

Carnivorous Science: Gendered anatomy in the post human body, an
hysteria of the machine in technological utopia

Emily Louise Windon Bachelor of Fine Art (honours class 1)

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For Queenie



"in order to study the world, you have to stop it" -

Hiroshi Sugimoto

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Research PhD program, the School of Fine Art, Music and
Drama.

Emily Windon

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ABSTRACT

My research is from a visual arts based methodology and in my own artistic practice, which forms an integral part of my research, I use myself as the subject, a strategy which has also been my foundational approach overall. My art practice is a central aspect of my research and whilst my research draws upon theoretical, historical and philosophical discourse, I have approached my research as a visual artist and my art practice has been as important a research tool as my reading has been, thus both have responded to and evolved with the issues I have been exploring. I have approached my hypothesis as a point for discussion and have not sought to argue a question and answer but instead allowed my hypothesis the space to be examined and analyzed.

My research is an investigation into how the subject is encoded with the discourse of modernism and how the subject can be liberated from this. I cover three main areas in the course of this investigation. These are anatomy and its role in gendering through scientific discourse, technology and its fundamental role in modernism and new technologies as a utopian ideal.

I look at modernist discourse historically and detail how modernist ideologies inform and frame social and cultural attitudes which, I argue, run along gendered paths. I discuss some key figures of modernist thought, such as Sigmund Freud and his predecessor, Jean Martin Charcot and the early inventors and scientists, Etienne- Jules Marey and Eadward Muybridge. I also discuss key theorists of the modern condition such as Hal Foster, Julia Kristeva and Michel Foucault. My research also looks at artists that have questioned accepted social and cultural ideologies, both historically and contemporary, and who present the modern subject in alternative ways, such as Joel- Peter Witkin and Hiroshi Sugimoto.

My research draws links between modernist thinking and technology and I map the changing face of technology as the tangible outcome of ideology. My research places hysteria as an important concept and condition that closes the gaps between seemingly broadly connected areas and I contextualize hysteria as the way ideology was encoded into the female body and mind. I also use the concept of hysteria as a way to liberate the subject from its ideologies.

In my research I look at the beginnings of scientific anatomy and its ideological foundations, and closely investigate the point where photographic vision becomes an element of a

gendered, patriarchal medical gaze. I discuss the emergence of a distinct medical gaze that occurred alongside the enlightenment, arguing that it is connected to the shift in culture that the scientific and industrial revolution brought about. I link this shift to new ways of seeing that the camera lens allowed and the implications this had on the clinical practice of medicine and the viewing of the body in general. I draw out significant ideological links to the beginnings of photography and the medical gaze, both new ways of seeing known and felt realities.

I have looked closely at the changing nature of perception which is distinctly modern and the implications this has had for women in society. I investigate the continuation of the medical female\social body and its subsumption into the new modern hegemony, using the hysterical female body as the point of investigation where the medical female body intersects succinctly with the modern gaze. Alongside my investigation of the modern, scientifically informed perception of reality, I discuss the alternative responses to modern life such as a return to nature, where there is an attempt to perceive the world without the lens of science. I investigate an uneasy tension within our modern reality, where there is a questioning of perception and a search for ways to relate to the world through non-empirical and technologically reliant systems. I look briefly at how this tension informs the new face of change like robotics, cybernetics and artificial intelligence, and the place of gender in a potentially bodiless society. Finally, I question whether the search for a technological utopia is leading toward a dystopia of the disempowered and a continuation of the hegemonies of modernism in the changing world of new technologies.

Outline of Exegesis structure and note on methodology:

The camera, the medium through which I primarily work, allows me to bring together the psyche, technology and the body, the three areas which I have investigated during the course of my research.

Throughout my research, I have used the concept of hysteria as a metaphor for transformation. Much of my research has investigated the framework of empiricism that informs our lives, a seamless empirical vision that is there always and that is woven with questions of patriarchy, the subjugated body and the role of technology in trapping or releasing us from these bonds. The idea of hysteria- its history, archive of images and theoretical discourse, has been a powerful tool to unlock this framework and I have kept close the concept of the hysterical women as my research has evolved.

I am a photographic artist and this exegesis discusses the research that has developed and informed my artistic practice. Whilst my research is not overtly feminist, a feminist outlook has informed and framed it at every step. The areas I have looked at throughout my research have also been broad as I felt this was necessary to fully examine my hypothesis. In many ways, my research has been a journey whose path has been mapped en-route; however the defining themes of my hypothesis have remained constant and central.

I have drawn upon diverse areas of theory in my research, including psychoanalytical concepts, medical discourses and theories surrounding female hysteria. This research has been important in directing and informing my practice and it is important to make note of my approach to these discourses as an artist. My distilling of this theory is artistic and its output is found in my studio practice.

Whilst the final exhibited work is primarily photography, as part of my general studio practice I used drawings to help work through some of the concepts I was investigating and, at the start of my research, painting. I have photographed continually throughout my research and the results show the evolution of my research and the crystallization of this into the final, exhibited work.

When I make photographs, I use an analogue medium format camera with film that is developed and then scanned into the computer. Working this way means that each frame is limited and the results are not known for certain until they return from the developing lab.

Thus each series has a finite amount of frames and whilst working on the images via the computer after film processing, I retain as much as possible their analogue, film based origin. I present the results in serial format, allowing meaning to be dispersed over a group of images rather than condensed into one single frame.

Photography is a technology that inhabits both the scientific and artistic worlds and is one that extends as a technological prosthesis from the body, allowing me to freeze in the frame, through technology, what my eye sees. As the camera makes visible what is invisible to the human eye, through its precision of mechanics and the chemical reactions of film or pixel and code, the camera lens shines a light on the optical unconsciousness; it is a mirror to the invisible, an eye on the shutters of movement that is able to surpass the mnemonic devices of the conscious and embed straight to the psyche.

Chapter Summary

My exegesis begins with a brief introduction of my motivation for this work, including some of my own personal history, as this has had a direct effect on where my artistic interests sit. From there, I discuss the theoretical concepts that have driven my research. Throughout the exegesis body I have placed discussions of my studio work alongside the corresponding research that the work has been informed by.

I start by arguing in the first chapter, *The Body on the Table*, that the enlightenment brought about a change in the way the world was perceived. With the introduction of lens technologies and the growth of the sciences, the world became fractured and categorized and, importantly, the body became part of the new world scientific view as it was documented by the anatomists. I discuss the anatomical human atlas, its political and cultural history and the implications the atlas had for the body and, in the particular, for the gendered body.

In Chapter two, *Gendering: From the material to the intellectual*, I discuss the use of classificatory systems and how this affected women and society in general. I also raise the idea of the female condition, where the woman is seen in medical terms as being vulnerable and helpless. I argue that the view of woman as biologically vulnerable was given cultural weight through the knowledge disseminated in the medical atlas. This was further legitimated by the dualistic, mind body view of the world that prevailed in that time. I also introduce the idea of a technologically mediated gaze and the privileging of vision over other senses.

In Chapter three, *the Wonder of the World*, I discuss in depth the new nature of vision and how this affected photographic technologies. I argue that there was a distinctly modern culture that was interconnected with and related to the way the body and nature was viewed and that swept up in its path women and gender, wrapping all in the technologies of modernism. Furthermore, out of this modernistic, fractured vision, came both social disquiet and the modern museum, the latter serving the needs not only of the sciences and the categorization of the world, but also the cultural need for a utopia, an Edenistic condensing of human achievement.

Chapter four, *The World Through a Lens*, takes an in-depth look at photography and its conception as a modern instrument of science and art. I then discuss the early photographer Eadward Muybridge and how his work exemplifies the shifting, complex and fertile grounds of modernist thought.

Chapter five, *Wilderness, Nature and the Psyche*, brings these discussions temporarily into the contemporary world, showing how relevant the history I have been researching is for today. I discuss the cultural encoding of nature and the role that early lens technology played in the re-coding of nature away from a theological framework into a more modern concept. Alongside my own work, I also discuss the work of the contemporary artistic team, David Haines and Joyce Hinterding.

Chapter six, *Time- Fractured and Spliced*, looks at the work of Etienne- Jules Marey, an early scientist, inventor and photographer whose work was crucial in the early modern understanding of the movement of the body in space and whose work exemplified the very modern notion of parceling of information, segmentation of the body and the reliance on the machine in both actuality and metaphor to understand and describe the world. His work shows the importance of time, the body and space to the concepts of modernism and follows the trajectory of change that I have been mapping in my research.

I then once more look at a contemporary artistic response to these themes in the work of Hiroshi Sugimoto. Sugimoto works with many of the themes of modernist thought yet he brings to them a sense of the intangible and the spiritual. He works with notions of time and technology and sees himself as being like a camera, trapping time in the lens of his eye and his machine in order to study reality. His images have an ethereal feel that is ghostly and distinctly unreal.

Chapter seven, *Repetition, Increase and Speed*, and chapter eight, *the Mystic Writing Pad*, discusses the work of the futurist photographer, Anton Bragaglia, and his attempt to infuse his images with movement and use photography in the pursuit of art, and in chapter eight I introduce the ideas of Freud and his importance to modernist ideas. Both artist and psychotherapist took the condition of modernism and wove it into their work, with Bragaglia seeking to find a way of representing the machine and the spirit and Freud working with the fractured psyche of the modern person. The psyche held an important place for the modern

person and I argue that its relevance was a response to the changes in seeing the world that modernism and the technology of the machine created.

The changing modern subject and the uneasiness that went with the experiences of modernism were crystalized in the condition of the hysteric and in Chapter nine, *An Hysterical Nature*, I discuss in detail the condition of hysteria and its importance in understanding the place of women in the modern world. I also discuss the work of the early photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron and her position as a female photographer in a mostly male vocation. I discuss in Cameron's work and also more broadly the idea of jouissance and its connections to eroticism and mysticism. I finish with a discussion of my visit to the Royal College of Surgeons in Melbourne.

In Chapter ten, *The Black Mirror of Technology*, I look at Freud's treatment of hysteria. Just as medicine, in the changing views of the enlightenment, moved from an externally based treatment to a treatment within the body itself, Freud took the treatment of hysteria from the visually based typographies of the hysteric's condition to one that treated the hysteric via the psyche, using memories of past events as way of explaining the present. Freud's concept of the hysteric shows that despite his radical way of dealing with psychosis, the position of women remained the same. Women were subjugated under medical discourse both physically and mentally and all aspects of their selves were taken into the hegemony of patriarchy. However, hysteria, through its affiliation with the ideas of jouissance and eroticism, can also be a tool for liberation. I discuss in detail the conflicting nature of hysteria in the context of my own photographic series, *Performing Augustine*.

Chapter eleven, *The Machine*, looks at the machine and its importance in society, and its distinctly modern position. The machine was both utopist and a dystopia. It freed and trapped and represented in many ways the unstable nature of the modern subject, shuttled between ideologies and realities. The surrealists embraced the machine and the metaphors it offered and I discuss their work, in particular the collages of Max Ernst. I also discuss my own collage work.

Chapter twelve looks at three contemporary Australian artists, Marian Drew, Kate Rohde and Beverly Veasey and how their practice creates a dialogue around the buffeting of nature and technology against the changing needs of society. Each artist uses the diorama setting to bring to their work debates surrounding history and the archive, and each presents our

culture as one of worrying excess where nature is removed from everyday experience as we continue in our rush to consume.

Chapter thirteen, *the Hysterical Robot*, brings together the themes I have been looking at throughout my research- technology, women, the machine and hysteria. I explain how these themes connect and intertwine and the importance they have for us today. I then discuss my own artistic response to my research in the first of my major works, the hysterical dance series.

Chapter Fourteen, *The eye of my mind....Joel Peter Witkin*, looks at the work of the contemporary artist, Joel Peter Witkin. His work traverses the areas my research has been uncovering as he searches for a way to represent the infinite within the finite frame of the empirical space and the lens of the camera. He unites the psyche, technology and the spiritual in his searching and acknowledges the value of historical symbols in the representation of challenging subjects. I then discuss my own final work, the Shimmering, Painted dance and Painted Animism. After my conclusion I give an outline of the final exhibition structure.

All images of my work in this exegesis are reproductions of photographic digital prints, unless otherwise stated.



A case of status epilepticus, from the epilepsy biographs, Walter Greenough Chase 1905 ¹

Introduction: A photograph... a memory

"Photography is our exorcism. Primitive society had its masks, bourgeois society its mirrors. We have our images." ²

I want to begin this thesis with two pictures. The first image is a photograph, the second a memory. Both serve to illustrate my fascination with the subject I have been researching and thinking about for many years.

The photograph is from the records of the Craig Colony for epileptics, taken by Walter Chase in 1905. ³ It shows a man, naked, at the beginning of an epileptic fit, at the point where the

¹ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 62

² Jean Baudrillard *Fotografien Photographies photographs 1985-1998* Neu Galerie Graz, Joanneum, 9 January 1999- 14 February 1999, 129

seizure has taken hold. This image was part of an attempt to record photographically the process of seizures on the body and was one of many taken at the time. When I look at the picture, it is not the idea of epilepsy that holds me, although that was the original purpose of the picture- a document of illness. It is the unnamed figure that speaks most, for me, in this image. I want to know who this person is, what his life was like, was he treated well, what did his life hold for him outside of the institution and how did he fare once incarcerated- for incarceration it was. I want to know his place beyond that of an un-named patient.

Looking at this photograph, I understand what Barthes meant by the punctum- there is something in the image that seems to rise out of its cultural and historical context and pierces me, holds me to it. The man is naked. He is pared down to his illness, trapped in time forever at the point where the illness takes over his being. He does not have a history in these records beyond his condition and this ghostly image is what remains of him for me, the viewer, all that I can know of him. The image shows so little yet says so much about photography and medical discourse, and their often quiet but momentous effect on our lives.

Next to this image I place my memory. It is also a photograph yet exists now only as a mnemonic trace. It is of two shoes, propelling forward two legs that have been trapped forever as they walk up and down a linoleum clad hallway. The photograph was taken by me as a teenager when I was a patient in a psychiatric institution. I took many photographs during this time and my camera was always slung around my neck. When I unearthed these photos sometime after my recovery, I discovered something about them I had forgotten-they were all the same. Looking at the photographs, I was looking at image after image of photographs of people, fellow patients, but just their feet and legs, as they walked up and down the hallway. I remember of my time of institutionalization, before the de-institutionalization movement, as being made of days blurring into the next without distinction. Time was stalled and quiet, suspended. The days became months easily and were filled with boredom, a sense of disembodiment, feelings of being lost, being trapped. You were chemically constrained and this left you without a sense of who you were. You belonged to the system in mind and body, legally and physically. You could blend into the architecture of the buildings and no one would miss you. The main sound that marked each

³ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 62 image is titled, "a case of status epilepticus, from the epilepsy biographs, Walter Greenough Chase", it is dated as 1905.

day was the sound of pacing feet. Walking up and down the hallway counted the hours and reclaimed the in-distinction of passing time from the institution back to the body. All the patients would walk up and down and I remember my own rhythm of feet on floor, each step moving my body towards some end that belonged only to me. The photographs I took then were a way of expressing what I couldn't articulate but knew none the less- knowledge that my identity was slowly being merged with that of an institutional discourse and I needed to keep re-defining myself as separate before I was engulfed and lost in illness.

When I found these images by chance years later, I had also found my voice and was no longer that silent patient in an institution; I was a free and functioning member of society. I decided to destroy the photographs. In this process I was not only trying to erase that part of my life which I wanted to forget, I was also releasing these disembodied feet from their own suspension in time, allowing the images to sink back into the past.

I have since realized that forgetting that time is not possible, regardless of whether I have tangible artifacts or not- I always have my memory and it stays with me, while the photographs, long gone, have melted into the past where they will remain, along with the encodings that each photograph must be burdened with.

These two photographs, one real, one only a memory, illustrate the power of photography to move the heart before the intellect, to remain as an image burnt forever into the synapses of thought. They are also representations of the tangled threads of photography and its contested arena which has had and continues to have a dialogue with culture and its constant evolution.

The beginnings of a social dialogue

“the ordinary sound of well-oiled machinery spells out the rhythms of eternity-it paraphrases and mimes the notion of living organisms and thus functions as a metaphor for life.”⁴

I remember my childhood as being a mix of beach living, hot long days and endless spare time. I left school early, as soon as I was legally allowed, and there followed afterwards a lengthy process of leaving home, returning and leaving again, co-inciding with much teenage angst and confusion. This angst culminated in a total nervous breakdown at eighteen and time spent in and out of psychiatric institutions. There I saw firsthand the effect of an institution on a person, the slow and total process of submission to a larger purpose- that of patient in a system, a simple but effective bargain of submission and treatment.

An institution is a machine, its machinations are essentially brutal, and there is little room for the individual in the process of diagnosis, treatment and cure. In a psychiatric ward, by its very nature, autonomy is limited. As a patient in an institutional ward, I was more and more medicated and became less and less myself. I was a like an automaton, existing in a chemical haze, becoming defined by an illness, fitting the parameters of a disease. Finally, I was able to escape the clutches of institutionalization and slowly redefine myself, eventually becoming un-medicated and a normalized, socially adept person. I left the institutional system at a time when the large psychiatric institutions were being closed down, seen perhaps as relics of an older, archaic society. With their closure and the dispersal of the patients into broader society, a system of treatment from a previous era was also ended and many patients were transported into the modern era of community based care, whether appropriate or not. I thankfully, was able to walk away from medical management altogether and start my life anew. I would also do everything possible to forget that stage of my life, to wipe it from my own personal history. I burnt my diaries from the time. I burnt all the photographs I had taken, even the negatives. I burnt all my drawings. I had accumulated in the wards such a mass of intense experience which I could not carry and so I tried to remove it all, to destroy every reminder of it. Every permanent artifact I sought to eradicate, every memory to erase.

More than twenty years later I understand how futile that wish was, that not only is it impossible to remove these memories but that my experience was unique and valuable. I

⁴ Rosi Braidotti. *Metamorphoses Towards a Materialist theory of Becoming*, Polity Press, USA, 2002, 225

realize now that in some way, everything I do is connected to my past, it is a cord that can't be broken, it has shaped me and defined me, even if I wasn't aware of it at the time. I may have burnt all my artifacts from that time yet every image I make now is in some way a recreation of them.

My creative output back then dealt with the same issues that my art does now. My interest in how to express the trapped and the free is a reflection of the extremes that I lived, of incarceration and the hopelessness of that, and the pure joy of being free, an autonomous, self determining individual. Similarly, my research has been underpinned by a drive to understand how the individual can be trapped by society, how power can be taken from someone insidiously or directly. Institutional power is everywhere, it is not as directly implicated in everyday life as it may have been previously but it is still there in the shadows. It is important to be aware of this, to know how the machinations of the state and its bodies have changed over the course of history into the present day and how these machinations evolve always and continue to affect culture, society and the individual. My PhD is a culmination of that research and draws a line in Western society and culture from history to the present day, tracing the course of the subjugation of the individual to society and how that is dealt with and reflected in visual artifacts and art. It is an investigation of the search for a social utopia that drives progress and the use of technology that has become so significant in that search, and an uncovering of the gendered body beneath the layering of the technological machine. Always present in this investigation, in both my written and studio research, is the photographic lens.

Chapter One: The body on the table

*"There are cemeteries that are lonely,
graves full of bones that do not make a sound,
the heart moving through a tunnel,
In it darkness, darkness, darkness..."*⁵

Prior to the enlightenment, the world was seen in organic terms and ordered through the omnipotence of God. The systems of nature were mirrored in the ordering of society which was like a tree, with each social group holding an important place in the hierarchy of the model. However, as the state moved from a monarchy to a secularly ordered model, the authority and reach of God was dispersed and the organic society began to break down. Consequently, ways of seeing the world became fractured and the ideas of the new era of the enlightenment brought forth new understandings of nature and its systems.⁶

The enlightenment can be understood as the conception point for the machine age, the precursor to today's digital age. The enlightenment gave us the lens- an instrument that reconfigured the micro and macro world and parceled reality into a vision through a machine. From this prosthetic eye the world of biology was mapped and the grandness of reality was frozen onto the walls of the camera obscura. The world became fractured, broken into units that could be observed, mapped, measured and dissected. The organic based interpretation of the world that was used in the pre- enlightenment was replaced by a world that could be configured and recorded using instruments designed and controlled by man. The omnipotence of God was not so much present everywhere as filtered through the intellect of man who metaphorically ate the apple of Eve and replanted the seeds. Thus began a search for knowledge that would reach an apex in the practice of anatomy and the scientifically based investigation of life.

⁵ From *Nothing but Death* Pablo Neruda. Translated from Spanish by Robert Bly. Ilya Kaminsky. Susan Harris. (eds) *The ECCO Anthology of International Poetry*, Harper Collins, New York, 2010, 144

⁶ The organic model of society is discussed in, Caroline Merchant. *The Death of Nature, Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*, Harper San Francisco, USA, 1990, 69- 98

The enlightenment saw man as central to knowledge acquisition, both as observer and observed. However, the scientific body was significantly gendered and it was the female body which was to be studied, the male body the gatherer of information. The body, its living systems, its cavities, its bones and flesh, were all documented, observed and recorded, making the body a powerful epistemological artifact. The way humans perceived the world was changing so vastly that it was almost an act of necessity for the body to figure so prominently in the pursuit of knowledge at the time. As I will argue, it was the body, significantly the gendered body, which was and still is the platform for understanding an ever changing world in a system of knowledge acquisition bounded by hierarchical and patriarchal conditions.

The human body is a powerful political and symbolic figure, one which, as argued by the postmodern theorist Foucault, was a public commodity ultimately controlled by the state.⁷ While the enlightenment emphasized the individual, when that individual transgressed the laws of society, their body became dispossessed. The out casted individual was punished in many ways, from the judicial system and its bodies in life, to the determination of how the body was to be treated in death. The state authorized death of the criminal removed the right to a proper burial, meaning a criminal's remains could be cannibalized by the state in the form of anatomy, in what Roberta Mc Grath describes in her discussion of anatomical practice as "ritualized dismemberment".⁸ Knowledge is power and anatomy is an apt metaphor for the ultimate power of the state over the disaffected body of the criminal. The criminal body, cut up in the name of understanding, would forever become immortalized in the anatomical atlas. However, while it was the bodies of men who were most readily available via the executioner's hands, it was the bodies of women who were most sought after.

The precursor to the medical photograph was the atlas, a set of drawings for medical instruction that presented the body in glorious, flayed detail. It was in the medical atlas that women's body became effectively contextualized into medical culture. Woman, in the

⁷ This is a key theory of Foucault's and is explained in his text, *Discipline and Punish, the Birth of the Prison*. Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish, the Birth of the Prison*, Penguin Books, London, New York, 1997

⁸ Roberta Mc Grath, *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 2002, 104

sterility of the dissection room, was deflowered for knowledge. The woman of the renaissance was already subsumed to the philosophies of nature. Connected to Mother Nature, she was presented as revealing her secrets coyly to man as shown in the sculpture by Louis- Ernest Barrias, “nature reveals herself to science” ,where a woman seductively lifts her gown to reveal her body to the gaze of the scientific eye.⁹



Nature Reveals Herself, Louis- Ernest Barrias, 1841- 1905 ¹⁰

Woman was made to divulge her secrets of nature symbolically, in the art and philosophies of the time, and then in actuality, as she became further subjugated by the dissection knife. As flesh only, she was voiceless, an instrument of discovery, accessible in any way. She is anonymous, ready to be clinically mapped, viewed from above in the hierarchy of doctor, patient, anatomist, and cadaver. The female body is known inside and out, she is dissimilated into medical discourse and as her flesh is peeled away, so are her powers and selfhood. Rendered in two dimensions, she is accessible and controllable. As Julie Doyle argues, anatomy needed visible evidence to legitimize its knowledge and the atlas presented

⁹ Caroline Merchant. *The Death of Nature, Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*, Harper San Francisco, USA, 1990, 190-191

¹⁰ Ibid 190

this knowledge in a reputable and distributable form. ¹¹It moved anatomy away from its shady past of exhumed graves and murderous cadavers, instead presenting human specimens without human subjectivity. In the atlas, woman, in particular her markings of gender, became a medical, anatomical body, organized, categorized, displayed in each sumptuous, fleshy layer.

The presentation of bodies within the atlas reflected the changes that the industrialization of society was having on ideas of the body. Roberta Mc Grath argues that the female body met the male need to dominate nature with the use of machines. The female body, being the incubator of the new human, was the ideal machine; “the mothers body was already regarded not as a living being but as a dead object, an inanimate machine for reproduction”.

¹² She is presented in the atlas as parts. Aligned with their particular function, the functions of woman can be studied and manipulated in order to eventuate a healthy baby. The woman was merely a womb, housing for the production of a baby- the fetus within the womb an interloper within a machine, waiting for the moment of expulsion and sentient life.

Furthermore, the mother was a potential impediment to the child. She is shown in pieces with her deficiencies mapped while the fetus is fleshly, lively, and intact. As Mc Grath points out, in the obstetrical atlas, the mother simply vanishes piece by piece, revealing the baby within as her parts are removed. ¹³

¹¹ Julie Doyle. 2007, “Historicising Surgery: Sex, Gender and the Surgical Imaginary”, *Social Semiotics*, Volume 17, Number 3, downloaded by the University of Tasmania, 17th august, 2007, 347-347

¹² Roberta Mc Grath. *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2002, 66

¹³ Ibid 88



*The Uterus in the eighth or ninth month of pregnancy, Jan van Rymsdyk, 1754*¹⁴

The medical atlas was part of the changing dynamic of the enlightenment. On a grand scale, the atlas was aligned with new ideas of the body which linked the body to ideas of the machine. The body, as its internal structure was uncovered, moved from the metaphorical to the biological, from whole to fractured. Michel Foucault sees the pre-modern medical gaze as one that worked within the negative spaces of body and disease. Medicine was visually based on the skins surface and was understood according to formal classifications similar to those of the natural world.¹⁵ Accordingly, the disease was an entity regulated by formal rules and classifications. The patient became almost a byproduct to the disease, simply an extension of the fact of the disease. The doctor in his treatment must first find the disease and know what type it is in certainty so that the correct treatment may be delivered. The doctor, to discover this information, must look to the interaction of patient and disease and work within the space of healthy and not, discovering in the intervals of interaction the true nature of the disease. He is like a silent observer, quietly watching and gathering information until he is sure of his verdict and his next step.

¹⁴ Ibid 69

¹⁵ Michel Foucault. *The Birth of the Clinic, an Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Random House, New York, 1984, 7

“ In the rational space of disease, doctors and patients do not occupy a place as of right; they are tolerated as disturbances that can hardly be avoided: the paradoxical role of medicine consists, above all, in neutralizing them, in maintaining the maximum difference between them, so that, in the void that appears between them, the ideal configuration of the disease becomes a concrete, free from, totalized at last in a motionless, simultaneous picture, lacking both density and secrecy, where recognition opens itself onto the order of essences.” ¹⁶

Foucault describes this medical gaze as a retreating gaze. It must wait for the disease to reveal itself and then, equipped with knowledge which it already knows; the disease must be allowed to play out its pre determined course of events. The medical gaze, moving forward, is also always stepping back. What the advent of anatomy did to the classical medical gaze was problematize its retreat. By bringing the gaze beneath the surface, it multilayered it, creating a dialogue between disease, symptom and tissue. Disease and its interaction with the diseased became animated and the medical anatomist followed the lines of this animation, layer by layer, weaving in and out of the body’s depths. The anatomist, through death, was able to bring to light the true nature of life. ¹⁷

Anatomy moved understanding of the body from the surface to beneath the skin, mixing vision with the abject fluids of internal bodily function. The guides to this journey were the surgeons, who together with artists, sought to impress upon their trade the respect that their fellow medical colleagues, physicians, enjoyed. Furthermore, the role of surgeons in the gendering of this new, fractured, visible body is an important facet in understanding how women’s bodies became subjugated in the changing view of the world.

The surgeons of the eighteenth century were on the lower rungs of the medical disciplines. They were connected to death, before death had undergone its transformation into knowledge. They were sullied by their connection to the rotting corpses of the graveyards that they were thought to exhume in order to undertake their gruesome trade of dissection. They did not undergo university training as physicians did and had no professional college to affiliate themselves with. The surgeon desperately needed to transform the stigma of his

¹⁶ Michel Foucault. *The Birth of the Clinic, an Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Random House, New York, 1984, 9

¹⁷ In my visit to the royal college of surgeons, discussed in chapter nine, I looked at the medical instruments of the changing medical gaze which were designed to allow clinical access to the internal body.

profession. To gain authority, the surgeon needed to re- allocate his practice in scientific terms- the language of science and the enlightenment gentleman.

Surgeons differed from the physicians, who diagnosed using external bodily signs and symptoms as guides. Surgeons diagnosed from the body's interior and used surgery to cure or manage problems. Physicians and surgeons both sat on the cusp of the classical and modern ages of medicine that Foucault described- one representing the old order the other the new.

The inferior status of surgery derived in part from the surgeon's need to be in close physical proximity to the patient's body. They needed to touch the body and enter into its cavities, membranes and viscous fluids. Physicians, on the other hand, diagnosed the body from a distance, ensuring their higher status was not contaminated through physical touching of the body's recesses. Their diagnosis was visual, mediated via the intellect. The external symptoms pointed to and allowed analysis and treatment of internal disorder.

The surgeon's role in entering the body and the associations that held was the hurdle which needed to be cleared to allow access to the privileges of medical acceptance. They were not merely manual workers, by cutting into the body a surgeon was also a violator of the pre anatomical body's subjective integrity.¹⁸

When the murder act of 1752 was passed by King George II, allowing surgeons to dissect the bodies of executed murders, a surgeon's need for knowledge advancement through anatomy was legitimated by the state, yet it was done so through the taint of brutality. A surgeon not only transgressed the body's surface- he did so upon the bodies of the socially exiled. The surgeon's work presented its dilemma- he needed to both dissect with his own hands and assimilate the anatomical knowledge uncovered into his practice and medical dialogue. Yet this could only be done on the body of the deceased. Anatomy, whilst being a large factor in a surgeon's inability to gain wider medical acceptance, was a necessary part of his practice.

The body itself- the site of unpleasant defilement via the surgeon's hands, needed to be re grounded, placed within scientific categorical understanding and moved away from metaphysical connections. The surgeon became a mediator in the re configuration of the

¹⁸ Julie Doyle. 2007, "Historicising Surgery: Sex, Gender and the Surgical Imaginary", *Social Semiotics*, Volume 17, Number 3, downloaded by the University of Tasmania, 17th august, 2007, 345- 346, 245

body as a medium of medical knowledge. The surgeon was a translator in this discourse- he knew it intimately and his skill allowed its medical secrets to be uncovered and recorded. As the body moved from a metaphysical understanding into an anatomical- medical one, gender also became transposed into the new logic.

Surgeons were able to aid their journey towards a higher status with the publication of surgical atlases. Artists made visible surgical skill and knowledge in the scientific framework of the medical treatise. The atlas could be reproduced and used in place of actual corpses. As Roberta Mc Grath illustrates in her discussion on the anatomical atlas, the volumes were invested with the beauty of art and the discourse of science. An atlas could define a surgeon's career and was as much an economic investment as an investment in knowledge. The atlas partnered with art in its production but it was science which became the ultimate disseminator. Printed on heavy paper, weighty, worked on for years at a time, the atlas carried with it the signifiers of science and the intellect.¹⁹

It is from the starting point of the medical atlas that I began the creation of my own atlas of anatomy in the work, *Stories from the Lost Land- a photographic ladies atlas*. This is an atlas from within the rooms of domesticity and uses the home gathered collection of natural artifacts in its creation. It is weighted with the history womanhood, domestic life, subjugation and a desire for something else.

¹⁹ Roberta Mc Grath. *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2002, 63-99



Looking Dress, Emily Windon 2007 20x20cm

Stories from the Lost Land- a photographic ladies atlas

The photographic series, “stories from the lost lands”, made from 2006 to 2008, was my first investigation of an artistic response to my research. Whilst I continued with the series well into 2008, and used the germination of the ideas in my later work, the initial concept remained throughout. In the series, I wanted to relate back to the idea of the internalized body externalized through anatomy. Just as the medical atlases flayed open the female body, I wanted in my images to recreate the idea of the displacing of interior, of removing the outer layer and in so doing, altering the sanctity of containment, of boundaries and control. There is something brutal about the images of the female cadavers in the medical atlases, they are shown splayed, with limbs amputated, organs spilling out, skin peeled back. The images are also however, quite beautiful, the skill of the drawings giving the images an aesthetic quality that softens the subject matter. It was important for my images to be visually pleasant, almost decorative, and operating within a recognizable female aesthetic.

For the creation of the images I collected a number of old miniature dresses and placed on these my own collection of anatomical body parts that are found in medical models. These were in turn laid upon a background of wallpaper, the patterning of the paper further symbolizing, I felt, the female gender, through the wallpapers allusion to the domestic. I played around with rejoining disparate elements and juxtaposing items that were anatomically unrelated yet visually appealing and I realized the importance of using anatomy that was easily recognizable so the images could be readily grounded in what I was trying to convey. I also painted many of the anatomical model parts and continued the idea of patterning onto the surface of the parts. As my research continued, I began to incorporate

elements of the natural world into the images, such as nests or small birds, as I realized the important role that ideas of nature and the natural world played in the subjugation of the anatomized female body. All the images were taken from above, creating a flattening effect and recreating the position of the anatomist, viewing the cadaver on the dissecting table below them.

The process of creating the images was one of assembly and disassembly. I assembled each component of the picture, enforcing upon the structure a two dimensional containment of it via the camera, and, finally, a disassembly of the parts. The process itself was a reversal of the act of dissection and its outcomes, where the body was disassembled through dissection, then reassembled into an ontological framework which was disseminated through the medical atlas.

The series title, *Stories from the Lost Lands*, referred to the past of the woman being dissected. She is unknown beyond her documented anatomy, she is a historical nonentity whose voice floats endlessly beneath the pages of the atlas and who whispers quietly to be heard. The images were my way of speaking about the disenchantment of the female body under the medical gaze, of the fragmenting and cataloging of gender that happened on the dissecting table and the resulting distancing of women from their own bodies.

As the images evolved over time, I decided to use black and white film in favour of color as I felt that bringing the images into a monotone framework would emphasize their connections to scientific conventions, allowing the images to have an authenticity that comes with black and white film. I also allowed the narrative element greater space in the images so the viewer could bring their own interpretations to the process of looking and in doing create a layering of meanings in each work.



Nest Head, Emily Windon 2007 20x20cm



Cats Skull Emily Windon 2007 20x20cm



Fathoms of shell, Emily Windon 2007 20x20cm



Shoe Handed Lady, Emily Windon 20x20cm



The unveiling, Emily Windon 2008 20x20cm



Velocity, Emily Windon 2008 20x20cm



Child, Emily Windon 2008 20x20cm



Care of the Young, Emily Windon 2008 20x20cm



Bride of Misfortune, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm



A simple devour, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm



A Small Burden, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm



Floating Head, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm



The Sweet Reveal, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm



Thoughts of Love and Desire, Emily Windon 2010 25x 25cm

Chapter Two: Gendering: From the material to the intellectual

"Having gone upstairs

On steps of dark oak

She finds herself before

A mirror with worm- eaten frame

She contemplates it in her virgin torso..."²⁰

Prior to the anatomical readings of the body and gender, females were believed to have only slightly different sexual differences from men. The new anatomical understanding of sexual difference however, saw gender demarcated along the lines of reproduction. Foucault, in his treatise on the treatment of abnormality in the pre modern age, sees the hermaphrodite as pertinently illustrating the changing relations of gender and the beginning of a medical discourse. In the pre- modern age, a monster was a being which united two separate and distinct categories, such as an animal and man or man and woman. The merging of separate classifications problematized the strict order of nature and put to question the organization of society and law- is an hermaphrodite treated as a man or woman; what are the legal and moral consequences of a being that cannot be placed within a category? Foucault terms this a "juridical- natural complex".²¹

Foucault uses the case of an hermaphrodite from 1614-15 to illustrate the dilemma that an un-categorical being may cause. In the example case, a hermaphrodite was ordered to be executed for living as a man after having an ongoing and conjugal relationship with a woman, after originally being baptized as a girl at birth. After a medical examination of the gender, the hermaphrodite was ordered to be hung and burnt, with his\ her partner bearing witness. However, a successful appeal was lodged based on new medical evidence. The doctor in the

²⁰ From *A Mirror* Jean Follain. Translated from French by Czeslaw Mitosz and Robert Hass. Ilya Kaminsky, Susan Harris. (eds) *The ECCO Anthology of International Poetry*, Harper Collins, New York, 2010,140

²¹ Michel Foucault. *Abnormal, Lectures at the College de France 1974- 1975*, Verso, London 2003, 65

case, Duval, approached the matter clinically and descriptively. Duval speaks in his writings of the need to move away from antiquities' refusal to name the parts of a woman. He describes woman's womb as sacred, having carried the body of Jesus, and also important as they bear the next generation. Doctors must be able to know and name the parts of a woman in order that the loss of woman in childbirth is lessened.²² The hermaphrodite is saved by being thought of in the new clinical discourse of sexuality and gendered bodies. However, he\ she is still a monster in the sense of traveling between two separate categories- male and female. So he\she is spared death but must take on a particular gender and not transgress from it. He\ she must also not live in a relationship at all as that may cause the blurring of still distinct boundaries.²³

A little over one hundred years later in 1765, another case of an hermaphroditic relationship demonstrates the changing view of the monster coming out of the shifting approach to interpreting the world. In this instance, an hermaphrodite, baptized female, was found to be later living as a male with a female partner. The hermaphrodite was convicted on the basis of defiling the sacrament of marriage, banned from having relationships with other woman and whipped. This was due to a physical examination that found she was an hermaphrodite with a dominant female sex. She was no longer monstrous in herself but rather her behaviour was monstrous.²⁴ A monster was no longer rooted in a disordering of the natural order but in an abhorrence of morals. Women's bodies had been assimilated into notions of sexuality and gender as had ideas of proper conduct and transgress able boundaries within gender.

Women's bodies, gendered, anatomically different, medically understood, were seen as vulnerable due to their reproductive capabilities, a vulnerability articulated by Duval in 1614 and still raised by medical professionals today. This distinct female condition necessitated the careful study of her body via surgical anatomy, allowing no fold of her femininity to be left unseen. The anatomical atlas in particular presented the female body uncovered- reproductive, anatomically and sexually different. The female body, portrayed via her reproductive capabilities, was shown aided and exposed by the surgeon's tools. The surgeons hands were missing yet his tools held the skin apart to reveal its muscular wonders or helped

²² Ibid 69-70

²³ Ibid 71

²⁴ Michel Foucault. *Abnormal, Lectures at the College de France 1974- 1975*, Verso, London, 2003, 74

deliver a baby helplessly trapped by the constricting cervical wall.²⁵ The body was proffered in the atlas along the lines of difference and the female body, already culturally inferior due to her alignment with nature and the emotions, was further rendered helpless through the illustrations of her unreliable reproductive anatomy.

One of the most successful anatomical atlases of the time, John Hunter's *the Anatomy of the Human Gravid Uterus, 1774*, was presented in the clinical style which is today so familiar. Shown only in the parts guilty of dysfunction- a pelvis trapping a baby, a placenta incorrectly situated, the woman is postulated as simply an inferior machine which must be fixed.²⁶ Margrit Shildrick argues in her discussion of women in medical discourse that the medical approach to patients, where the doctor is removed emotionally from the client, concentrating only on the pathological symptoms, renders the patient the status of a faulty object which must be modified. The woman, already devalued within the western Cartesian dualistic approach where she is aligned with emotion rather than intellect, is further subsumed in the binary of the physical (pathological) body versus the intellect to which she has no claim. Hers is the physical body that needs repair via the intellect of the doctor and his associated weight of medical discourse. The maintenance of this dualistic approach to the body in medical science has been an important element in medicinal progress, where the boundaries of the body can be opened and mapped without recourse to the ethics of the day.²⁷ The female body cannot escape the tyranny of reproduction and it is her link to the cycles of nature that has inhibited her joining the philosophical allegiance with culture and the intellect, as opposed to nature and the emotions.²⁸

The legitimization of the surgical profession finally reached completion with the establishment of a legitimate professional body- the Royal College of surgeons, in 1800. It is interesting that John Hunter, whose atlas of 1774 presented images of a much more clinical nature than atlases of his contemporaries, and who invested such a large personal fortune into its production, also became the inaugural head of the college and is remembered today

²⁵ Julie Doyle. 2007, "Historicising Surgery: Sex, Gender and the Surgical Imaginary", *Social Semiotics*, Volume 17, Number 3, downloaded by the University of Tasmania, 17th august, 2007, 347

²⁶ Mc Grath discusses Hunter's Atlas, and others, in detail in seeing her sex 63-99 Roberta Mc Grath, *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2002, 63-99

²⁷ Margrit Shildrick. *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries, Feminism and (Bio) Ethics*, Routledge, London, 1997, 17

²⁸ Ibid 26

as the founding father of the surgical profession.²⁹ Certainly anatomical drawings were leaving behind their tendency towards artistic embellishment and were being presented as clinical, factual renderings of the body.

Finally, it was anatomy which overtook surgery in the respectful quest for knowledge. The cutting into living systems had transformed into a new field of discovery- that of the inner landscape. The surgeon's quest for answers beneath the skin was like a reflection in a black mirror, throwing back the changing psyche of its culture, a macro dissemination of a fractured world view. The surgeon broke apart the body, stripping flesh from bone in order to examine each in situ then alone, just as the collector gathered exotic materials from the corners of the world and placed them within their personal collections for private study. "The messiness of the body, as well as the unruliness of everyday life, were thus managed by the use of either a reducing tool or an analytical system. The immobilized specimen under scrutiny could neither hide nor escape."³⁰

The new, post romantic world was being viewed by the prosthetics of the lens and this culminated with the invention of the camera- vision through the lens was made permanent and truth imputable. Mc Grath argues that in the eighteenth century a reversal in thinking occurred for which the image gained a hierarchy over the text whilst the knowing subject was distanced from the known. She talks of a technologically mediated gaze that arose from the clinic- a place where knowledge was gathered and held apart from those being examined. "A previously dynamic relationship between doctor and patient, where knowledge about the body had been on a more or less equal footing, was replaced by a system which privileged the vision and voice of the doctor; a new hierarchy of the senses emerged which increasingly relied less upon the older system of proximity and sentience."³¹ This hierarchy was, like all hierarchies, imbued with notions of power and important to the new ideologies of knowledge was the place where knowledge was found and transformed. This place was nature and by association, women. The female body, in the discourse of science and medicine, was mined and excavated and, like nature, she was silent and passive

²⁹ Julie Doyle. 2007, "Historicising Surgery: Sex, Gender and the Surgical Imaginary", *Social Semiotics*, Volume 17, Number 3, downloaded by the University of Tasmania, 17th august, 2007, 352

³⁰ Barbara Maria Stafford. *Body Criticism, Imaging the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, London 1997, 48

³¹ Roberta Mc Grath. *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2002, 11

in this process. As technology progressed, she became weighed down by the instruments of her being known. The female body, in the early days of industrialization, outlines a, “gendered relationship between science, technology, power and knowledge”.³²

Mc Grath sees the nineteenth century as being a turning point where the body, suddenly “spectacular”, was both image and machine; connected to ideals of aesthetics and technology. Into this milieu came the camera, also inhabiting the spaces of aesthetics and technology. In addition to these aspects of change was the simultaneously altering of the nature of vision, also having a bold impact on the ontology of the time.

The post romantic world was filled with the technologies of the lens that would weight culture soon enough yet were still new enough to be floating in meaning, mixing with the body, medicine and philosophy. This floating, changing world is what I sought to depict in the series, *Due South*. These are images where an ungrounded, mixed gendered figure moves among the signifiers of empirical knowledge, and turns back to nature to find its ultimate home.

³² Ibid 12



Due South/ archive: 2, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm

Due South: a photographic archive

The photographic series, “*Due South*” was begun in 2008 in response to the investigations outlined in the preceding chapter. In this series I have used an ongoing character I have affectionately named the feathered figure. This is an androgynous figure, sometimes played by myself and sometimes by family or friends, and is literally a person covered in paint and feathers. It is usually masked in some way. The feathered figure for me represents a concept of something that moves between things, between histories, between ideologies, between ways of viewing the world. It is ghostly, slippery in that it cannot be easily pinned down. It has fluid boundaries and is more shadow than material. The feathered figure embodies all that is intangible and in this way is able to move between the known and bring to light a space beyond empiricism and the known. The feathered figure, masked, feels its way, it is intuitive and senses its way through the landscape which is both external and of this world and inner, the world of the psyche and dreams. The feathered figure is very compelling and I have returned to it many times, each time bringing these understandings to the image. The actual image making is as much performance and documentation than a construction of interrelating objects and it is important to let the figure inhabit its environment without excessive intervention.

In *Due South*, the figure moves through an enclosed landscape in which are placed symbols of discovery: the skeleton of the anatomy school, the camera through which the world is mediated, a clock for pinning the world to mapped fragments of time, a taxidermy deer embodying the desire to know and collate the natural world. The title itself refers to the age

of exploration, where the western world was assimilated into a cartographic system and the great south lands were landed upon by the Europeans. By placing this figure, who dissolves boundaries, who is uncontained, within the framework of historical and symbolic motives, I am able to tangle the thread that connects the objects, allowing a disjunction of meanings to occur whilst weaving new shimmering, fluxing tangents. A rupture occurs and it is this rupture that I will seek to employ in my continuing photographic investigations.



Due South/ archive: 10, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 1, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 9, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 7, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 8, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 11, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 5, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 8, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Due South/ archive: 4, Emily Windon 2008 20 x 20cm



Trapping the midnight- Gemini sage Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm

Trapping the Midnight, Metamorphosis Spectral

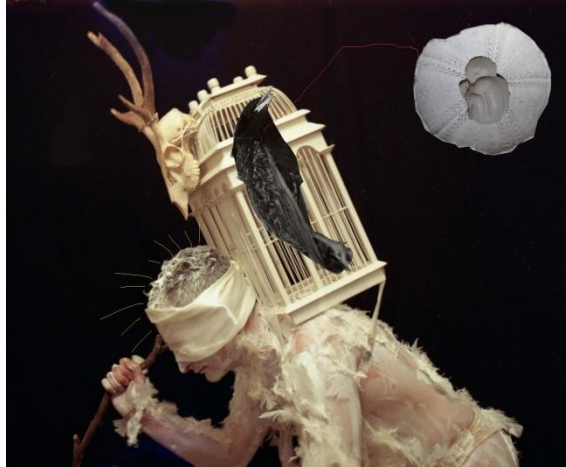
Due South and the use of the feathered figure led me to another series that took elements of the former and expanded into an investigation of the psyche. The series formed two groups- *Trapping the Midnight*, and, *Metamorphoses Spectral*.

The first group, *Trapping the Midnight*, shows a figure, feathered, moving about a darkened, artificially constructed, dreamlike space. The figure is ghostly, mythical, shifting in and out of our known reality. It holds an empty cage on its back, a repository of the psyche from which has flown the contents. It has taken elements of the world and reformed them into new patterns that are familiar yet slightly skewed and that float about in space whilst staying connected via threads of the psyche.

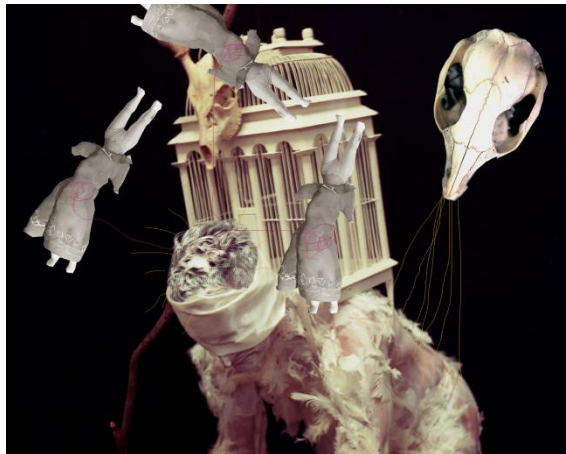
The second group, *Metamorphoses Spectral*, shows the same figure moving in the real space and time of an enclosed industrial shed. Trapped in real time, it is fractured within the photographic frame, existing for a moment before the camera eye, caught and trapped by the lens as it attempts to reconnect with the psychic realm. In *Trapping the Midnight/ Metamorphoses Spectral*, I am capturing that dream space where time and the body are ungrounded and floating. I am interested in body space interaction, how the flesh engages with and creates the environment in which it moves. The spaces in this series are both constructed and natural and each image uses visual cues to generate narratives of myth, emotion or the unconscious.

Most often masked, the feathered figure, or the midnight ghost, feels and intuitively senses its way through the landscape which is both external and of this world and inner, the world of the psyche and dreams. These images incorporate elements of performance in their making and performance is an important aspect of my practice. This is not performance in the strict sense of the word- it is private and a way of freeing the frameworks of perception to allow something else to emerge, some part of the unconscious. Performance involves a decision to relinquish some control, to invite the unplanned moment into the making of an image. Photography, particularly studio photography, can be a very calculated and ordered process. I have deliberately included procedures in this image making that subvert photography's alignment with order, control and a seamless empirical truth, such as allowing my character to perform for the camera, or retaining clues to the image's construction. In this way I am trying to get closer to a space free from the grounded here and now and closer to the dream space, or the uncanny- real but not quite right.

The camera frames with its mechanism an event or setting which has gone in a moment. The image looks back at us as a single event in the frame that has multiple origins and endpoints according to each experience, of the subject, the viewer, the photographer. The act of photography expands the moment whilst reminding us of its passing and it is this powerful connection to time, memory and the lived moment that makes it so adept at expressing the spaces between our lived realities and that as a photographic artist, I am tapping into every time I make my images.



Trapping the midnight- Bird to baby sun Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



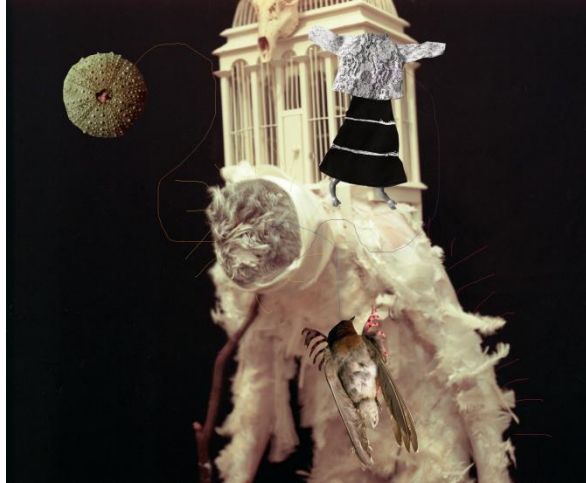
Trapping the midnight- pulsating light Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



Trapping the midnight- the oracle Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



Trapping the midnight- the visitations Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



Trapping the midnight- watching disorder Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



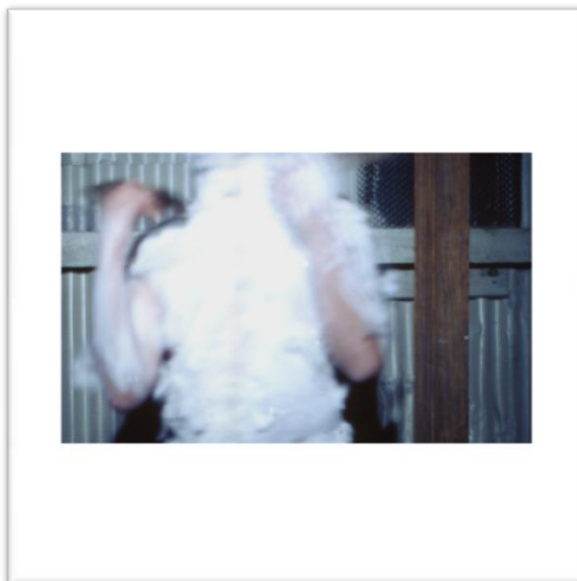
Trapping the midnight- confer with the falcon Emily Windon 2010 20x 20cm



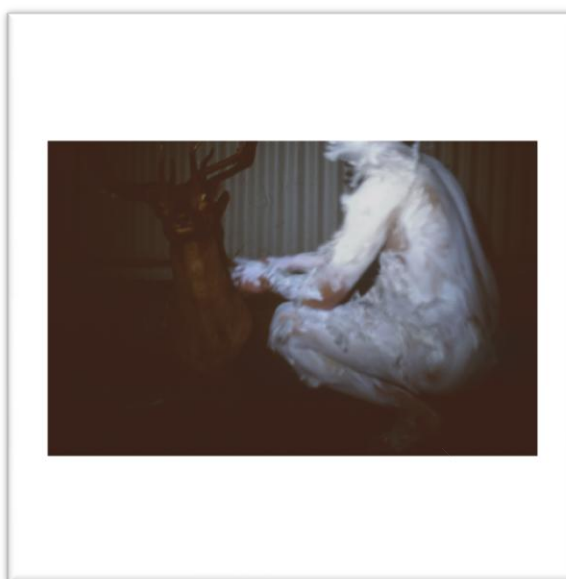
Metamorphoses Spectral no 1 Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



Metamorphoses Spectral no 2 Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



Metamorphoses Spectral no 3 Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



Metamorphoses Spectral no 4 Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



Metamorphoses Spectral no 6 Emily Windon 2010 digital projection

Chapter Three: *The Wonder of the World*

*"And thus the "pure perception", the sheer optical attentiveness of modernism increasingly had to exclude or submerge that which would obstruct its functioning: language, historical memory, and sexuality."*³³

Jonathan Crary, in his analysis of the changing nature of modern vision, argues that in the nineteenth century, optics moved from a geometric base to a physiological one. As society moved from a feudal system to one of commodity and exchange, visual representations, once "elite", became an exchangeable commodity, available to the masses. This democratization of imagery was accelerated by the processes of industrialization and the advent of the serial image, exemplified in the photograph. However the photograph was merely a symptom of the shift in visual systems and the quest to understand human optics. For Crary, vision became subjectified, moving from outside the body, to within it. This coincided with ideas of normality based on scientific epistemological thinking and vision was incorporated into this understanding.³⁴ It is a shift signaled by the passage from the geometrical optics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to physiological optics, which dominated both scientific and philosophical discussion of vision in the nineteenth century. Thus knowledge was accumulated about the constitutive role of the body in the apprehension of a visible world, and it rapidly became obvious that efficiency and rationalization in many areas of human activity depended on information about capacities of the human eye. When vision left its geometrical basis, it also moved from its connection to touch. No longer based on tactile relations to perspective space, vision is disembodied, unmediated.³⁵

Vision, and the truth of reality before the eyes, was not originated externally, independently of the body, but came from within the body. It was subjectified, originating from within the complexities of the human organism, and automated in the sense that it was a product of biological processes, a reflex reaction of events. Vision, democratized- belongs to all living

³³ Jonathan Crary. *Techniques of the Observer, on Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1991, 96

³⁴ *ibid* 12-16

³⁵ *ibid* 16-19

systems who share an equal hold on the reality they see and its visual representations.

However, it is important to remember that this was not a true democratization- post classical vision was incorporated into a scientific empiricism and its journey was along the path of the fractured, dissected body. The new order, as already discussed, was top down and the body on the dissecting table was the disaffected- the lower class, the female, those without claim to the authority that those of letter held.

This disordering, unfixing and relocating of visual reality necessitated a search for a new understanding and brought about technologies of vision that enabled this. Optical devices of the time were symptomatic of the anxiety of the modern subject, seeking to assimilate the upheavals of perception into the new empirical scientific order. Photographic technologies were a symptom of new configurations of perceptions of the body, in a world leaving behind the mysticism of the pre modern as it moved into the rationality of modernity. From this time lens based instruments become used more rapidly in the pursuit of knowledge.

The tensions in evolving methods of understanding were played out not only on the body of the disaffected but also within the institutions of knowledge archival- the museum. The museum of the enlightenment was a public space but was ultimately a reflection of a personal collection- the cabinet of curiosity. The cabinet of curiosities, in its placing together of many different items, collapsed original hierarchies and called for new meanings and attachments. It prompted the viewer to use the objects within as props in a performance that allowed new connections to be made and new understandings of the world and universe to be borne. This flattening of diverse objects from diverse locations, or original meanings, into one plane- that of the cabinet of curiosities, is also similar to the flattening that occurred with the use of an optical device. Just as the cabinet helped to illuminate for the viewer a new or better understanding of the world, optical devices trapped diverse images and redefined them within a compressed, sharper unit of vision.³⁶

The museum was an arena which occupied both a space of wonder and illusion and a place of rational thought and study. It was a space of contemplation, curiosity, movement, entertainment. It occupied a space likened to fantasy or mythology, one which was based upon the real world yet was concurrently magical, unreal, a place of wonder. It could be,

³⁶ Barbara Maria Stafford. Frances Terpak. *Devices of Wonder, from the World in a Box to Images on the Screen*, the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2001, 5-6

“conceptualized as a space outside space: a heavenly place off the grid of real-world maps, and hence outside the focus of social and political production.”³⁷ The museum offered to the public a microcosm of the world that transcended boundaries of time and geography, a magical Garden of Eden, what Dorinda Outram describes as a utopia. A, “space equally removed from conflict, whose visitors would not see reflected in front of them the fragmented world of actuality, but a seamless order of nature”.³⁸

The space of the museum was able to offer the public a particular image, rooted in both intellect and illusion. The naturalist within it, however, was less buffeted from the changing empirical systems in which they worked. The natural history scientist of the enlightenment reacted to what they saw in their collections and specimens from both a visual sense and a psychological one- the space of the natural history museum or laboratory was one in which the scientist interacted on a multilevel basis. Just as the architecture of the anatomy theatres incorporated ideals of power and hierarchy in their structure, natural history fieldwork- the gathering and observing of specimens in their original environment, can also be analyzed in terms of spatial construction.

The field naturalist, in gathering specimens for study and archiving, linked movement and observation with curiosity and allowed the intellect to become an active journeyer through time and space. He was seen as masculine, heroic, conqueror of the civilized over the primal. However, the outside space of the naturalist was becoming replaced by the sedentary scientist of modernity, working amongst the drawers of the museum collections. In 1807, Gorges Curvier wrote of the field naturalist as being deprived of having the vastness of collected knowledge in books and specimens before him- he may have courage and audacity but that was not enough in the pursuit of knowledge. On the other hand, “If the sedentary naturalist does not see nature in action, he can survey all her products spread before him. He can compare them with each other as often as is necessary to reach reliable conclusions. He chooses and defines his own problems; he can examine them at his leisure. He can bring

³⁷ Nicholas Jardine. James Secord. Emma Spary.(eds) *Cultures of Natural History*, Cambridge University Press, England, 1996, 256

³⁸ Ibid 258

together the relevant facts from anywhere he needs to.”³⁹ The scientist, in his study, was like the anatomist in the dissecting room. He was able to take apart the natural world piece by piece and reorder it into new, meaningful systems of knowledge. Curvier was speaking with a vision that was truly embodied- the order of the world had changed, space was perceived in the intellect first and assimilated into the natural order later.

Thus the naturalist, who worked from their collection, observing and gathering information from books and drawers inside a museological space, exemplifies the modern idea of the enclosed, individual person. This person imposed boundaries between themselves and other people, was separate and guarded their inner space from the emerging modern world of sensation. The natural historian who would traverse over wild terrain collecting and documenting specimens was replaced by the sedentary scientist, working from their desk, observing and researching their specimens in a closed and controlled environment. The original placement of things was no longer relevant as the intellect was able to traverse the spaces between seeing and knowing.

Foucault describes knowledge in the eighteenth century as being positivist, dispersed amongst linked institutions united by the need to expand understanding. To illustrate this, he maps the contrast between the treatment of lepers in the seventeenth century and the treatment of plague victims in the eighteenth. Lepers were driven from the city and forced to live on the outskirts. They were given a symbolic burial and treated as dead- their possessions were passed on. The lepers were extricated from society and its systems and became living non-entities.

In contrast, plague victims of the eighteenth century were quarantined in their home environment. They were accounted for and recorded daily, catalogued into the social system, present and known. Their treatment was based on a model of inclusion, observation and knowledge building; what Foucault describes as positive technologies of power. This was symptomatic of the time, the classical age of the eighteenth century, which sought to grow knowledge. Power was used to build knowledge by distributing it within institutions. By

³⁹ Nicholas Jardine. James Secord. Emma Spary. (eds) *Cultures of Natural History*, Cambridge University Press, England, 1996, 260

observing its quarantined subjects, a process Foucault terms, “an art of governing” was enacted.⁴⁰

This governing was specifically the organization and structuring of different groups and the aim of it was normalization. The ideology of the normal passed to the state for legitimization. In seeking to enact the normalization process, state power acted not as an excluding force but as an interventionist and corrective one. There is a clear distinction between power in the eighteenth century that was deductive, taking from people, befitting of the class based feudal society of the time, and that of post eighteenth century that was based upon the formation of knowledge, the linking of institutions and the possibilities of transformation.⁴¹ Certainly, we can see the evolution of the new form of institutional power and control when we progress through a history of modern medicine and empirical thought.

Interestingly, this transformation of power can be seen in a more recent form in another example of disease control, Tuberculosis sufferers of the twentieth century. In the 1930s to 1950s America, women were widely used in the public campaign to promote x ray chest screening to detect Tuberculosis. As a representative of the public patient, the figure of a woman symbolized a naïve carrier of the insidious disease of Tuberculosis. She was blind to the lethal position she held, carelessly infecting those who came across her. The campaign stressed the danger that only the state apparatus was able to uncover.⁴²

At the time of the campaigns, there were no drugs available to cure Tuberculosis. Instead, sufferers were removed from the community and placed into sanatoriums where they were monitored and controlled by the state. The home was the battleground of the war against the disease which was known to be transmitted through unclean and unventilated spaces and exacerbated by overcrowded conditions. The state and its institutional care was the place of internment for those who had failed in the war against TB and who ultimately made their private sphere public. The publically interned suffered the shame that Tuberculosis implied and were tarnished by the assumption that they lived in dirty, over-crowded conditions.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault. *Abnormal, Lectures at the College de France 1974- 1975*, Verso, London, 2003, 49

⁴¹ Ibid 50-52

⁴² Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 146

The Tuberculosis campaign included strong warnings not to rely on the traditional herbal remedies that were popular in many communities. This was a knowledge that was female based and verbally passed on, operating outside the state legitimization systems. Instead, there was social pressure to submit to the state managed system of community removal and control of Tuberculosis sufferers. The x ray, the most effective form of detection, became an agent of surveillance and control, legitimizing the removal of individuals to institutions.

Historically, the x ray was linked in the public mind to ideas of death or depravity-it represented the skeleton and the illicit looking of the voyeur. It unclothed the clothed. The public campaign for Tuberculosis screening needed to overcome these stigmas and make x rays a positive symbol of public health. To this end, the campaign in propaganda films equated the sick and infected with poor, black or Hispanic subjects and with white, sexualized women. These people were presented as unknowing agents of death through the symptomless transmission of Tuberculosis to healthy white men, in the case of the sexualized white women or the old and young, in the case of the working class black women.

The portrayal of the healthy women was left to the white, attractive but not grotesquely sexualized woman who submitted herself to the control of the technician and his x ray apparatus. She could then be pronounced healthy, inside and out. Untouched and cleansed through the operation of the medical, state, apparatus.

In the case of Tuberculosis, its treatment and public campaign, institutions are unified in the ways that Foucault described. The hospital system simply became an arm of an integrated and multi-functioning system of public (state) control.⁴³ What this example illustrates and Foucault's argument describes are conditions unique to the era broadly defined as modernism.

⁴³ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 146- 157

Chapter Four: *The World Through a Lens*

“Under the microscope, the body would become not merely fractured and disintegrated but dispersed and detached, macerated or crushed, and finally dissolved” ⁴⁴

Cultural historians, such as Geoffrey Batchen, Jonathan Crary and Roberta Mcgrath, have argued that photographic technology arose not so much as a linear procession of technological developments but as coming out of a new sensibility that we term modernism. The event of modernism was like a soup of ideas, a cultural milieu whose starting point was multiple and the inventors of modernist technologies numerous. Geoffrey Batchen, in his cultural history of photography’s origination, found that the concept of photography was described in 1790-1839 by over twenty different people in seven countries. ⁴⁵ Batchen likens the atmosphere of the 1800s that gave rise to photography as having a Foucauldian “positive unconsciousness” that allowed certain thoughts and discourses to be favored over others. It was from the thinking of the 1800s that there arose a desire, or need, to photograph. ⁴⁶

The ending of the eighteenth century also saw a transformation in how nature was viewed. Prior to the views of philosophers such as Darwin or Kant, nature was seen as ordered, a living example of the beauty and wonder of God, operating on the mathematical basis that Isaac Newton had described. The microscope and telescope simply confirmed this, showing how God’s order of nature could be found in both the micro and macro worlds. Any breaks from nature’s order were seen as wonders of God’s complexity, unable to be understood by the humble intellect of man. However, this view of nature, where it is created in the divine and single act of Godly creation, was altered in the new ways of thinking. Nature came to be seen as chaotic and disordered, a living, changing organism. Just as vision became embodied, changing the relationship of man to reality, the relationship of people to nature moved from one of passive observance to one where nature became part of human subjectivity and was intertwined with culture.

⁴⁴ Roberta Mc Grath. *Seeing Her Sex, Medical Archives and the Female Body*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2002, 151

⁴⁵ Geoffrey Batchen. *Burning with Desire the Conception of Photography*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1999, 180

⁴⁶ Ibid 56- 59

Nature, previously fixed in western thought, was suddenly unresolved, traversing the ground from unquestioned, inanimate existence to an animated ideology, aligned with culture. As photography emerged, nature, so closely intertwined with photography's conception, was a fluid and unresolved concept.⁴⁷ However it was photography that allowed a mingling of the unresolved concepts of nature, science and culture. Photography's early practices presented the photographic act as both an illusion and a representation. It was art and science, romance and realist and many of the early photographers easily slipped between the fields of art, literature and science. Photography was a drawing of nature, by nature, reproduced. Its conception inhabited both nature and culture and photography was able to move seamlessly in and out of the binaries imposed by western thought.

Photography occurred at a time when ways of seeing the world were changing. Ideas of nature, subjectivity, space and time were being re-defined and within this grey area of describing previously firm knowledge, photography arose. Batchen sees photography's conception as a palimpsest, inscribing itself in the space created by the collapse of the enlightenment world view and its natural philosophies.⁴⁸ In this time, humans become both knowing and known, an object of knowledge and a subject which knows. This way of being, its ambiguity and overlapping, echoes the writings of photography at its conception, where nature was both subject and object, self-knowing and known. Batchen describes this as a "new economy of power-knowledge-subject," and a "continually divided or doubled mode of being".⁴⁹

The camera obscura, in its ordering of nature, could not contain the human vision. Vision was shifting, a process in flux, no longer a simple, mechanical act. Space and time was understood in new ways. Photography, further, allowed past and present to be experienced in the same moment, as the photograph both fixed time(history) and brought it into the present (the viewing act).⁵⁰ Fixing past and present meant that what was unseen by the eye could be revealed through the freezing of time in the permanent specimen of the photograph.

⁴⁷ Ibid 56- 59

⁴⁸ Geoffrey Batchen. *Burning with Desire the Conception of Photography*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1999, 177-186

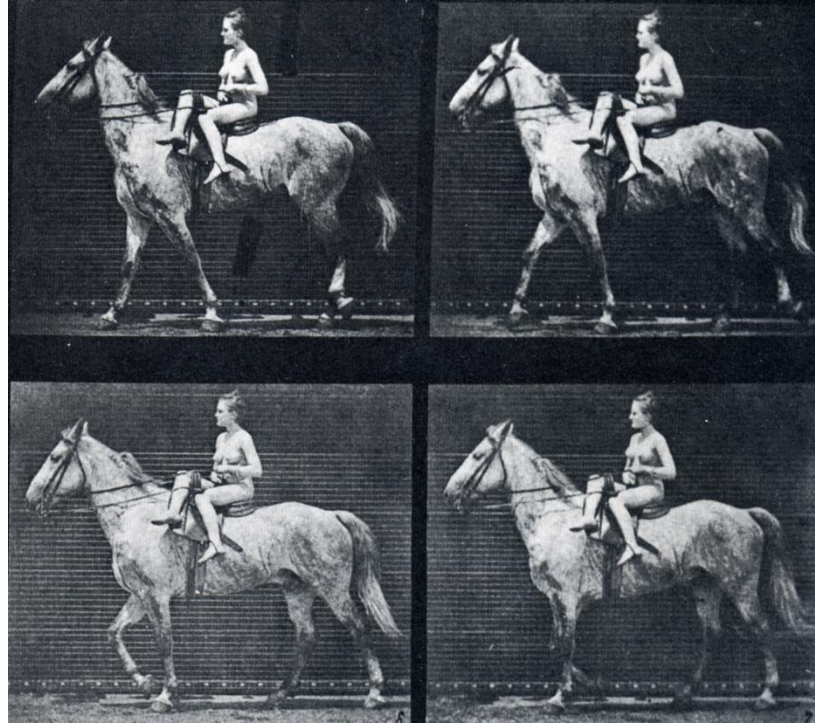
⁴⁹ Ibid 191

⁵⁰ Ibid 92

Eadward Muybridge famously presented a photographic breakdown of movement that illuminated what had only ever been surmised. In his preface to the original edition of his monumental works of animal motion, he describes the original impetus for his project, in the spring of 1872. In an effort to prove that the horse, when in speed, moved with all four feet off the ground, an ongoing controversy of the time which could not be proven using human vision alone, Muybridge photographed a series of horses in movement, with the idea of capturing the four feet off the ground.⁵¹ When he attempted to arrange the resulting photographs in a sequence that allowed the full stride process to be seen, he realized that due to the irregularity of the intervals between photographs, this would not be possible. Speaking in the third person, Muybridge describes his next step. "It then occurred to him that a series of photographic images made in rapid succession at properly regulated intervals of time, or of distance, would definitely set at rest the many existing theories and conflicting opinions upon animal movement in general" So began his project which would culminate in "Animal Locomotion", published in 1887, containing 781 plates, each plate consisting of between ten to forty eight separate, sequential pictures.⁵² Each image presented the subject against a neutral background which was often marked as a grid. Where the subject was human, they were often presented naked or partly naked. Images of female bodies running and jumping without clothes seem to us today titillating yet for Muybridge, they were part of a serious body of scientifically based work. It must be pointed out, however, that the subjects themselves operated within the cultural hierarchies of the photographer\subject and this informed not only the more general presentation of images but also, on a more particular level, who was depicted clothed and who was imaged naked.

⁵¹ Eadward Muybridge. (ed) *Animals in Motion*, Dover publications, New York 1957, 13

⁵² Ibid 9



*Detail of Tom with Rider, Eadward Muybridge 1879*⁵³

The results presented images previously invisible, casting into doubt the accuracy of the human eye. Here was a machine which could give images more truth than those the naked eye could perceive and in this sense, the camera was an early form of a cyber implant, our first robotic prosthetics where reality is mechanically reproduced. What we see in Muybridge's images is a flattened, two dimensional form of a reality which we do not question yet concurrently, we are unable to see ourselves. The only evidence on what is before us is the photographic copy of the movement frozen, yet originating in real time. Interestingly, Muybridge reanimated his photographs using the zoopraxiscope, thus the broken movement of the horse could be seen at speed, albeit much slower than the original gait.⁵⁴ This suggests a lingering unease of the veracity of the photograph as a true presentation of reality and a need to make it fit more closely the action of human vision.

Muybridge seemed to recognize the shifting boundaries between science, culture and entertainment that the photograph activated. In writing in 1898 of the zoopraxiscope's uses, he muses on its future if combined with another new device, the phonograph. "the combination of such an instrument with the phonograph has not, at the time of writing, been

⁵³ Eadward Muybridge. (ed) *Animals in Motion*, Dover publications, New York 1957, Plate 16

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 15

satisfactorily accomplished; there can, however, be but little doubt that in the- perhaps not far distant – future, instruments will be constructed that will not only reproduce visible actions simultaneously with audible words, but an entire opera, with the gestures, facial expressions, and songs of the performers, with all the accompanying music, will be recorded and reproduced by an apparatus, combining the principles of the zoopraxiscope and the phonograph, for the instruction or entertainment of an audience long after the original participants shall have passed away...”.⁵⁵ Muybridge is of course describing the cinema, realized not long after his words. Yet Muybridge still needs to augment the questionable reality of the photograph. He goes on to say, “and if the photographs should have been made stereoscopically, and projections from each series be independently and synchronously projected on a screen, a perfectly realistic imitation of the original performance will be seen, in the apparent “round”, by the use of properly constructed binocular glasses”.⁵⁶ The stereoscope filled the need to plump out the flattened image of the photograph and would allow, as its inventor, Oliver Holmes explained, “skins” of the world to be presented before the eye.⁵⁷ By the time the cinema took hold as an entertainment for the masses, in a form not dissimilar to Muybridge’s prediction, the stereograph was beginning to disappear into obsolescence, existing now only as a relic of an earlier time, whilst the cinema operates today only slightly changed from its original conception, although there has been a recent reemergence of interest in cinematic 3d.

Muybridge’s work remains as a poignant record of the way photography filled the collapsing world views of modernism that Batchen describes. He leaves for us numerous archives of human and animal movement, each captured as a fragment in time and rejoined as a whole in gridded format, echoing the later importance that the motive of the grid held for modernist art. Muybridge’s work now easily straddles both scientific and artistic grounds, his images are testament to the power of the camera to blur and focus the chaffing edges of the conflicting dialogues of art, nature and culture.

⁵⁵ Eadward Muybridge. (ed) *Animals in Motion*, Dover publications, New York, 1957, 16

⁵⁶ Ibid 16

⁵⁷ Anne Marsh. *The Darkroom Photography and the Theatre of Desire*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 2003, 64

Chapter Five: Wilderness, Nature and the Psyche

*“shhh, listen to the nature talk”*⁵⁸

It is pertinent at this juncture to discuss my own artistic responses to my investigations into the dialogue with nature and culture and the way that the camera can create a meeting point for these intersections. The way nature was viewed in the nineteenth century is significant for understanding the deep rifts happening in the world view that resulted in significant changes. These changes are still in place today and investigating them has been the thread leading me through my research. Nature, similarly, is a continually contested ground and holds strong cultural symbolism, still powerfully represented and mediated with and by the photographic lens.

Living in Tasmania, as I did for four recent years, it is hard not to be affected by the majesty of the natural environment. It is wild, imposing, a dense, fecund place. Viewing many scenes of the Tasmanian wilderness you are met with the notion of the sublime. The scene before you is alive with its own history, it collapses time and you are able to see a view that has seemingly altered little in centuries.

At the time of Tasmania's settlement by Europeans, there was occurring in the Western world a change in the way nature was appreciated. The idea of the picturesque had taken hold, where nature could be appreciated for its emotional effect upon the viewer. There was a growing trade in the tourisms of the picturesque and the traveler would be armed with mirrored devices that allowed the spectacle of nature to be miniaturized as it was reflected into the mirrored glass, or “Claude Mirror”.⁵⁹ The sublime, rising out of this new appreciation of nature, was the effect of a compelling terror that was felt when confronted with the full force of nature, the “physical incommensurability of the human being with Nature”.⁶⁰

Peter Timms, in his discussion of Tasmanian wilderness photography, argues that images of the Tasmanian wilderness represent an ideal that is wrapped in notions of both culture and

⁵⁸ Evander Windon, in conversation, 2008

⁵⁹ Andrew Maillet. *The Claude Glass use and Meaning of the Black Mirror in Western Art*, Zone books, New York, 2004, 143

⁶⁰ Fredrick Jameson. *Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Verso, New York, 1992, 34

nature.⁶¹ He argues that we have inherited a tradition from the European idea of the picturesque that we cannot escape and that we unconsciously approach landscape through this mediated, inherited vision. This allows us to compensate for the terror of the unknown - the wilderness, by placing our experience of it into a cultural framework. He goes on to argue that the very nature of Tasmania's wilderness makes it an exemplarily place for this experience of the wild. "It's not that Tasmania has more wilderness than other places (after all, the deserts, the oceans and the northern rainforests fit the usual definition just as well), but because it has the right kind of wilderness and the right kind of weather: the kind that links us to both the Classical arcadia of Claude and the restless rapture of the German Romantics; the kind that, with a little selectivity, may be loaded with portents of death and transfiguration".⁶²

When I stand in awe with my children looking at the marvel of the wilderness, with mist rising from the waterfall which is crashing over the rocks in the distance, I am touched by that sense of the sublime and emotions well up in me which cause a sense of reverence. It is quiet and I am standing still, riveted by the scene we have come upon. My son, sensing the importance of the moment, says quietly, "shh, listen to the nature talk". We have shared in a particular (cultural) moment, one which is able to be passed down from one generation to the next and which generates powerful emotions in us as we experience it. Nature becomes embodied, we become part of the landscape, touched by the sensation around us and we wait for nature to speak back to us.

Nature is experienced in this way. It is a multifaceted interaction which draws upon culture, history and physical sensation. As Timms argues, wilderness photographers, either knowingly or unconsciously, drew upon the conventions of pictorialism to choose and frame their images and when these images are viewed they are done so using the same tools. This allows them to be readily understood, in a similar way that that Claude glass of the eighteenth century mediated the grandeur of nature for the viewer.

Baudrillard argues that in our contemporary haste towards virtual worlds we are losing our connections to our own realities, a reality made of imperfections and difference. We are trying, through technology, to create a perfect, faultless world and in doing so, bring about

⁶¹ Peter Timms. 2003, "Love Death and wilderness Photography", *Art Monthly Australia*, December 2003 - February 2004, 166

⁶² Ibid 37

what he terms, “the murder of the real”.⁶³ To guard against this loss, we must embrace the imperfect in life. In this sense, the wild, disordered chaos of the wilderness becomes a way of retaining the real, of reconnecting to the imperfections of life. The landscape holds a cache of cultural memory, acting as a mnemonic device alerting us to its significance and transformative capabilities. We want to find in the natural landscape an awakening of the inner self and we approach our experience of it wearing this backpack of need. When we enter the landscape, however, can we see through the frameworks that we so readily depend upon to mediate our experience of nature with?

Barbara Stafford asserts that in the eighteenth century there arose a preoccupation with visualizing the invisible, which brought about a corporatization of the soul and the visualizing of the inner self.⁶⁴ This bringing to life of the interior and the unseen can be seen in the advent of spiritual photography, where the soul is pictured traversing the corporal boundaries, interacting with visible life unbeknown to those present. The camera is able to uncloak the veil of invisibility, just as the photographic image is able to capture in the landscape the embodiment of nature, the phenomenology of the mists rising from the waterfall, of the stream winding through the mountain paths. The camera bought its veracity to the image and allowed nature to participate in its actualization at a time that the concept of nature itself was changing.⁶⁵ Stafford sees nature as moving at this time from something understood on a theological level to an understanding of nature as matter in and of itself. Further, with the advent of microscopes and telescopes, nature was fragmented and made immediate.⁶⁶ As nature shifted from a holistic, divinely created entity to a fragmented collection of matter, there was borne a burning desire to see nature, to document and codify it. The doctrine of science was enlisted to bring a particular vision of observation to nature, which, along with the travels of the eighteenth century explorers, brought the natural world back into tangibility and made its immenseness graspable. Science allowed the rift in the ways of viewing the natural world to be healed. It brought about a rediscovery of nature, one that could bring awe and wonder whilst simultaneously being entered into the classificatory systems, collecting the fragments of the natural world into a new, manmade order. Nature

⁶³ Jean Baudrillard. *The Vital Illusion*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2000, 74

⁶⁴ Barbara Stafford. "Brilliant Ideas" to "Fitful Thoughts": Conjecturing the Unseen in Late Eighteenth- Century Art, 1985, sourced from data base- <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1482267>, 24\05\10

⁶⁵ Geoffry Batchen. *Burning with Desire, the Conception of Photography*, MIT Press, USA, 1999, 62- 69

⁶⁶ Barbara Stafford. *Voyage into Substance, Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760- 1840*, MIT Press, USA, 1984, 292, 430

was thus understood through the technology of the scientist, it was measured and contained, fragmented and codified, assimilated into a new order. In addition, as Jonathon Crary makes clear, this vision was an embodied one, it was objective, yet originating from within and nature was indelibly pinned to the intellect, the psyche of man.⁶⁷

Linda Nochlin describes nature as a constructed space that meets a human need for a place disconnected from social vexations, a place that is permanent and untouched by lifetime tragedies⁶⁸. Nature is dependent upon culture for its meaning and culture can similarly be mapped by observing how nature is approached and dealt with.

Nature reaches across temporal and physical boundaries, it connects humans with the past and alerts both the inner and outer self. It is visually present without technology and offers a vision of an arcadia supposedly untouched by time. Nature is a utopia of a world that goes on in eternity, abundant, fertile, self supporting. It is eternity in the marked time of the present and amongst its ancient history are the threads of the mystic world of the unknowable.

⁶⁷ Jonathan Crary. *Techniques of the Observer, on Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1991 .this is argued by Crary in this text and is discussed in the chapter, "the Wonder of the World", of this exegesis.

⁶⁸ *Mary Frank Encounters*, Neuberger Museum of Art, New York, September 17 2000- January 7, 2001, 12



The mystic landscape-2, Tasmania, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection

The Mystic Landscape

It is with these ideas in mind that I approached my own photographic investigations of nature. I felt that I needed firstly to somehow rupture the gaze that we so easily harness when we are in nature, to strip it away somehow so a photographic image of the natural world can be seen in its raw state. I decided to place my images in a forest and used the ordered forest of a wood plantation. By approaching nature in this way I intended to highlight its artificiality and its consumer-ability, as both actual product, in the form of cut wood, and as a product to create a feeling in the inhabitant of natural space. Into my images I placed a mirrored ball and two stuffed kookaburras. Kookaburras are the ultimate Australian icon. They are used to promote the image of Australia as an idyllic wonderland, where the happy kookaburra laughs amongst the gum trees. Additionally, the Kookaburra, unlike other birdlife, has not been domesticated and still holds a balance with the untouched wilderness and the modern world. Alongside this menagerie, a mirrored ball swings, out of place and rupturing the normalcy of the image.

By shifting the normalcy of the image, it is stripped of its patina and its artificiality is focused. This idyllic scene of the Australian bush is simply a plantation, waiting to be harvested, with two stuffed birds placed precariously on the branches of the gum tree. It points to the constructed quality of our relationship to nature, we want images of nature to reinforce the concepts of goodness, calm, thriving healthy life, whilst the reality is an often far from this ideal. In Tasmania, where these images were taken, much of the bush is contested and fought over between conservationists wanting to preserve it as a natural wilderness and

those seeking to use its natural resources for commercial gain. Alongside this contemporary dialogue is the historical one of the often brutal post settlement conflict between the first, Aboriginal, inhabitants of Tasmania and the English convicts who were later sent there. This is a place torn between differing agendas and interpretations of history.

Alongside this space of plantation orderliness, I wanted to create images with a sense of foreboding- romantic woods where one may be lost in the wild, searching for a way out of the beauty and a place so timeless that the dead could still inhabit its dark recesses. The wooded wilderness is like this- in it you feel a certain dread, an urge to leave, a sense of the sinister. It allows the mind to seep past its boundaries, acting as a mirroring of the psyche, the untraveled regions where deep, subterranean memories lurk. The wood is where light struggles to reach; it sits contained by the canopy of branches and leaves and travels alongside shadows and chilled air. The fear of the wood is the fear of ourselves, of what we do not know or wish to find out, of memories receded and pushed away. The wood for me is a powerful motive, one which I return to, just as I return to the motive of the feathered figure, which also moves about the shadowed lands of the forest, tracing connections between consciousness and the psyche, the symbolic and the real.

The mystic forest series was preceded by an earlier one where I took photographs on my own property, using a bird of prey that had been hit and killed by a car. I felt using the bird would bring a sense of mysticism to the images and capture the sense of unseen energies that this bush held. The road to the small town of Nicholls Rivulet, where my property was, winds through a mountainous region with areas of deep wilderness, where just the periphery alone, which sits against the road's edge, offers a density of foliage that deters any exploration. The Tasmania landscape is like this- the dense wilderness is punctuated by areas of control and orderliness, small towns appear out of nowhere and then disappear again into the landscape, plantations rest against bush, wild rivers fall into catchments for electricity generation. There is a constant struggle of wilderness and containment, abandonment and restraint. Even on my own property of a few acres, when I walked through the bush I always felt engulfed, like I was walking through an invisible curtain of density that seemed to brush against me, pulling me deeper into its shadowy growth.

As I was experimenting with the mystic landscape of the forest I also made a number of visits to the coast. The Tasmanian coast, like the bush, is inimitable in its sense of isolation. It has a

rugged beauty, the sea whips against rock and sand and often the only visible sign of life is a solitary bird arcing through the sky. Once again, I have not found a similar sense of engulfing surrender to nature on the coastal beaches that I always felt in Tasmania. It has a blend of wind, salt, coldness and loneliness that unique and unforgettable.

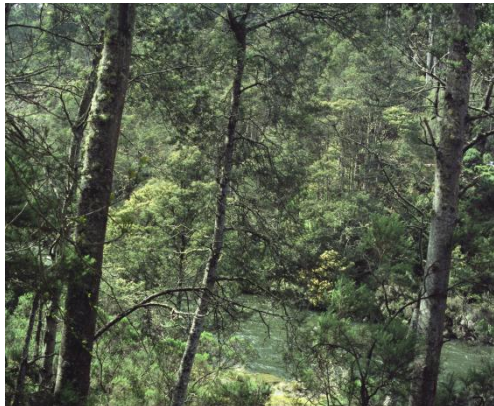
When I left Tasmania and moved to Queensland I returned once more to the idea of a mystical landscape. The Queensland landscape is vastly dissimilar to the Tasmanian bush. It lacks the sense of entrapment that the Tasmanian wilderness has. I have not felt the chill of isolation in the same way as I did when walking through some parts of the Tasmanian wilderness. There is a lightness in the Queensland bush that is lacking in the places I visited in Tasmania- there you feel as though a vast void lurks beyond the line of trees, you need to resist the urge to run and to hold back the panic that always seems to rise. This change is reflected in my images, the mystical landscape in Queensland is sweetly dreamy, imbued with a sense of idyllic tranquility. The rupture of the image is its own romantic excess, alerting the viewer to its overindulgence of dreamy niceness. This is a place to imagine hope and promise, and both the images from Tasmania and those from Queensland offer us an example of the patina of desires and fears that are washed over the landscape that waits beyond our doors and rests within our dreams.



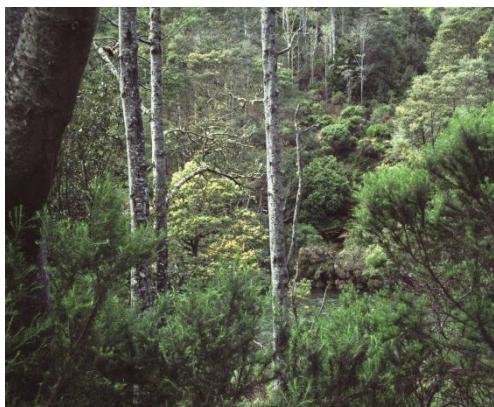
The mystic landscape Tasmania-1, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection



The mystic landscape-3, Tasmania, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection



The mystic landscape-4, Tasmania, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection



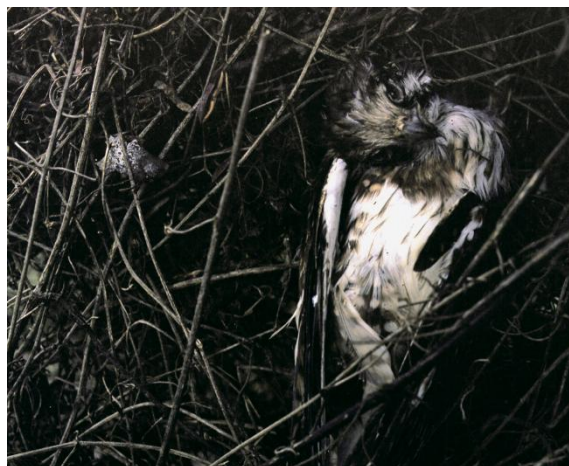
The mystic landscape-5, Tasmania, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection



The mystic landscape-6, Tasmania, Emily Windon 2006 digital projection



Sage of the woods, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Sage of the wood- solitude, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Sage of the woods- unity, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Sage of the woods- fallen, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



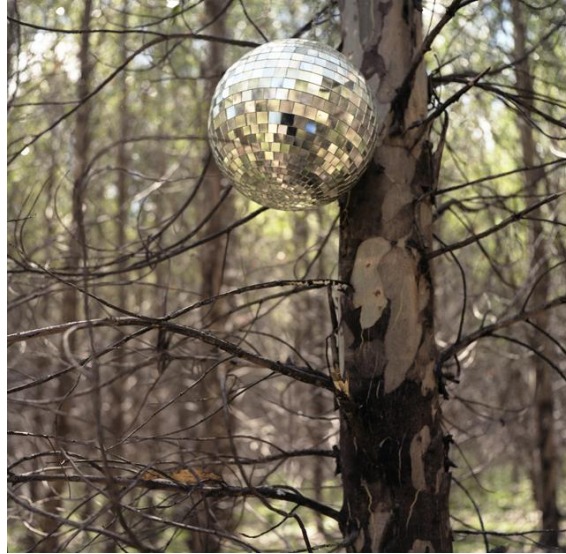
Sage of the woods- gathering, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Sage of the woods- longing, Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



The mystic landscape (south) - forest vista Emily Windon 2009



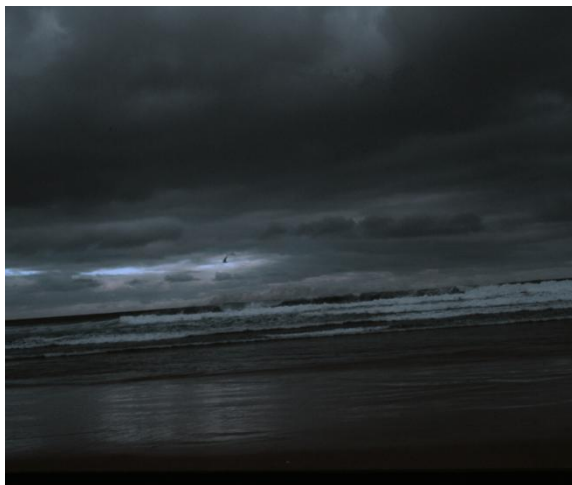
The mystic landscape (south) - mirror ball dream Emily Windon 2009 digital projection



The mystic landscape (south) - two visitors Emily Windon 2009 digital projection



The mystic landscape (south) - forest floor Emily Windon 2009 digital projection



Marion Bay beach with solitary bird Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Marion Bay beach with distant hills Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Marion Bay beach, rising wave Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



Marion Bay beach, sea spray Emily Windon 2008 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection



The mystic landscape (north) - Emily Windon 2010 digital projection

Joyce Hinterding\ David Haines- Levitation grounds

Two contemporary Australian artists whose work delves into concepts of the landscape and the sublime are Joyce Hinterding\ David Haines who work independently and as collaborators. When they collaborate, they bring to their joint art work a shared fascination with science and how it affects the ways we interpret the world. In particular, they are interested in making visible natural phenomena that is not usually seen by the naked eye. They are also intent on bringing elements of the uncanny to gently subvert nature, rupturing the visual patterns that are habitually relied upon to interpret a natural scene. By illuminating the unseen and presenting an uncanny natural world, their work is seen as almost occultist, a ghostly presentation of another dimension. They present a world we do not understand, where traces of a powerful force prick our skin. This is a world where science is invisible- occult phenomena and science simply do not converge, yet scientific knowledge, such as physics, underpins their work and research.

“Our work does not consciously attempt to make a bridge between Art and Science nor create a hybrid of disciplines, but one thing we might be able to do is bring back some of the complications that were once common in the past and now lay firmly out on the fringes.”⁶⁹

In many ways Hinterding and Haines work in the chiasm that began with the arrival of modernism and the new ways of looking at and understanding the world. When vision was rooted within the body and no longer objectified, there was a burgeoning interest in discovering the world in its finitude, its microcosms and invisible elements that could only be made visible with the use of instrumentation, such as the microscope. As Hinterding and Haines find ways to bring into being phenomena such as the movement of solar winds and the smell of ozone molecules they are journeying on the same path of the early scientists, trying to come to terms with the power of the natural world by harnessing it and controlling it.⁷⁰ Haines and Hinterding speak of trying to subvert the falling into dialects of the sublime when faced with a scene of natural beauty such as a stand of trees in a forest, or waves crashing onto rocks at the base of a cliff. They are trying to retain control of their emotions in

⁶⁹ <http://www.sunvalleyresearch.net/?p=270>, discussion of “*Hollow earth Theory (Revived): Field studies 1&2*”

⁷⁰ Earth Star exhibited at The Gallery of Modern Art – Queensland Art Gallery & Ok Centrum Contemporary Art Australia, 2009. David Haines and Joyce Hinterding.

order to reach an understanding of the enormity of the natural world, just as the early scientists placed a lens over live specimens in order to make visible the blood coursing through their veins.

In 1999 Haines and Hinterding undertook a residency at Bruny lighthouse in southern Tasmania. Bruny lighthouse is situated on Bruny island which is an inhabited but remote island reached by a 30 minute ferry ride. It is a small island that harbors jagged cliffs falling into wild and roaring seas alongside forests of native trees that stand ominously amongst cold and misty surroundings. It is, like much of Tasmania's wilderness, eerie and disquieting. Into this environment Haines and Hinterding immersed themselves and very quickly their intended work involving the mapping of the daily shifting of nature transpired into something else. The final work, "levitation grounds", is an eerie combination of nature both mapped and portrayed in ghostly, uncanny terms.⁷¹ I clearly remember visiting their Artspace exhibition and standing in front of Hinterding and Haines's images of trees levitating, being completely transfixed by the utter beauty of the image. Amongst a dark forest three horizontal trees levitate, stripped of their foliage and moving up and down ever slightly. The whole image is an immersion of ethereal tendrils that seemed to pull me, the viewer, into its reaches. Along with these ghostly trees were transcripts of satellites that passed with regularity over their island residence. The satellites transmitted signals that most of us are unaware of and Haines and Hinterding capture these, presenting them in an accessible and navigatable way. Finally, they presented an image of a cave with water crashing into it. The cave is the epitome of the sublime yet as you stand before it, you sense that something is not quite right in the image. The image is actually displaced ever slightly as the water crashing in and out of its reaches does so on a loop, continuously repeating its own artificiality, showing us the veil that we seem to need to wear in order to face nature at its full, unequivocal force. Haines and Hinterding are aware of the rawness of nature and the strategies that we use to understand it, to contain its force so that we can look outside each day without collapsing. They mirror back to us our tactics- the tropes of the sublime, the technological instrumentation, the making visible the unknowable, oppressive and compelling forces of the natural world. They are a contemporary approach to a timeless issue- that of nature and where humanity can be placed within it. Levitation grounds shows us both the beauty of nature and our futility in the ways we seek to control it and Haines and

⁷¹ *Levitation grounds*, David Haines and Joyce Hinterding, Artspace Sydney, 23 March-15 April, 2000

Hinterding's work shares the same drive that the early photographers of modernism had- an urgent need to break down the aura of nature into graspable segments, to hold it close without damaging its beauty irreparably. The use of the frame was vital in this search for the early photographers, as was the harnessing of time in the visual moment. These two elements allowed the rush of the world to be halted and, once stilled, endlessly studied.

The Levitation grounds, digital video still, David Haines and Joyce Hinterding, 2000 ⁷²

Image of *The Levitation grounds*, digital video still can be found at <http://www.sunvalleyresearch.net/category/haines-hinterding>

⁷² *Art in Australia*, Vol.44 no.1, spring, 116

Chapter Six: Time- Fractured and Spliced

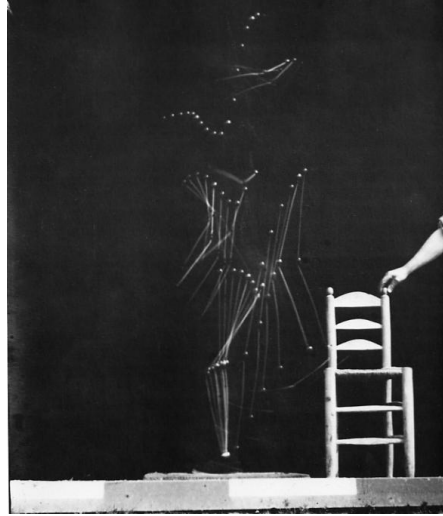
*"It is often said that painters invented Photography (by passing on the notion of the frame, Alberti's perspective and the optics of the camera obscura). But I say, no, it was the chemists. For the noeme 'That really existed' only became possible the day a scientific discovery- that of the photosensitivity of silver haloids- made it feasible to capture and print directly the light rays emitted by an object possessing areas of light and shade"*⁷³

The advent of cinema was seen as problematic to the representation of time and Etienne-Jules Marey, a contemporary of Muybridge, was also mapping the movement of the body in space in ways that reflected this disquiet with the representation of movement and time. However Marey differentiated his work from Muybridge by actively integrating time into his methodology in an attempt to deal with the questions it posed. Marey was concerned with time and how it could be used to measure physiology. He saw time as a continuum; it moves and the body can be mapped within its movement. While Muybridge was mapping the bodies' movement on a visual basis, Marey mapped the body in interaction with time and space.

Marey altered Muybridge's methods of recording movement by using a single photographic plate, allowing multiple images to be recorded on the one frame. This act moved away from the traditional notion of the frame and sequential representation that had been inherited from the renaissance. The frame gave a message of a single event occurring within a set time and space, while Marey needed to represent multiple times within the one frame. As a result of the body's multiple appearances and subsequent crowding within the frame, Marey began to doubt the potential of the photographic process.⁷⁴ He responded to these limitations by paring down the subject to its points of reference- bones and pivot points which most accurately represented the actions of movement- a technique he termed geometric photography, resulting in images he named chronophotographs.

⁷³ Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography*, Vintage, UK, 2000, 80

⁷⁴ Mary Ann Doane. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time, Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, USA, London, 2002 , 54



*Chronophotograph of a jump from a chair, 1884*⁷⁵

The body's movement, as recorded by such early practitioners as Muybridge and Marey distinctly sought to remove all cultural signifiers so that the movement of the body alone was being recorded. In Marey's geometric photographs, the subjects were dressed in black with their skeletal framework highlighted in white. They were set against a black concave backdrop which caused a complete tonal dropout, so that only the highlighted framework was visible. In this way, the bodies' gait was recorded as a series of white vertical dashes. However, as Lisa Cartwright points out in her discussion of his work, Marey worked within his cultural constraints and such a process rendered the body itself observed and regulated according to correct and incorrect physical properties. Cartwright describes this as a transition from an analogue observation such as Muybridge's to a digital observation where all extraneous details are erased. The body as a racial and gendered type, where undesirable and desirable characteristics can be observed via the body's surface, is replaced by a body that is made desirable or not via its own internal functioning.⁷⁶ Marey's work can be seen as a precursor to today's medical imaging technologies, which categorizes and regulates the body's internal functions through institutional apparatuses, thus escaping the claims of racial and sexual stereotyping by removing signifiers, yet still stereotyping and controlling the body.

⁷⁵ François Dagognet. *Etienne-Jules Marey, A Passion for the Trace*, Urzone, New York, 1992, 130

⁷⁶ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 67

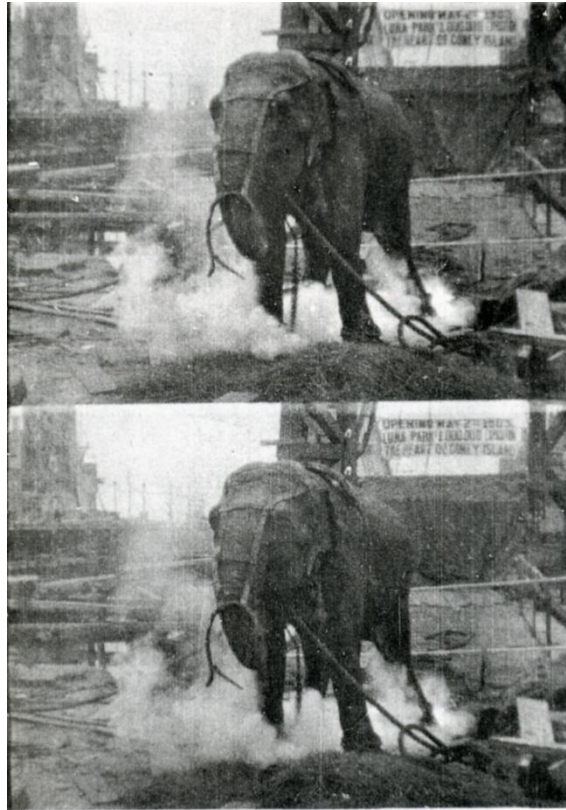
Marey was working in a new climate that viewed the body as a machine whose functions can be separated, broken down and tweaked to facilitate a better functioning body as a whole, specifically designed to suit its specialty, be it sport, military, laborer, academic and so on.

Marey was searching for a way to accurately map and record the body's movement in space in a way that could also be read. This caused him to go from graphic instruments, to photographic and then to alter the subject in the photograph so that it would allow its movement to be read as a graph. Marey's development of mapping the body can be seen as symptomatic of the need to redefine the collapsing boundaries of modernism and the consequential distrust of the body's abilities that new technologies brought about.

Science allowed a certain power over life and death. Through scientific technologies, the body could be opened and observed beneath the skin; it could be measured and mapped. Even the process of new life could be halted -an unborn fetus could be removed from its womb and frozen in time for eternal observation. With the breaking of the skin's surface a symbolic crossing of boundaries occurred. Ethical barriers became porous in the search for scientific understanding.

Lisa Cartwright draws on the example of the sad story of Topsy the elephant to illustrate the power that science held over life and death. Topsy was an elephant captured in Africa in 1875 and taken to America where she became a popular attraction at Coney Island. After killing three men in 1903 it was decided that she be put to death. However, the manner of her passing was an exercise in public spectacle where the power of human technology could be viewed. Topsy was fitted with large wooden sandals which sent a terminal electrical current through her body, her death fall watched by 1500 people. The man killing beast, taken from the wilds of Africa and unsuccessfully tamed, was struck down by the relatively new invention of electricity in the space of a few seconds. Crashing to the ground, her lifeless body and burning flesh were tangible reminders of the possibilities of science to circumnavigate nature's rhythm of life and death. Topsy's death, however, was not just witnessed by those physically present. A camera was set up to record a motion picture of her final and tragic moments so that the image of her body shuddering with the volts of electricity travelling through her could be witnessed by a mass audience. What lasted a second or so became timeless, a lasting and permanent reminder of

scientific ultimatum over life. Topsy was the exotic captured creature that could not be tamed in life yet through technology, she suffered the final form of control in her death.⁷⁷



Electrocuting an elephant, Edison Manufacturing Company, 1903⁷⁸

Modernism bought about a segmentation of time and an objectification of experience, akin to needing the world around us to perform in order to offer a deeper understanding of reality. This attitude bought about such things as the world expositions where samples of the world were gathered in one place. A person in Paris could experience the tribes of Africa in the form of an African family in their own 'authentic' enclosure. Topsy, similarly, represented the power of (colonial) man over nature. Viewing such exhibitions was possible if the world could be parceled into grabs of meaning, each show or segment allowing a new understanding of what was beyond everyday experience.

⁷⁷ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 17-20

⁷⁸ *ibid* 19

As Jonathon Crary argues, in the C19th, the way vision was understood shifted from the classical, perspectival based understanding to a new understanding grounded in the body and subjected to new physiological constraints.

As the idea of perception changed, ways of looking at the working of the mind changed also. Issues of information processing came to be seen as potentially pathological when information was not processed accurately. If vision is of something fixed and objective, then what is seen is also stable, simply stamping itself upon the mind. However, when vision becomes subjective, it is activated. The mind is not an innocent bystander in information processing.

Max Nordau, a clinician writing on the issue of mental degeneration in 1892 and quoted by Crary, writes, in part, that, “untended and unrestrained by attention, the brain activity of the degenerate and hysterical is capricious and without aim or purpose. Through the unrestricted play of association representations are called into consciousness and are free to run riot there. They are aroused and extinguished automatically; and the will does not interfere to strengthen or suppress them.” ⁷⁹

Here, sensory perception is powerful and potentially damaging. A lack of control of sensory information results in pathology; subjective vision loses the innocence that classical vision had.

This is a world that we can relate to, where sensory perception is seen to be bombarded with visual information that the mind is constantly sorting through. The idea of attention meant that the world was a place that existed in interaction with the subject; vision was not just a window upon an unchanging reality but a mechanism of sorting, analyzing and excluding reality.

Modernism saw an emergence of new pathologies of perception and cognition, connected to the changed understanding of vision, which resulted in “powerful, normative models of

⁷⁹ Jonathan Crary. *Suspensions of Perception, Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 2000, 16

subjectivity".⁸⁰ It is not surprising then, that ways of looking at the workings of the body moved away from relying upon vision and optics as the primary tools in information analysis. The anatomical autopsy needed vision to render an understanding of the cadaver flesh. Other senses may come into play in the autopsy session, yet without sight, an autopsy was pointless. Marey, however, recognized the potential failures of relying upon sight to gather dependable information. Looking for ways to augment the possibility of human error, Marey saw the potential of technology and machines in medical diagnostics. He began to work with living flesh and recording devices to map the workings of the living body.

One of Marey's early experiments involved inserting small air filled ampoules into a living horse heart. These in turn mapped the heartbeats on a kymograph, a machine that traced a graphic line as a representation of the heart's pulse.⁸¹ The elements of this early experiment were repeated in many later experiments, illustrating what would become for Marey the essential components in his research. Marey's deep distrust of the human senses in gathering reliable information led him to invent many machines for recording movement and once he had embarked upon this form of research, for him the possibilities were boundless. He had complete faith in the ability of his machines and their superiority over human senses. "Not only are these instruments sometimes destined to re-place the observer, and in such circumstances to carry out their role with an incontestable superiority, but they also have their own domain where nothing can replace them. When the eye ceases to see, the ear to hear, touch to feel, or indeed when our senses give deceptive appearances, these instruments are like new senses of astonishing precision."⁸² Just as the photograph affected an interpretation of the natural world that was truer than the eye, the mechanical reading devices both augmented and asserted their austerity over the unreliability of human senses.

The human, in interpreting the bodies' actions, needed to avoid contact with the body and allow physiological process to be inscribed directly onto a machine, without intervention. In this sense, the idea of recording the body was the same as photography, where nature was

⁸⁰ *ibid* 97

⁸¹ Lisa Cartwright. *Screening the Body, Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 24

⁸² Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992,40

recorded directly into a mechanical apparatus, surpassing the need for a human intermediary to interpret it.⁸³ Marey was to eventually take up the camera in his pursuit of mapping movement, recognizing the camera's ability to freeze movement that the eye could not see. Marey had earlier tried to record the movement of birds in flight yet had been hampered by the need to fit birds with a large and cumbersome harness which could be used in only limited situations. He saw the potential of the camera to record the intricacies of flight with ease and after seeing the work of Muybridge, Marey wrote with excitement about photography's potential in his own work. "For instance, on the question of the flight of birds, I was dreaming of a kind of photographic gun, to seize the bird in a pose or, even better, in a series of poses marking the successive phases of the movement of wings."⁸⁴ Marey successfully developed a photographic gun in 1882, modifying available technology. It was his first use of photography used as a recording device and had all the elements of his earlier devices. "It consisted of an interceptor to capture the movement, a transmitter to relay it, and an inscripator to make it at once visible and permanent."⁸⁵ By the time the information was available for analysis, the data was fixed and immutable, and life was frozen in its movement without degeneration.

⁸³ Margrit Shildrick. *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries, Feminism and (Bio) Ethics*, Routledge, London, 1997, 43

⁸⁴ Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 47

⁸⁵ *ibid* 61



*Firing Position with the photographic gun Etienne- Jules Marey 1894*⁸⁶

Photography climaxed the earlier graph based recording devices by allowing the mapping of movement in stasis with as little intervention as possible. Whereas the earlier experiments involved the cutting into of the body in order to insert recording instruments, photography recorded with accuracy the external movement of the body. The photographic gun, however, held a major concern for Marey in its disjointing of time. Where the graph based devices recorded continuous movement through a line traced onto paper, the photographs resulting from the gun showed movement broken by the action of the shutter. Marey needed a way to represent movement photographically in the same way as the graph. This concern would ultimately lead to Marey's development of the chronograph, where the living person becomes a photographic subject recorded as a graph.

Marey 's photographic work altered Muybridge's methods of recording movement by using a single photographic plate, which allowed multiple images to be recorded on the one frame. This act moved away from the traditional notion of the frame and sequential representation that had been inherited from the renaissance. The frame implied a single event occurring

⁸⁶ François Dagognet. *Etienne-Jules Marey. A Passion for the Trace*, Urzone, New York, 1992 , 92

within a set time and space however, for Marey the representation of time as continuous was paramount. Marey needed to represent multiple movements within the one single frame, allowing a reading of time within the one frame, or space. He viewed the process of the body's trace on record as automatic- the body begins the process of recording and determines, through this movement, what is recorded. Photography was able to record visible movement the instant it happened and with the development of the chronograph, was able to make movement in time visible and suspended.⁸⁷ By not allowing human intervention in the recording process, Marey, the scientist, became the analyzer of the information that nature, the recorder, inscribed.

The visual legacy of Marey influenced many artists of the time, most notably those in the Futurist movement. Like Marey, the futurists were concerned with movement in time, although the futurists' interest in movement was related to extreme force and propulsion which the machines of modernism allowed. Marey recognized the potential of his images to aid artists; however he had in mind academic artists seeking to reproduce human form in realistic detail. Many artists felt that the camera and art were antithetical to each other- the camera could corrupt the artistic truth and vision.⁸⁸

The work of artists such as Théodore Géricault was seen to be anatomically incorrect yet it was able to express movement in ways that a photographic representation could not. While reality for Marey was something tangible that could be pinned down and made visible through instrumentation, artists were seen as being able to present a reality based on intuition. Thus Géricault's much admired image of horses galloping, "the Epsom Derby" was understood as anatomically impossible yet this did not detract from the admiration of Gericault's mastery to depict movement and emotion.

⁸⁷ Mary Ann. Doane. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press Cambridge, USA, London, 2002, 48

⁸⁸ Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 272



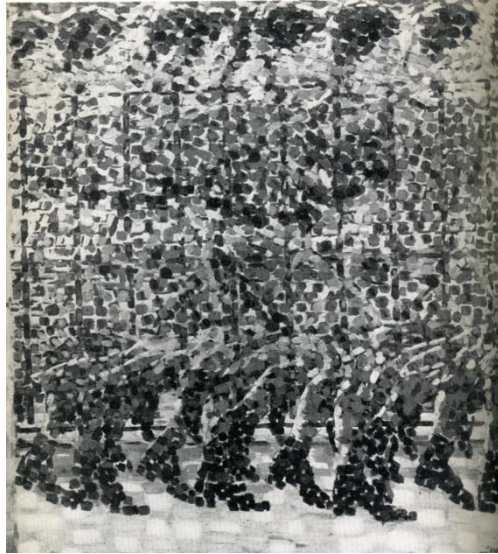
The Epsom Derby, Théodore Géricault 1821.⁸⁹

Petran Kockelkoren argues in his text, *Technology: Art, the fairground and Theatre* that artists play a pivotal role in helping new technologies assimilate into culture.⁹⁰ Taking the example of the train, he points out that in its early days there were a number of insurance claims based on train sickness that had symptoms ranging from simple watery eyes to brain damage, a condition termed delirium futurism. Artists such as those in the futurist group took these technologies- in this instance movement and speed, and made them palatable. Even though the futurists presented the movement of modernism in a way that was unpleasant, generally contentious and often deliberately antagonizing, they none the less helped the audience and wider culture come to terms with the inherent panic of modernism. Kockelkoren describes this process as technoësis, where technology, images and meaning converge and evolve.⁹¹

⁸⁹ François Dagognet. *Etienne-Jules Marey, A Passion for the Trace*, Urzone, New York, 1992, 144

⁹⁰ Petran Kockelkoren, *Technology: Art, Fairground and Theatre*, Nai Publishers, Rotterdam, 2003, 35

⁹¹ *ibid* 14-31



Girl Running on a Balcony, Giacomo Balla 1921 ⁹²

Modernism created an affect of fragmentation that Marey was able to illustrate so aptly. The body in his photographs lives as a modernist- existing in time fragmented, yet still a whole individual. Marey offered a visualization of time fragmented and the body's movement through that uniquely modern space. It was this fragmentation of time that many theorists saw as conversely being analogous to healthy existence. Using the ideas of Freud, writers such as Walter Benjamin, writing in the 1930's, saw the sped up time of modernism as a factor in the deadening of the human senses. In order to cope with the constant bombardment of sensations, the mind became anesthetized, just as Freud discovered the anesthetization, or forgetting, of soldiers' minds and memories in order to cope with the extreme trauma of war. ⁹³ Interestingly, the chief form of remedy for the nervous shock associated with modernism was opiates- opium, cocaine and their derivatives, and one of the main groups of users were children. Parents would drug their children as a form of chemical control while they went to work in the factories, ironically partaking in the very economy of modernism to which their lives were subjugated. By the 1860's, hypodermic syringes were

⁹² Jane Rye. *Futurism*, Studio Vista, UK, 1972, 66

⁹³ Susan Buck- Mors. 1992 "Aesthetics and Anesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered", Downloaded www.jstor.org, June, 2009, 18

available to allow subcutaneous injections of narcotic substances and unregulated cocaine was widely available for use amongst the poor and later the upper classes.⁹⁴

Karl Marx saw the artifacts of modernism- the consumer driven, factory made product, as creating another form of opiate- that of the phantasmagoria, where the senses are nullified by the mass of parceled goods which show no relation to their production, they simply are. For Walter Benjamin, the flaneur was the ultimate modernist, turning reality into a large phantasmagoric experience. The flaneur slows time, existing in the arcades devoted to the selling of commodities and in the crowds of the masses. He becomes intoxicated by modern life; each experience is parceled into the rhythm of his narcotic like experience. Underneath this layer of unreality, however, the seething disjointedness of modernism still writhed and this is experienced when Benjamin's unfinished manuscript, the arcades project, is read.⁹⁵ In the arcades project the reader is presented with snippets, or fragments of discussion about the arcades of the turn of the century in extraneous details, with each segment existing as a separate entity to the next. It is an exercise in fragmentation, just as the Marey photographs show the fragmentation of the modern person. Benjamin saw the camera as a way to the unconsciousness, its ability to segment visual reality allowed it to present another reality that surpassed the conscious mind and fed directly to the psyche. For Benjamin, the camera trapped reality, seared it into being and allowed the viewer to discover an optical unconsciousness.⁹⁶ The camera was a powerful symbol for the modernist consciousness, a mechanical instrument that was able to transcend its materials and present something timeless and otherworldly that spoke to the psyche of a culture.

⁹⁴ Susan Buck- Mors. 1992 "Aesthetics and Anesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered", Downloaded www.jstor.org, 2009, 20

⁹⁵ Walter Benjamin. *The Arcades Project*, Belknap Press; Harvard University Press, USA, 2002

⁹⁶ Alex Coles. (ed) *The Optic of Walter Benjamin, Volume 3 de-, dis-, ex-.*, Black dog publishing, London, 1999, 214

Hiroshi Sugimoto- trapping time

Hiroshi Sugimoto is a photographer working today who could easily slip into the age of the flâneur that Walter Benjamin describes. Looking at Sugimoto's work alongside a discussion of modernist history clarifies the issues that the cultures of modernism brought about and are still being resolved. It is the same interest in time, the image and the frame that Sugimoto plays out in his images. Furthermore, Sugimoto is interested in how science and art work together to illuminate the unseen world. For him, "art resides even in things with no artistic intentions".⁹⁷ Sugimoto takes elements from modernist history, its fragments and concrete evidence of its past and reframes them in a way that allows him to present in the artifacts of science the possibilities of an aesthetic soul. He is able to weave together in the archives of scientific history the dialogues of religion and beauty and in doing so presents to us scientific thought in a new light, rift with symbolism and mysticism. Sugimoto expertly takes a thread begun with early modernism and loops it into the present where he shows us the heritage of modernist thought and the possibilities it holds for alternative outcomes. We are shown in Sugimoto's work the continuing importance that artists have in re-presenting culture in alternative ways, particularly those aspects of cultural dialogue that rub against the machinations of the social body and always seem slightly out of place, such as technology and its outcomes.

In his 2004 series, "Conceptual Forms", Sugimoto photographed mathematical and mechanical three dimensional models, made initially in Germany in the late nineteenth century and later acquired by the University of Tokyo. In the images, the three dimensional models of trigonometric functions that Sugimoto photographs loom out of a darkened background, as if merging into tangible form what is essentially an intellectual concept. Each model wavers in its milky light, hovering between known and unknown, grasped into form yet threatening to merge back into its darkened non-space of invisibility. Hovering on the edge of light, the models also quiver on the edge of consciousness, invested with the task of making real the abstract concepts of mathematics.

mathematical form : surface 0004. Hiroshi Sugimoto 2004⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ibid 273

⁹⁸ <http://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/conceptualforms.html> accessed April 2011

Image of *mathematical form : surface 0004* can be found at <http://www.mutualart.com/Artwork/Mathematical-Form-0004--Onduloid--A-Surf/173E87939BB0A5B1>

The mechanical models that he photographs for the series were educational tools initially made to illustrate the basic concepts of industrial mechanics. Like the trigonmoic models, Sugimoto uses lighting evocatively - these models similarly loom out of a darkened space, yet they seem overpowering, solid, rooted firmly to the position away from the shadows and in the here and now. They seem to evoke a sense of hope, each mechanical model waiting to spring into dynamic action at the touch of a hand, lever at the ready to be turned, cogs quaking with a desire to be ratcheted along their teeth.

mecahnical form 0026 Hiroshi Sugimoto 2004 ⁹⁹

Image of *mecahnical form 0026* can be found at http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/dealers_galleries/FullSizeArtWork/dg_id/19997/image_id/194134/imageno/6

Sugimoto makes visible the unseen voices behind the models. In the delicate play of light and shadow he is able to communicate the belief and hope placed in the pursuit of rationalism to transform the world, and the pouring of this hope into the mechanics of industrialism.

The models in the Conceptual Forms series compress into three dimensional space an epoch of hope and aspiration. They are parcels which allow something larger to be grasped. When Sugimoto explains, “you can use a sample to understand the whole thing, the whole world”, he shows us the way to viewing his work. ¹⁰⁰ He stops time in his images, compresses it and crystallizes it into a single frame that holds the hopes and ideals of the human drive for advancement.

Time and its passing is a recurring theme throughout Sugimoto’s work and many of his images record temporal movement. He records one night the flickering of a candle flame as it burns through the darkened hours, buffeted by the breeze from an open window. Embedded forever on his film is the struggle of the flame against the wind, its last moments in time and space, each flicker recorded and merged with the next. The flame for Sugimoto is

⁹⁹ http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/dealers_galleries/FullSizeArtWork/dg_id/19997/image_id/194134/imageno/6 accessed April 2011

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Kellein. *Hiroshi Sugimoto, Time Exposed*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1995, 91

a reminder of human's travel from dark into light- the flame was harnessed by primitive humans, allowing evolution to travel on the path that has brought humanity to the present day. Similarly, the well known seascape series shows us the sea as it would have been seen by our ancestors. The sea is, in Sugimoto's words, "immutable".¹⁰¹ It is a window to the ancient world, essentially unchanged, the same water lapping at the foot of our shores today that our earliest ancestors would have swam in.

Bodensee, Utwil. Hiroshi Sugimoto 1993¹⁰²

Image of *Bodensee, Utwil* can be found at

<http://www.fraenkelgallery.com/index.php#mi=&pt=1&pi=10000&s=1&p=1&a=26&at=1>

If the images of the sea compresses into a single frame the distance between the ancient and now, the Theatres series presents in a single image an entire cinematic movie, itself a journey through compressed time. Sugimoto, by leaving the shutter of the camera open for the length of the film, records the movie as a single white rectangle inside the theatre. Casting a dreamlike glow over the empty seats, the entire movie simply vanishes. It is there in the frame but has returned to its archetype of imitated reality, the picture burnt away to leave a vacuous space of glowing light, an image of the imagination, of the dance of the unconsciousness upon the consciousness.

Sugimoto covers his eye one day when viewing the dioramas of the natural history museum and, he discovers, "I had found a way to see the world as the camera does".¹⁰³ Sugimoto becomes a camera and brings into light the optical unconsciousness, the compulsion to halt time in the frame that the camera embodies.

It is interesting that Sugimoto sees himself as not only a camera, but as an interlocutor- language is a way for him to understand the world. By naming something, it is comprehensible, graspable. "Language has to do with the need to communicate with a world that is separated from yourself, the separation between inner world and outer world would

¹⁰¹ Ibid 109

¹⁰² Ibid 71

¹⁰³ Kerry Brougher. David Elliot. *Hiroshi Sugimoto*, Hatje Cantz publishers, Ostfildern, 2005, 45

be less clear without language".¹⁰⁴ Just as the camera frame collapses into a single moment the mass of the lived moment, language condenses into a word the enormity of existence.

Sugimoto takes art, science and religion, the three intersections he sees his work as traversing, and presents them to the viewer in a way that communicates their essence. The cinema is shown as a simple rectangle of even bright light- a portal directly to dream space. The sea is pictured as timeless and peaceful, just as it has been for the eons it has pooled upon the earth. The museum diorama is pictured surrealistically real, a realistic copy of a copy, an attempt to bring back from the past the last scenes of our ancestors or of a disappearing wilderness, yet an attempt that is never quite successful, always slightly uncanny, slipped and off centre.

Dioramas, Alaskan Wolves, 1994 Hiroshi Sugimoto¹⁰⁵

Image of *Dioramas, Alaskan Wolves* can be found at <http://makingarthappen.com/2012/07/05/hiroshi-sugimoto/>

Interior Theatres. El Capitan, Hollywood, 1993 Hiroshi Sugimoto¹⁰⁶

Image of *Interior Theatres. El Capitan, Hollywood* can be found at <http://libguides.colby.edu/film>

In Sugimoto's latest work, "Lightning Fields", he abandons the camera altogether, allowing the actions of nature to work directly onto film and perhaps truly becoming the camera himself. Using a generator to produce static, which is then transferred to a photographic plate which records the induced voltage, he fixes permanently the arcing movement of the charge that speaks emotively of the power of electricity, the voltage casting tendrils over the film that creep out from the central arc like branches of a tree. Sugimoto maps our journey of modernism- our attempts to accommodate the sublime wonder of nature by transcribing it into the voice of empiricism, and then represents it as something quietly beautiful, poetic and sublime. He is a camera; his eye frames and reframes the modernist archive and reminds us of the centrality of the camera to our understanding of modernism.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Kellein. *Hiroshi Sugimoto, Time Exposed*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1995, 92

¹⁰⁵ *ibid* 43

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Kellein. *Hiroshi Sugimoto, Time Exposed*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1995, 36

Lightning fields Hiroshi Sugimoto 2008 ¹⁰⁷

Image of Lightning fields can be found at <http://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/LighteningField.html>

¹⁰⁷ David Elliot. (ed) *17th Biennale of Sydney, the Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age*, Biennale of Sydney Ltd in association with Thames and Hudson, Australia 2010, 232

Chapter Seven: Repetition, Increase and Speed

"We declare that the world's splendor has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed" ¹⁰⁸

The photograph, as a character of modernity, represented the modern idea of increase, in speed, capacity and product. The quantity of images possible with photographic technology also touched upon a malingering and overwhelming disquiet. The photograph and its capacity for reproducing reality endlessly exemplified the problematic issue of time for modernity. Time had become mapped, controlled, scrutinized, sped up and slowed down. Time was not simply there; it was a unit of representation and was entering the theoretical discourse of modernism.

The futurists embraced the power of time in motion and in their work sought to show the increased passing of time that new technology allowed. Just as Marey mapped the movement of the body in time the Futurists sought to visualize the power of force via speed and velocity in time. Both saw the need to break each unit of time into separate components. However it was the futurist photographer, Anton Bragaglia, who moved away from this representational mode in his photographs of moving bodies, mostly using his brother Arturo as the subject. In his images, Arturo travels in a blur across the photographic plane. There is no distinct stage of movement where his body's progress can be mapped. He seems to live a movement across time, to inhabit the space between the start of its spatial progression and the end. Bragaglia likened his images, which he termed photo dynamism, to the movement of a clock. Chronophotography simply represented the quarter hours whereas photo dynamism showed not only the movement of the second hand but all the incremental stages in between. ¹⁰⁹

Bragaglia came to photography through an interest in the occult and a desire to capture the movement of paranormal activities photographically. ¹¹⁰ Spirit activities, another phenomena

¹⁰⁸ From Marinetti, *Foundation Manifesto of Futurism* 1909. Jane Rye. *Futurism*, Studio Vista, UK, 1972, 7

¹⁰⁹ Mary Ann Doane. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, USA, London 2002, 87

¹¹⁰ Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 296

gaining much interest with the emergence of modernism, existed without the constraints of time, in another dimension to which only the gifted – the spiritualist, could reveal. The body in Bragaglia's photographs looks spectral, also. He seems to have captured an essence; the spirit of the subject seems to jump out of the body to mark the passage of flesh in space. While we are simply looking at the result of leaving the camera lens open as the subject moves across the focal plane, a technique which is easily accomplished with many cameras today, we are also seeing something beyond a basic mix of chemicals and mechanics. The images of Bragaglia seem overly weighted with a macabre otherworldliness for such a straightforward procedure. Bragaglia has photographed his brother in movement yet also captured perhaps the ghost of the changing subject of early modernism. When we look at the images we see a contested psyche, trying to establish itself in a world disintegrating and remodeling itself. The person in Bragaglia's images seems to be grasping for something that isn't there, forcing itself into a reality that is melting away under the weight of new ways of perceiving the world.



Portrait of Arturo Bragaglia Anton Giulio Bragaglia 1911 ¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Mary Ann Doane. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press Cambridge, USA, London, 2002, 86



Self Portrait Anton Giulio Bragaglia 1911 ¹¹²

Bragaglia sought to discredit the reliance on a mechanical truth that photography suggested. Of his images he wrote, "With photo dynamism we have freed photography from the indecency of its brutal realism, and from the craziness of instantaneity, which, considered to be a scientific fact only because it was a mechanical product, was accepted as absolutely correct." ¹¹³

Bragaglia was not anti modernist however, hence his alignment to the futurists. He believed that only photography was truly able to depict the unique movement of modernism- fluid, constant and dynamic. Although Bragaglia was initially taken in by the futurists, giving a series of lectures as a futurist in 1911, by 1913 he was denounced and dropped by the group, soon after he had published his own manifesto, *Fotodinamismo futurista*. The futurist painter Boccioni described Bragaglia's images as "simply monstrous." He went on to say of the images, "the pompousness and the infatuation with the non-existent was grotesque". ¹¹⁴ The futurists as a group publically distanced themselves from Bragaglia's photo dynamism, writing in the journal *lacerba*, "Everything referring to photo dynamism concerns innovations in the field of photography exclusively, these purely photographic researches have absolutely

¹¹² Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 297

¹¹³ *ibid* 299

¹¹⁴ *Ibid* 310

nothing to do with the plastic dynamism invented by us, or with any dynamic research in the dominion of painting, sculpture, and architecture".¹¹⁵

Photography, in its capturing and preserving of time presented something antithetical to the futurists' desire to represent the dynamism of modernist enhanced movement. The photograph, as Roland Barthes would argue seventy years later, presented an image of the "already dead".¹¹⁶ The photograph shows the actual which takes on the authority of the real and thus a sense of eternity. This, however, poses a conflict as the photograph presents the real as past- it will survive the moment it captures thus we as viewer are confronted with a dead eternity, the living as dead. Barthes is describing a quality that Bragaglia's images possess, an essence that distinguishes photographs from other representational forms and comes from the coexistence of the past and reality in the one image. This ghostly disjunction must have alerted the Futurists' to the divergent path that Bragaglia's images took from the futurist manifesto, one obsessed with the searing present, one weighted by the deathly grip of the past. Bragaglia's photographs highlighted the power of photography to speak beyond the tenets of an age and inhabit its own spectral presence. Ironically Bragaglia also stopped his photographic research and in 1918 reestablished links with the Futurists when he opened his gallery, the Casa d'Arte Bragaglia.¹¹⁷ Bragaglia had been convinced of the photograph's ability to represent above all other art forms the essence of futurism yet his conviction was not strong enough to withstand the rejection and discrediting of his art by the other futurists.

¹¹⁵ Ibid 309

¹¹⁶ Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography*, Vintage, UK, 2000, 80

¹¹⁷ Marta Braun. *Picturing Time the Work of Etienne- Jules Marey*, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 311

Chapter Eight: The Mystic Writing Pad

*"...We understood my comrade and I
That the little car had bought us into a new
Era
And that although we were both fully grown men
We had nethertheless just been born" ¹¹⁸*

Time, its passing and its malleability through machinic force, was a like a canker upon modernist rhetoric. The problem of time held onto the minds of modernism, refusing to just be there, it demanded explanation, representation, dissection. The futurists sought to harness its power, Marey sought to map its progress on the body and Freud sought to explain its effect in terms of the psyche. Freud saw firsthand the devastating effect that modern technology could wreak on the human mind as battle scarred soldiers returned from the war. He realized that the soldiers were blocking out their traumatic memories- large chunks of their lives on the battlefield were lost from their memories causing gaps in their progressive personal history. Coupled with the general uneasiness of overstimulation that modern life involved, Freud began to theorize on the ways the psyche protected itself from the dangers of modern life. The psycho therapist, in their concern with personal biographies and reflecting on past events to understand present neurosis, was already aware of the effect of time. In fact Freud used hypnosis as a way to recover memories that had become seemingly dulled with age. However, for Freud these memories did not disintegrate over time. Time was discontinuous. Freud saw memory degradation as being a product not of time but due to modifications made by the psyche. Time was a product of the psyche, used to buffer and protect it- time stopped and started according to the psyche.

For Freud, the unconsciousness lacked a concept of time- time is apparent in the consciousness but the consciousness is not held within a temporal order.¹¹⁹ The consciousness continually makes and breaks contact with the unconsciousness and this discontinuity between consciousness and unconsciousness Freud felt could explain the

¹¹⁸ Guillaume Apollinaire. From the poem *The Little Car* (translated from French by Oliver Bernard, Ilya Kaminsky and Susan Harris(eds) *The ECCO Anthology of International Poetry*, Harper Collins, New York, 2010 , 20

¹¹⁹ Mary Ann Doane. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press Cambridge, USA, London, 2002, 37

concept of time- a way of ordering what was moving in and out of mappable, temporal reality as the unconsciousness was given information from the consciousness and then released again.

Memory, for Freud was etched into the psyche through the act of resistance. He said of this process in his text, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, "For the fading of memories and the emotional weakness of impressions which are no longer recent, which we are inclined to regard as self-evident and to explain as a primary effect of time upon mental memory—traces, are in reality secondary modifications which are only brought about by laborious work".¹²⁰ The laborious process was the forcing or breaching of a barrier between the consciousness and unconsciousness and that suggestively violent act left a trace on the unconsciousness. The unconsciousness, whilst not being subject to time was subject to topography- it was retained by the brain and inhabited its topographical space. It needed an area both open and clear, allowing vast amounts of information to be taken in and retained, leaving a trace of its being.

Freud used the apparatus, the mystic writing pad, to conceptualize this process of memory. The mystic writing pad was a children's toy similar to today's etch-a doodle toy. Made of three layers, the top was clear colloid, the middle waxed paper and the bottom a wax plate. Marks would be inscribed on the top two layers, leaving a permanent trace on the wax plate. The top two layers could be lifted and their marks removed, ready to use again. In Freud's analogy, the two top layers represented the consciousness, the bottom layer the unconsciousness. The external world, for Freud, needed to have buffers put in place via the psyche, to protect it from over stimulation. Freud drew on physics to explain this, as physics showed that the external world is made of masses of energies which are in violent motion and transmit that motion. Reality, in this sense was a constant dodging and reformatting of the self against the violence of modern life. Modern life itself was shown by physics to be made of energies- atoms colliding and reacting, actions which, though invisible, were made tangible through the explanatory voice of the scientist. Freud can be seen as being influenced by the fears of his time towards modernity and technology and the fear many held of its power to effect the senses. Freud was concerned with the colliding of technology, the senses

¹²⁰ Freud, as quoted in, Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, Harvard University Press Cambridge, USA, London 2002, 37

and the psyche and his work was part of the attempt to unravel and understand how the subject reintegrated into such a vastly changing world.

For Freud, time was discontinuous. Memory and consciousness were incompatible as consciousness could not be retained on its own- it had to retain itself through traces on the unconsciousness. Consciousness was bound to time and memory and time were incompatible. Time occurred inconsistently as the memory moved to its instant in the consciousness, to its trace in the unconsciousness. Memory is representation without time- the two cannot co- exist in the unconsciousness. Time, not linked to memories, left no record. It was un- representational and time became simply a product of the subject to aid in the processing of excessive stimuli.¹²¹

For Freud, time resulted from the gaps between registrations of activity by the consciousness into the unconsciousness which gave rise to the concept of time. Time is a buffer for excess stimuli; it emerges to cope and is a product of the subject. Without the thinking, acting subject time is irrelevant, non-existent. Freud shows the chasm that modernism brought about between the classical subject that Crary described and was earlier discussed, whose reality was objective, just as time was, and the modernist subject of the late enlightenment, whose reality and very experience of time was subjective, relating to and resulting from their interaction with the world. Like a layer of the Mystic writing pad, the modern subject pressed upon reality and left their indelible trace upon it which in turn influenced the experience of reality. One was meaningless without the other; lived reality was an ongoing interaction between the thinking person and their subjective, embodied experience. In many ways a meshing with reality was possible and in this sense the blurring and transgressing of boundaries was facilitated.

¹²¹ Ibid 44-45

Chapter Nine: An Hysterical Nature

Frivolous Convulsions

Her degenerate glance

Is a cockles masquerade cry

With the stench of depraved convulsions

Her source outraged modesty

Formidable for the sex

Carries out epileptic reflexes

But her dream's aimless activity

Is a hand that does not indicate the hours

For the benefit of an absolution ¹²²

Photography inhabits a space of colliding worlds where the old world view still infringes into the new world view of scientific objectivity in the form of such movements as spiritualism or religious fanaticism, yet as Barthes points out, it was the science of chemistry that ultimately gave rise to the photographic form, a first generation inheritance from the new history of rational objectivity. However, by the very fact of its unique and indelible connection to scientific authority, photography was able to travel between the seas of new and old worlds.

Photography was central to the spiritualist movement. Whilst we may now be able to see how simple the deception of spirit photography was, many people sincerely believed that the photographic record of séances and similar events was incontrovertible proof of the ability of spirits to inhabit the lived world. Photography also gave rise to the pictorialist movement where religious scenes were reenacted, classical myths were retold photographically and heroines were presented in portraits showing the power of their beauty. The figures presented were from times predating Albertis' perspective grid and in that sense they could inhabit a space that could be reframed on its own terms without submitting to conventional tropes of photographic representation.

¹²²Francis Picabia. *I am a Beautiful Monster, Poetry prose and Provocation*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 2007, Translated by Marc Lowenthal. Excerpt from the suit of poems, *fifty-two mirrors 1914-1917*, 49

Julia Magaret Cameron (1815- 1879) was a photographer who managed to successfully cross these boundaries- she was female in a largely male pursuit and her subjects were woman and children, two groups who already suffered from the subjugations and subsequent invisibility of nineteenth century patriarchal society.

Anne Marsh, in her discussion of photographic history, describes Julia Magaret Cameron as giving her subjects an hysterical femininity and imbuing many of her photographs with an erotic sexuality, mixed with a religious fervor. Cameron placed as much importance on capturing the inner self as well as the outer and for her, darkroom mishaps, blurriness and other faults were positive qualities, imbuing the prints with an aura and individuality of their own.¹²³

Marsh sees Cameron's work as occupying a particular Victorian context which saw both the strict repression of sexuality and its emergence in social groups such as the avante garde. Women were sexually coded as both devout mother- Mary, and evil temptress- Eve. Women needed to suppress their evil sexuality, the Eve, in order to maintain the moral and patriarchal order. Woman, aligned with nature, was also seen to be subject to natural, primal urges. She is vulnerable, soft, with always the seed of destruction within her. Simply, she must be confined and controlled in order to limit her potential destruction to herself and society. For Marsh, Cameron's staging of religious photographs, where the adoring maternal Mary was repeatedly shown to have an excess of maternal desire, operated both within and without the ordered Victorian society and was able to be read as both religious and erotic.

Marsh recognizes that Cameron's photography would have held a conventional reading for most Victorians- she was a mother -woman in a patriarchal society, staging religious photographs. Her photographs were not seen as erotic or as being undertaken by someone with an erotic gaze. Infact, the visual model for the Mary figure was Cameron's maid and thus each photograph embodied a power structure inherent to the Victorian hierarchical society. Many critiques of Cameron's work see her maid and model, Hilliar, as representing Cameron herself in her role as mother and keeper of her home. Marsh, however, also sees Cameron' photos as being able to be read along the lines of Lacan's idea of jouissance.

¹²³ Anne Marsh. *The Darkroom Photography and the Theatre of Desire*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 2003, 118- 126

For Lacan, *jouissance* was a way that women expressed their feminine selves outside of the phallic order. The idea of women is a male fantasy and in that sense, an illusion. *Jouissance* is an excess of sexual being and a way of understanding female desire. Being beyond the phallic order it escapes the problem of occupying the space of male fantasy and is a way of making real female desire, sexuality, and femininity. *Jouissance*, being an excess, cannot be placed within the limits of need and the semiotic order, thus allowing it to surpass the boundaries of the symbolic or patriarchal order. Lacan sees female desire, the *jouissance*, as being a form of mysticism. The mystic is the one who understands *jouissance*. For Lacan, woman does not exist whilst femaleness, exists in *jouissance* which is in turn a form of mysticism. Cameron's photographs, similarly, place woman within the patriarchal order in her presentation of the good mother. However her eroticisms within the depiction of religious fervor also express the notion of the mystic and her *jouissance*.¹²⁴ As Marsh says, "whether or not this is female *jouissance* is open for debate, what is clear is that both Lacan and Cameron present mysticism, woman, God and sexual pleasure in one frame or narrative"¹²⁵

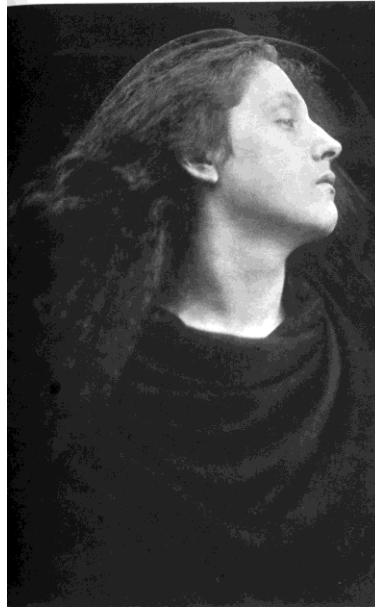


Spring Julia Margaret Cameron 1864¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Marsh discusses Cameron's work in detail in her text, Anne Marsh, *The Darkroom Photography and the Theatre of Desire*, Macmillan, Melbourne 2003, 118- 126

¹²⁵ Ibid 127

¹²⁶ Ibid figure 13



Call, I Follow, I Follow, Let me Die, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1867¹²⁷

Marsh's alternative reading of Julia Margaret Cameron's work highlights the tensions that women and their sexuality endured. Many see a strong link between these tensions and the very female condition of hysteria which was so prevalent at the time. Cameron's women, as Marsh points out, are akin to the hysteric. They are in rapture. They seem to have left reality to inhabit an(erotic) self that is disconnected from the viewer\observer. Their eyes roll heavenward, their clothes seem to fall from their body, their hair is wild and adorned with flowers, they are uncontained.

The clinical treatment of hysteria has always been able to fit neatly into the male patriarchal order. From the early Greek conception of the hysteric as a woman who suffered from a literally wandering womb, the female hysteric was destined to suffer from a perception that she needed to be restrained and repaired- medically and socially. The history of the hysteric culminated in the grandeur of the Salpêtrière which in 1690 contained three thousand women within its walls. Upon arrival to the Salpêtrière a woman was whipped, a punishment no doubt to reclaim her insubordination towards her duties and social role, back to the patriarchal state. Once punished, she was interred and left to fester amongst her fellow outcast and forgotten female sisters. By the time the Salpêtrière's most famous clinician, Jean Martin Charcot, arrived in 1862, there was a cure rate of 9.72 percent and approximately one physician for every five hundred patients. In the year of Charcot's arrival,

¹²⁷ Anne Marsh. *The Darkroom Photography and the Theatre of Desire*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 2003, fig 11

two hundred and fifty four women died from insanity related causes.¹²⁸ Charcot, using the camera as an integral tool, would transform the Salpêtrière from a place of human misery to an institution at the forefront of neurological research. Its inhabitants, the patients of the Salpêtrière, would find notoriety in the photographic archives of Charcot's clinics and today their images are part of our cultural history. However, the road from patient to cure was paved with a patriarchal hegemony from which escape was near impossible.

Just as Jules Marey sought to visually map the movement of the body in space using photographic technology, Charcot sought to create a visual map of illness and in particular, female hysteria. Charcot felt that through the visual mapping of hysterical episodes, which were classed in the epileptic group of conditions, he would be able to find anomalies which would uncover the hidden truths of diseases and lead the way to answers. To this end, Charcot and his photographers, including for a time Marey's photographer Albert Londe, embarked on a journey of photographically documenting and cataloging all forms and stages of hysteria. The photographic subjects were always women and they submitted tirelessly to the camera, performing their illness for semiotic inscription. The hysteric was a true photographic subject, conjuring a body that was marked both medically (scientifically) and aesthetically, through the harsh beauty of her *jouissance*- her excess of femininity. The hysteric's audience was both the viewer of the photographic evidence and the real-time audience of Charcot's Tuesday lectures. These lectures were renowned mixes of clinical discussion and spectacle, where Charcot would bring out his hysterics to perform their illness for an audience of physicians and notaries.

Didi- Huberman, in his extensive study of hysteria at the Salpêtrière has argued that the hysterical woman needed to perform her illness in order to remain in the relatively pleasant surrounds of the curable illnesses section of the Salpêtrière. While a woman was being treated as a hysteric, deemed a curable illness, she was seen as capable of regaining a normal life. If that stopped, however, and her aberrations no longer fitted into the hysteria type, she could be transferred to the incurables, there living a life sentence without hope amongst the forgotten of the incurable insane. Thus the hysteric performed knowingly for her audience in an ever increasing ecstasy of delirium. Didi- Huberman describes the life of the interred at the Salpêtrière as being where, "a kind of masochistic fantasy was in full

¹²⁸ Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 15

swing, functioning according to its demonstrative trait (making oneself be seen suffering), and according to its distinguished character of a pact, and of connivance, too.”¹²⁹ There was an interplay of power occurring at the hospice where the woman, always grappling with her oppressive powerlessness, performed for the needs and desires of her keepers in an attempt to manipulate some autonomy for herself. Ultimately, however, she was a patient in an institution where she had no authority over how her life was arranged and her days lived.

The hysteric, through the unique dynamics of patient and clinician that existed at the Salpêtrière, had bequeathed her living body to medicine where it was probed, touched, fondled, examined, stimulated, measured and observed incessantly in order to find an answer to the dilemma of the uncontrollable woman. Even in sleep she was studied. The sleep of the hysteric (a particular form of hysterical episode) presented an opportunity for study without need for restraints. Charcot described one such incident of a ‘sleeper’ who had been placed, sleeping, on the stage of the Tuesday lecture room. Speaking to his audience, he explains, “The patient who has just been placed before your eyes is, according to the customary language of this hospice, a sleeper. Indeed, this patient has been sleeping- if it can be called sleeping- since the first of last November, that is, for twelve days”.¹³⁰



Hysterical Sleep, La photographie Medicale, 1893¹³¹

Thus the hysterical body submits in all its forms to the dictums of medical need. She submits through physical or chemical restraint, coercion, hypnotism, sleep. And always underlying

¹²⁹ Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 171

¹³⁰ Ibid 183

¹³¹ Ibid 183

her submission is her eroticism; her excessiveness of the female always lingering, threatening to spill out.

The hysterical episode often incorporated the, “attitudes passionelles” where the hysteric would perform a series of erotic gestures often involving past loves or desires. One much photographed patient, Augustine, who was admitted to the hospital at age fifteen, was particularly prolific in her attacks of the attitudes passionelles . Augustine’s hysteria originally began after the rape at thirteen by her mother’s boyfriend. Much of her condition seems to involve the playing out of sexual episodes and the subsequent traumas surrounding them. She was also very affectionate towards the male doctors and at one point professed her love for a particular, un-named physician.¹³²

Augustine was regularly treated with amyl-nitrate, ether, morphine and other chemicals and it was noted that after inhaling ether, she would behave sexually.¹³³ She was encouraged to describe her erotic hallucinations after the event and to record them in writing. There is a distinct aura of lewdness surrounding the images of this teenager writhing around in sexual delirium whilst being clinically observed by a group of male physicians. Certainly there was a fascination for her sexuality that seeps through the pictures. The images of her speak so clearly of the sexual role that she and others played and of her ultimate innocence in that role. She seems so young, so vulnerable; it is disquieting to know that what the images don’t show are the male observers that would have surrounded her, watching (presumably) dispassionately her endless replaying of a young girl’s traumatic initiation into adulthood. Eroticism and female sexuality at the Salpêtrière were always present, lingering ominously over the women’s lives.

¹³² Ibid 215

¹³³ Many of the female patients were treated with stimulants and opiate drugs such as amol nitrate, ether and opium. Ibid 217



Photograph of Augustine, *Attitudes Passionnelles: erotism*, Iconographie Vol. II ¹³⁴

The hysteric was excess, she broke from her social bonds through her behavior, her physical bonds through her bodily spasms, her clothes would slip away, her face contort into expressions according to the stage of the hysteric attack, she would leak bodily fluids, tears, saliva, urine, genital discharge, all recorded and noted.



Photograph of Augustine, *Onset of the Attack: the Cry*, Iconographie Vol. II ¹³⁵

She was slipping from herself and each drop and thread would be caught and categorized, measured, and photographed. Perhaps this constant archiving was an attempt to reclaim the order which the hysterical woman threatened to tumble. If the patriarch (doctor) represents

¹³⁴ Ibid 145

¹³⁵ Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 113

the symbolic order and establishes that order through prohibitions and law, than the leaking women, spilling her abjectness everywhere, constantly weakens those boundaries, destabilizing the order. It must then be re-inscribed, back into the patriarchal system. Julia Kristeva, in her essay on the abject, writes that Christianity bought about a new order, “an arrangement whose economy will regulate a wholly different system of meaning, hence a wholly different speaking subject”.¹³⁶ Importantly, she notes that in the new order, abjection moves from the exterior to the interior- it emanates from within the body. In the Christian order, excess and order can co-exist but it is through language, the speaking of the text, of the Christian word, that the double sided subject is reconciled. Kristeva writes, “One of the insights of Christianity, and not the least one, is to have gathered in a single move perversion and beauty as the lining and the cloth of one and the same economy”.¹³⁷ The women of the Salpêtrière were certainly a cloth whose underside had frayed and the clinicians desperately sought to repair the damage. For Kristeva, the abject is the place where meaning collapses. If, then, the hysterics of the Salpêtrière represent in the unbridledness and skin porosity of the abject, then you can see how the desperation to reintegrate them into the semiotic order could occur. You can also see how the play between patient and complicit performer could occur, the women themselves recognizing the unique position they held, the unspoken yet fearful power they represented. This dynamic allowed them to reclaim their space as it was taken, both parties engaging in the juncture of a contested position within an always tremulous order.

The photographic archive was a way to remap that order, Charcot himself explaining his role as such, “But to truth to tell, in this I am nothing more than a photographer; I inscribe what I see”.¹³⁸ Charcot’s vision held an established place in the patriarchal and hierarchical culture of his time. He was able to successfully re-integrate these tragic women, beset by their traumatic pasts and forgotten for so long, into an order to which they never quite fitted neatly.

Ultimately many women must have recognized the dangerous path they were traveling, with the specter of the dark recesses and mental squander of the incurables ward looming

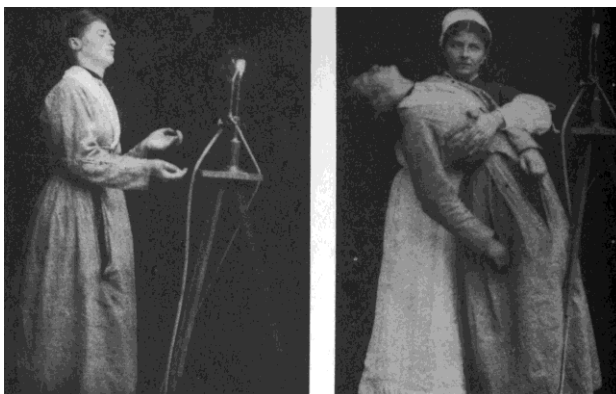
¹³⁶ Julia Kristeva. *Powers of Horror, an Essay on Abjection*, Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. Columbia University Press, New York, 1980, 113

¹³⁷ Ibid 125

¹³⁸ Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetrière*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 29

(certainly those incurable patients were forgotten because they symbolically did not exist, there was simply no place for them) .They must have decided to finally submit to the will of the doctors and taken their cure, allowing themselves to be re-contained, for their abjections to be sewn within them at last.

For me, there are two images that speak eloquently of the position that the woman of the Salpêtrière occupied. The two photographs are demonstrating the phenomena of catalepsy, or suspended movement, that many of the hysterics displayed. The first photograph shows a woman in a cataleptic state, frozen by the light. She seems to hold her hands towards the light in gentle supplication. She has an expression of meditative beauty on her face. Charcot, the magician, has her in his power; he has wiled her body to stop in motion through his command of the technology of light. Then, in the next photograph, the light has been snuffed. The woman falls back, her inert body plummeting through space until caught by a nurse who has appeared out of the shadowy recesses. The spell is broken yet she is still under the power of the clinician, her body is not yet hers, she has fainted. These two images, so simple yet so full of meaning, illustrate exquisitely how a woman's very being was subjugated to the will of the doctor. He is able to halt her as he pleases, she is frozen, motionless as he desires, then she falls backwards at a time he chooses. Her volition is his; her body is given over to his will. He is in control and she has relinquished herself to the power of medicine. In the darkness, when that power is removed, when the light is extinguished, she ceases. Perhaps there will be someone there to catch her, perhaps not.



Catalepsy provoked by a bright light and lethargy resulting from the abrupt suppression of light, Iconographie Vol. II ¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetrière*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA 2003, 208

Visiting the Royal College of Surgeons

“There are hysterics who cry in abundance; some of them urinate copiously at the same time; there are others, finally, who- how shall I put it? - cry through the vulva” ¹⁴⁰

The women of the Salpêtrière offered their porous bodies, leaking jouissance everywhere, as sacrifices to the empirical scientific order. They were incorporated into a medical hierarchy that privileged vision and used the camera as a way to fix reality, to re-centre vision and knowledge into the modernist sensibility. In their hysteria, however, they demonstrated the often fragile boundaries of the modernist logic and their actions suggested a failure of institutional hierarchies to control and order its subjects. The hysterics demonstrated their abjectness and in doing so threatened the very order which inscribed them.

It is worthwhile at this point, with the voices of the Salpêtrière’s inmates so clearly held in our minds, to recall the moment when medicine moved from being visually based, as discussed previously, to being one that travelled beneath the surface, via the discipline of anatomy. By the time Charcot arrived at the Salpêtrière and began to re-inscribe the abject back into the empirical order, medicine had moved from operating outside the body, to within it, to then relying on an embodied vision, using the tools of optics to travel beneath the outer bodily layer. It was those tools that aided in the cataloging of the abject fluids of the hysterics and allowed the physician to look past the skins surface to probe what lay beneath. In 2004 I travelled to the Royal College of Surgeons in Melbourne to see firsthand some of those instruments that had allowed the Doctor of the C19th to move beneath the surface of a live body and mingle with the fluids that were previously contained and bounded by the surface of the skin. To me, these instruments were a crucial symbol of a grand shifting of empirical knowledge- they represented a culmination of a great change of thinking borne out in medical instrumentation. On a simpler level, the instruments were to me a symbol of the power of the Doctor to force a submission of the body to his gaze.

The Royal College of Surgeons is a fine old building in the heart of the Melbourne central business district. Close by are Parliament house and both buildings share architectural styles

¹⁴⁰ quote from Salpêtrière physician, Landouzy. Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetrère*, Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 271

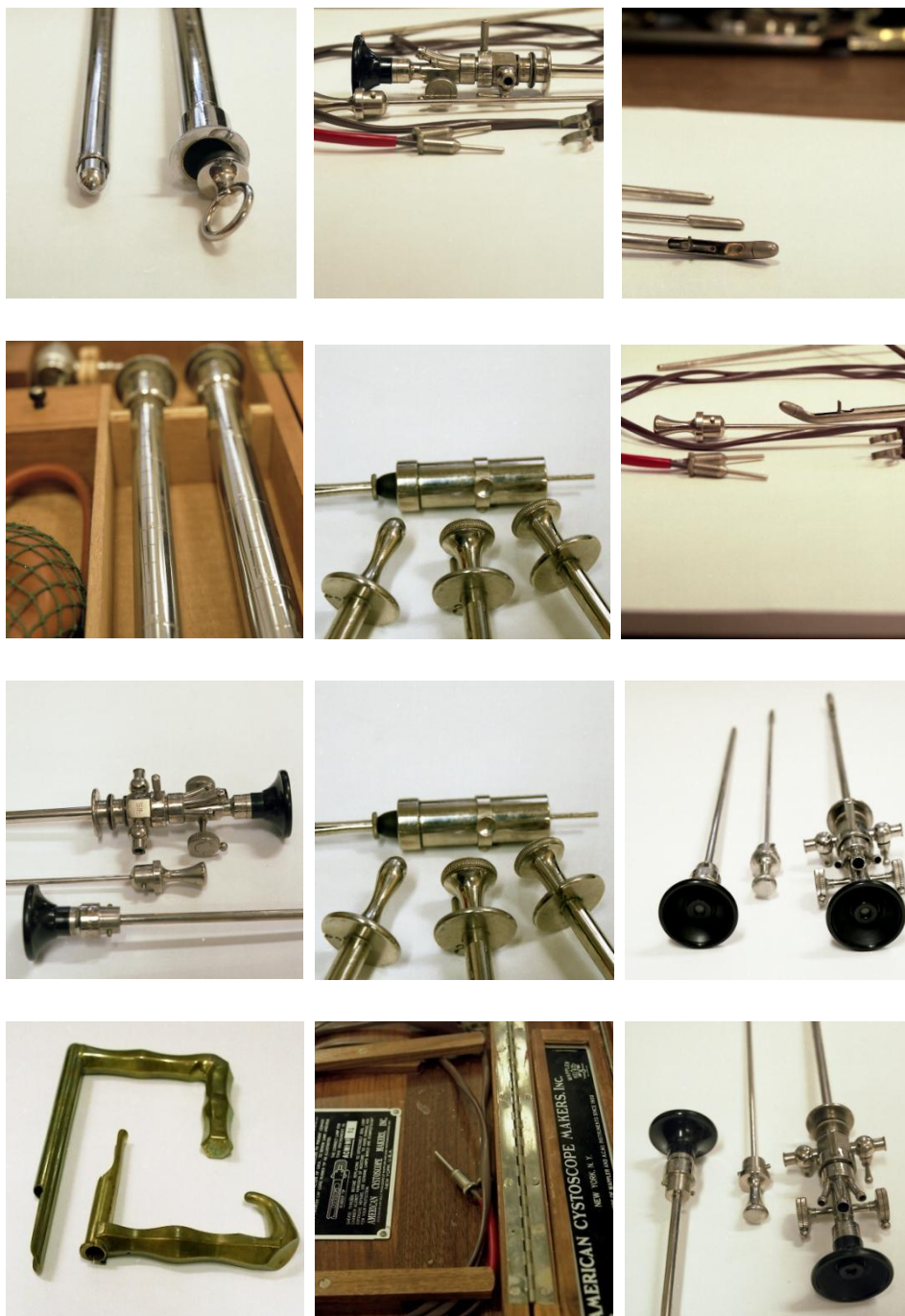
and geographical precincts. Both buildings also sit neatly within the parameters of fine and respected institutions.

The Royal College of Surgeons is a working body, servicing surgeons and surgical knowledge, and is an archive of the surgical discipline's history. The general public are not allowed admission past its foyer however many members of the public come in to view the classical beauty of the building's interior, replete with marble, granite and bronzes. I felt it to be a rarified and imposing place. It certainly embodies a seriousness and sobriety that causes you to immediately slow down and quiet your manner when you enter. If it was intended to uphold the respect which the discipline of surgery had gained, it certainly achieves its aim. The archive of medical instruments was in the bowels of the building, in a small room below the grounds surface. The room was divided in two. On one side was a large pantry styled room full of boxes containing the instruments, on the other side were two desks and a computer. I shared the space with a woman who was entering all the museum's archived information into a computerized data base- even places seeped in a working history cannot escape the demands of the technological age.

The first box bought out and laid before me was a bronchoscope. The instrument was cold in my hands and for something that was meant to travel through a bodily orifice, it was very large and inflexible. It would not have been comfortable in use. Over the next four days I set about drawing and photographing as many instruments as I could. All were from the group of scopes- designed, as the name suggests, to offer a scope, or view, inside the body. They each served a similar purpose although you could see small variations in style as new technologies were incorporated and particular uses required. I was struck most with the rigidity of the tools; they would penetrate the body most definitely and in a certainly unpleasant way- the body would be made to yield to the demands of medical knowledge.

Interacting with these instruments- holding, drawing and photographing them, brought me a closer understanding of the past dynamics between patient and clinician. I keenly felt the sense of submission that the patient would have, not only physical but mental and emotional. I felt the power of a knowledge that was contained in simple instrumentation, the yielding that knowledge pressed upon the patient. The patient was prone, the doctor would have loomed above, the patient would need to remain still and not struggle to minimize the discomfort of the instruments' movement within their body. The medicine surely sought

submission as the first act of treatment. Cure came later. There was little room for those who refused their subjugation.



All images are photographs of objects from the Royal College of Surgeons collection, Melbourne,

Photographer: Emily Windon 2004

Chapter Ten: *The Black Mirror of Technology*

"We will say nothing about tiredness and callousness. This rigid mechanical order just had to relent for a minute, and I felt myself becoming, once again, a man of flesh among men of flesh. Sympathy regained its dominion. But I soon heard steam whistling, dynamos vibrating, electricity sparkling and crackling, and, right away, the automaton expelled the humanist" ¹⁴¹

In the era of modernism, as I have discussed, society and culture were grappling with the exploding and colliding forces of increase in speed, time, and power technology. Amongst this angst of changing worlds was the body as a mediator, a thing that could be mapped, measured, willed to submit and thus an exemplary tool to regroup and reinforce the position of the individual within an increasingly alienating existence. That positioning, as I have demonstrated, also involved a re-affirming of the empirical and patriarchal order that had been carried through each changing epoch.

The situation at the Salpêtrière clinic was an event significant for its detailing of the power of an etiological process to gather in and subsume a group of people into an epistemological framework. Hysteria was not limited to an observation and control of the body, however, it was also being treated through the mind, by the groundbreaking psychologist Sigmund Freud who had begun his training under Charcot at the Salpêtrière, as a, by his own accounts, cocaine addicted, nervous young man in awe of the great clinician Charcot. ¹⁴² Freud would eventually distance himself from Charcot and his practice and would subsequently make the important move away from a cure based on observation, to one based on listening to a patient speak. However, it is interesting to note that despite such a radical departure from previous treatments of neurological disorders, the position of women within the treatment process remained largely the same, as a look into the case history of Emmy von shows.

Freud in his case notes of Emmy von from his text, *Studies on Hysteria*, co written with his colleague, Joseph Breuer, describes his genuine wish to help her. ¹⁴³ He recounts being

¹⁴¹ Iain Bamforth. (ed) *The Body in the Library a Literary Anthology of Modern Medicine*, Verso, London, New York, 2003, 166 account of WW1 surgeon Georges Duhamel

¹⁴² Georges Didi-Huberman. *Invention of Hysteria, Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere*. Translated by Alisa Hartz. Cambridge, The MIT Press, USA, 2003, 80

¹⁴³ Sigmund Freud. Joseph Breuer. *Studies on Hysteria, Vol. 3, the Penguin Freud Library*, Penguin Books, London, 1991

interested greatly by her symptoms and personality, so much that he becomes dedicated to curing her of her hysterical conditions. Emmy von is a financially independent woman in her 40s, of good health, apart from bouts of hysteria which leave her bedridden and result in a nervous tic and a stammer. She is one of fourteen children and was born into a wealthy family. Only four of her siblings remained alive. She married in her twenties an older, wealthy man who died of a stroke soon after the birth of her second child. Emmy von is troubled deeply by this event and its aftermath, but also by traumatic memories of her life, from her childhood on, which Freud is able to uncover during hypnosis.

Freud speaks quite tenderly of his patient and his dedication to her cure is evident from his notes. He begins using hypnosis as the pre-eminent tool in her treatment and soon after beginning treatment he observes that he is able under hypnosis to cure her symptoms by eliminating traumatic memories. When he finds Emmy von becoming upset or exhibiting signs of hysteria, such as, in one instance, a debilitating gastric complaint she suddenly develops, he is able under hypnosis to enquire as to the hysterical origin of the upset and then cause the offending memory to be forgotten. For instance, in describing under hypnosis the traumatic memory of her youngest daughter being very ill with encephalitis, Freud says “I made it impossible for her to see any of these melancholy things again, not only by wiping out her memories of them in their plastic form but by removing her whole recollection of them, as though they had never been present in her mind”. ¹⁴⁴

Freud, whilst offering a cure, has also assumed complete control over his patients mind. She is a pliable, fragile leaf under his hypnosis and he determines what part of her own history she has access to. He cures whilst cutting, slicing at her own remembered life in order to control the present. At one point Freud recounts the onset of the patient’s menstruation after only a fortnight. “I promised to regulate this under hypnotic suggestion and, under hypnosis, set the interval at 28 days”. ¹⁴⁵ This was effective. Freud demonstrates his control over mind and body, the patient is enslaved by his powers. Her memories are not her own, her own body must be relinquished to the powers of the professional. She inhabits a world where her position is temporal, a walking through space that can be reclaimed, studied and controlled at the whim of another.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid 117

¹⁴⁵ Ibid 113

Freud concedes that he may have taken his power over the patient too far, describing how when he met Emmy von again after over a year, she was in good health but lamented that many of her most important moments in life she remembered only vaguely. Emmy von expresses concern to Freud that this is evidence of her weakening memory and Freud writes how he is careful not to tell her the correct reason for her amnesia.¹⁴⁶ Even the real truth behind her amnesia Freud holds back. Freud is content to let the loss of memory rest in the patients mind as a fault of her weak state; she is not in a position to know the reality of it. Freud is the paternal father, full of love and caring yet able to wield ultimate control over the penitent child.

Even as ways of interacting with the world changed, the position of women and their place within culture remained ultimately stable. Freud may have heralded a radical change in the way the physician related to the patient yet the female patient was still without autonomy, her body and mind could be altered as necessary, she may be cured but that was secondary to her concrete place within the symbolic order that medicine operated within. Moreover, Freud showed how easily both the body and mind of the woman was colonized by medical and patriarchal discourse. Freud's move from looking to listening expanded the scope of medical interactions with women without altering the bonds that discourse held over them. As always, notions of liberation, from illness, from social bindings, from injustice, operated within the group that sought to liberate and had strict caveats imposed upon freedom. Liberation was limited, allowing a firmly delineated boundary already prescribed within which women always pressed against. The modern woman thus travelled with fellow man yet always found her true horizon was netted and closed.

The body of modernism was distinctly gendered, and was there, always present, in the changing epoch of the age, playing its part, participating in the unification of person and technology, human and machine, culture, hegemony and hierarchy. Freud was a pivotal figure in theorizing the modern state of the person. He dealt with the ways the fissures between lived experience and perception exploded into neurosis and viewed the modern experience as one of continuous shock, adjustment and shock. The modern person suffered not just the alienation that the sped up time of modernism proffered; they also suffered

¹⁴⁶ Sigmund Freud. Joseph Breuer. *Studies on Hysteria*. Vol. 3, *the Penguin Freud Library*, Penguin Books, London 1991, 117-118

from the disjunctions that the process of the western capitalist system and its technologies caused.

For Marx, when workers do not share directly in the products of their work, they become alienated. In an ideal society, workers, by collectively sharing the bounty of their labour help define and create nature. "nature appears as his work and his reality...and he can therefore contemplate himself in a world he himself has created" .¹⁴⁷ Humans, in sharing collectively and equally their products, allow a point of reflection. Those products, in this moment of reflection, become part of the collective, human condition. "Human beings produce not only themselves, but the whole of nature, ...in accordance with the law of beauty" .¹⁴⁸ When the worker is removed from this process, they become alienated in every sense, from nature, their work and the products they create. Alienation abounds at every stage. The worker, estranged from their labour and its means, makes a fetish of the commodity. The commodity is worshipped as the ideal, an idealized product of wealth when in reality it is only a hollow byproduct of capitalism, empty and meaningless. Because of the gaps between labour, product and the distribution of labour products that capitalism creates, the workers' labour is objectified; the process of labour is transferred from the labourer to the product and the product becomes imbued with a power that is incorrectly dispersed. Because workers must sell their labour in order to get the necessities of life and the object of exchange is not the produce of their labour but the currency of it, the labourer, alienated already, detests their bondage to work in order to meet their daily needs. Thus the process of labour and its produce as a whole creates a range of human action that is intolerable. "estrangement manifests itself not only in the result, but also in the act of production, within the activity of production itself".¹⁴⁹ All human activity becomes centred on profit, any activity which has no profit value eventually ceases. In order for alienation and inequality to be rectified, a fundamental change on the mode of production must be brought about. Furthermore, under capitalist labor, machines gradually replace tasks ordinarily done by workers and workers as a consequence become alienated from the machines they must use in order to complete their labour.¹⁵⁰ This is technological alienation. "In technological alienation, human beings are not only dominated by the commodities they produce; the very tools with which human

¹⁴⁷ Amy.E.Wendling. *Karl Marx. On technology and Alienation*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2009, 15, as quoted Karl Marx

¹⁴⁸ Ibid 15, as quoted Karl Marx

¹⁴⁹ Amy.E.Wendling. *Karl Marx. On technology and Alienation*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2009, 16, as quoted Karl Marx

¹⁵⁰ ibid 51-56

beings labour dominate them".¹⁵¹ As machines become alienated from the labourers who use them, they are in turn fetishised and given an occultist status. "Machine fetishism is a product of technological alienation. Not only do workers use means of production that seem to operate by mystical and occult properties incomprehensible to the workers themselves, these machines increasingly display the very functions of which the worker is progressively deprived: mobility, diversification of task, and skill".¹⁵² Further, as workers continue to work with machines they become more like machines themselves. The technological utopia that machines are predicted to herald, where human labor is unnecessary is one which cannot be eventuated as a true utopia shared by all.

Marx was able to articulate the effect that modernism, in particular, Western, capitalist based modernism, had upon people. This was played out not only in the sensory bombardment of everyday life but in the industrialization of work and in the technologically enhanced killing of the war zone. Susan Buck Morris, in her seminal essay, *Aesthetics and Anaesthetics*, writes of the emergence of a technological prosthetics whereby technology comes to be used as a shield against the damaging effects of the modern condition. In describing the transformed process of synaesthetic s, where the mind interacts with outer and inner experience, she writes, "the powerfully prosthetic sense organs of technology are the new 'ego' of a transformed synaesthetic system. Now *they* provide the porous surface between inner and outer, both perceptual organ and mechanism of defense".¹⁵³

Just as the Claude, or black, mirror of the eighteenth century allowed the grandeur of nature to be reflected in a palatable form, technology becomes a mirror for the person, yet, like the Claude mirror, the reflection is not quite right, the reflection is of a body removed from regular reality and transposed into a prosthetic reality.¹⁵⁴ Buck Morris also points out that Jacques Lacan presented his theory of the mirror stage in 1936, a time between the wars where the full destructive capabilities of modernist technology had been witnessed. Lacan's theory was based upon the idea of an infant misreading, or misrecognizing its reflection of itself reflection in the mirror. The infant subsequently lives an illusion of a whole self when in

¹⁵¹ Ibid 56

¹⁵² Ibid 57

¹⁵³ Susan Buck- Mors. 1992 "Aesthetics and Anasthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered", *Downloaded www.jstor.org*. June 2009, 32 (emphasis Buck Mors)

¹⁵⁴ Arnaud Maillet. *The Claude Glass, Use and Meaning of the Black Mirror in Western Art*, Translated by Jeff Fort. Zone Books, New York, 2004

reality the self is fragmented.¹⁵⁵ The mirror is a way to reflect reality in a palatable form and in this sense the camera lens also enables a reflection of the world, mirrored and mediated through technology and presenting an image that is real and not real. Photography is the mirror of our times, the lens the way we are able to gain a foothold in the revolving dynamics of modern life.

Photography allows us to reflect back to history and for history to touch the present. It gives a power to photographs and creates a space for images such as those of the hysterics of the Salpêtrière to creep inside our mind, making audible their silent screams. The camera, as a machine, may have the funk of fetish about it yet it also, as a mirror, offers a reflection where the slight slippage of the real allows another reality to step in, one which I investigate in my own restaging of the hysteria photographs from the Salpêtrière.

¹⁵⁵ Edward Erwin. (Ed) *the Freud Encyclopedia, Theory, Therapy and Culture*, Routledge, New York, 2002, 86-87



Emily Windon, *Augustine- 11*, January 2011 100x 100cm

Performing Augustine- re-staging myself as the hysteric.

It is with the idea of the power of the lens to mediate the world that I approached the images of Augustine the hysteric and began a process of documenting in photographs my own re-staging of Augustine's hysterical fits. It is fitting that as I staged my photographs, in which I was the subject, I was able to see into the camera lens myself and to note its dark, somber qualities, similar to how the black convex mirror was described. The black mirror cast a reflection that was blackened and mysterious and the black convex mirror has for those reasons been associated with the dark arts of the occultists, attributed with dark, mystical qualities. The black convex mirror was given stronger powers than the simple convex as it allowed its user to converse with the dead and, with its absorbing of the gaze, had links to mesmerism and thus to the emerging idea of the unconsciousness. Due to its transgressive nature the black mirror was associated with sexual depravities and those on the peripherals of common, decent society.¹⁵⁶ It was a tool of those who looked in from the outside and using their mirror they were able to reflect society's underbelly where the dead were resurrected for the living and where reality was undermined by magic and mysticism. My lens, as I look into its darkened mirror, seems to invite me within its depths, to transport me to the past where I too may converse with the dead, with a history that has passed but which

¹⁵⁶ Arnaud Maillet. *The Claude Glass, Use and Meaning of the Black Mirror in Western Art*, Translated by Jeff Fort. Zone Books, New York, 2004, 47- 75

allows a window upon it. This history is myself, as Augustine, the patient of the Salpêtrière whose hysterical fits I recreate for the camera.

I am transfixed by the images of Augustine, and of who Augustine is. I can never know her beyond her photographic documentation as her history begins and ends with the Salpêtrière. There is a small amount of background history that seems to explain how she came to be a patient at the hospital; however, after a time at the Salpêtrière, she simply disappears. To be accurate, she disappears from documentation. In actuality, she walked out, without permission, disguised as a man. She must have known what would happen to her if she remained at the Salpêtrière, how she would be devoured by the needs of her doctors, and she hatched on an ingenious escape plan. Augustine was known as a hysteric. As a man, however, like the other men who passed in and out of the clinic, she was anonymous. Wandering out the door, as I like to imagine she did, slowly, nonchalantly, she was unnoticed. Without the damnation of her female gender to alert her keepers, she was free to vanish.

Augustine, I feel, was aware of her role and her position. Otherwise, how would she know the means of her escape, the necessity of her escape? She reminds us that these women were more than their illness; they had lives beyond the institution that were valuable to them, which they would want to return to. It is the images of Augustine that first led me to an interest in hysteria. The most photographed of all patients, her images are also among the most arresting. She seems to look past the lens to the viewer, asking their opinion, inviting the viewer to inhabit her world, before falling back into herself, doubling over, lost in her hysteria. I think most of all I feel a deep respect for Augustine, for the trauma that she suffered, for her ability to escape the patriarchy that had trapped her, for ability to remove herself so eloquently from the bonds of the institution. I want to know all I can about her yet only have the photographic images of her to draw from.

In order to understand her better, I decided to restage the photographs of her hysterical episodes. I wanted to inhabit her body, to imagine I was her, to feel what it was like to be photographed in the midst of an hysterical incident. In order to make the process more authentic, I wore a wig as my hair was short, and Augustine's long hair I felt was an important part of her hysteria. It allowed her to be coquettish; it allowed her to be uncontained. In the wildest of her fits, her hair would fly out madly, in her attitudes

passionelles her hair would fall about her seductively. The women of the Salpêtrière needed such embellishments of femininity; in the clinical hospital gown, hair was an important affirmation of the female sex and sexuality.

I also needed to use the photographs of Augustine as a reference point as it was important for me that I mimic the poses as accurately as possible. I didn't want to perform my own version of hysteria, I wanted to understand what it felt like to be that hysterical patient, and the best way for me, as a post-modern woman of the 2000's, was to accurately recreate the positions of hysteria. I took this very seriously, and this was a serious event for me. I felt I needed to ensure that this happened with a retaining of a sense of the dignity of the women who lived this life. I was careful to have with me a respect for the woman and Augustine in particular in the re-enactment process.

After preparing the studio and equipment, I took my place and began the first pose. The first thing I became aware of was how self-conscious I felt. It was night, my studio was very private, and only I and my partner were present. However, I was very uncomfortable, very aware of what I understood of as my vulnerability. Here I was, contorted on a bed, wearing undergarments in the place of regular dress, with a camera and operator centered on me. It was intimidating.

The second thing that struck me was how physically difficult this was. Each pose I initially went into myself and then asked my partner to correct according to the picture. I always felt I was fairly close to the position I was trying to recreate, however, my arm would need to be moved slightly, my head this way, my legs positioned here so that finally, when in the correct position, I was twisted in ways that were difficult to maintain. What looked like a fluid movement in a photo was something unnatural, like a jigsaw that had been incorrectly assembled. I was aware of each part of my body, aware of my presence in the image. I was present in that moment, trying to recreate what was absent- a person, a narrative.

Augustine's hysteria signified, through its visual impact, her difference to woman. Yet as Derrida points out, difference, which Augustine can be said to communicate through her acting of the sign of the hysteric, is never a simple concept of being defined by what it is not. For difference to be understood, it must be understood amongst the signs with which it is

defined, which make it different.¹⁵⁷ Augustine's hysteria always has around it both the typology of the hysteric and that of the normal woman and there is never a clear synthesis of one or the other, all states are travelled through in the flux of meaning. A similar thing happens to me when I attempt to recreate the images of Augustine- a part of me is Augustine and that history, just as a part is also me now. As these images are created they hold a trace of the past, an image beneath an image and I am able to move in this way from past to present, to inhabit momentarily the intervals between referents, between sign and meaning. I am able, for a moment, to be that woman from the past, to inhabit her space, momentarily, like a trace of a cultural memory, of all women defined as hysteric. That was me, in my own past and theirs and we share this together.

Hysteria is the complete subjugation of women into the male patriarchal order. It takes the discipline of science, which offered ways of freeing women from patriarchy as knowledge was opened and expanded, then ensured that women could not escape as they were subsumed into the very methodology which could free them. As earlier discussed, women's bodies were the initial point at which they entered the new scientific hegemony and it was their psyche which finally shut the door. However, it was a door which would be pushed open slightly and at times the hysteric was able to see the light of freedom.

The hysteric enacted the stage of the semiotic, an important and powerful drive which is suppressed as a child moves into the social order. Kristeva describes the semiotic as the preverbal (pre oedipal) impulses and drives that are chaotic and uncontrolled.¹⁵⁸ The semiotic is the pre-social body; the symbolic is the mediation of the self through social space. However, the symbolic is needed to understand the semiotic whilst the semiotic threatens to destabilize the symbolic. It is a constant rubbing of one against the other, two poles both connected and repelled. The hysteric was able to rupture through the symbolic by returning to the semiotic, preverbal drive. Thus it was all the more important for the Doctors of the Salpêtrière to inscribe their own language onto the hysteric, through the cataloging and ordering of the hysterical impulse, and (re)place the women firmly within their symbolic, patriarchal order.

¹⁵⁷ John Sturrock. (ed) *Structuralism and since from Lévi Strauss to Derrida*, Oxford University Press, UK, New York, 1979, 154- 179

¹⁵⁸ Julia Kristeva. *Powers of Horror, an Essay on Abjection*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1980

The surrealists saw this potential for subversion of the dominant hegemony that the hysterics held and in their own search for ways to subvert the symbolic order they recognized in the hysteric her jouissance and abjectness and what she could offer them in their quests for anarchy. The surrealists, themselves questionable in their attitudes towards women, none the less saw the power in the hysterical feminine and she consequently held an important place in the avant garde ideology. The work of the avant garde, their creative input, called into question and sought to destabilize the symbolic order. They embraced the jouissance of the semiotic impulse and brought that jouissance into their work and thus the social world, allowing the semiotic to transgress the symbolic.¹⁵⁹ The surrealists surely recognized in the hysteric the power she held to transfix and arrest the viewer, to bring them closer to a memory of semiotic (preverbal) life, where liberation from the disappointments and injustices of the world was offered.

Irigaray, in her close analysis of hysterical discourse, taken from transcripts of interviews with patients, observes that when the hysteric talks about the world, it is in relation to another, not to herself. For Irigaray, this indicates that the hysteric is unable to integrate with the world, that it must always be negotiated by someone else.¹⁶⁰ The world, more frequently discussed as concrete, rather than inanimate, is disconnected- a hard, earthy, disconnected reality to which the hysteric is unable to directly engage with. "The world is actualized in the form of material objects, always exterior to the subject of enunciation, whose character establishes an equivocal relationship of possession."¹⁶¹

Irigaray realized that when the hysteric talked of places, it was precise places always spoken of in relation to another person. Irigaray concluded that the hysteric transfers responsibility for speech to the interlocutor-the other in the conversation. The hysteric lacks their own experience of the world. In this way, the female hysteric could easily be players in the agenda of the clinician of the Salpêtrière -the concrete reality of the walls of the Salpêtrière inhabited their own reality. The regulated structures of institutional life replaced the lack of their own, filled the void of their own missing dialogues with the externalities of life. They easily slipped into the symbolic order that the Salpêtrière represented, they were like a mould being filled and they poured themselves freely into it.

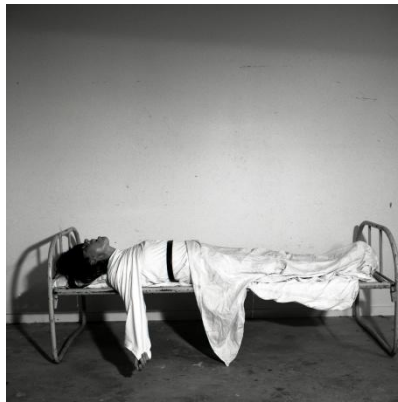
¹⁵⁹ Elizabeth Wright(ed) *Feminism and Psychoanalysis, a Critical Dictionary*, Blackwood, Oxford, UK. 1992, 197

¹⁶⁰ Luce Irigaray. *To Speak is never Neutral*, Continuum, London 2002, 45

¹⁶¹ Ibid 45

In my re-enactments of the hysterical episodes of Augustine, I wanted to somehow help free her from the symbolic, to empower her and all hysterics in these images. I thought of giving her a language but remembered that she already had one- her language of gestures was already inscribed upon her and this was illuminated by the very difficulty I found in re-enacting her poses. How precise each one was- her move from the symbolic would not be easy. I began to see that perhaps the best way to free her would be simply to print nothing- no gesture, no words, just a space for her to be, to make an action that could not be inscribed and would set her free. I realized also that as I was re-enacting these images and trying to free Augustine from her history, I was finding a way to approach my own history, my own memories and my own images that had been imprinted to my consciousness. My fascination with Augustine was also a link to a past of my own that I dare not approach too deeply lest I reawaken some spirit of hysteria buried within myself. As I viewed the images of my reenacted photographs, I felt that they belonged in a book of their own and that beside each one could be printed a simple square of black, a concrete void without language or gesture, a space where the hysteric could speak freely, a place like a black mirror, into which could be poured her true self, her own discourse, untouched and raw.

I often wonder what happened to Augustine after she left the Salpêtrière.



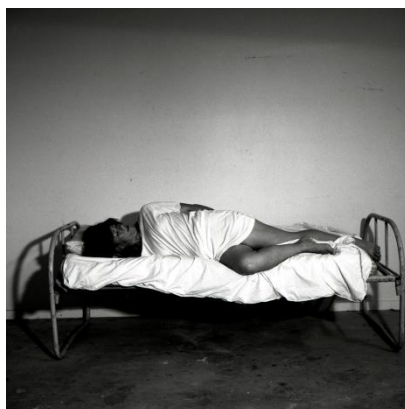
Emily Windon, *Augustine- 23*, January 2011 100x 100cm



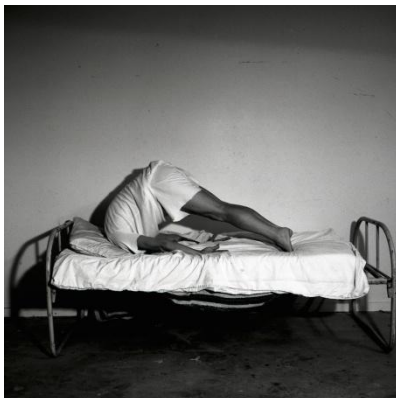
Emily Windon, *Augustine- 30*, January 2011 100x 100cm



Emily Windon, *Augustine- 4*, January 2011 100x 100cm



Emily Windon, *Augustine- 20*, January 2011 100x 100cm



Emily Windon, *Augustine- 2*, January 2011 100x 100cm

Chapter Eleven: The Carnivorous Machine

*"On a rainy day in Cologne a teaching aid catalogue caught my attention. I saw advertisements for all kinds of models- mathematical, geometrical, anthropological, zoological, botanical, anatomical, mineralogical and paleontological- all elements of such a differing nature that the absurdity of their being gathered together confused my eyes and my mind, calling forth hallucinations which in turn gave the objects represented new and rapidly changing meaning."*¹⁶²

In the beginning of the twentieth century, despite attempts by industrialists such as Taylor and Ford to unite man and machine, the human body and machine were seen as separate and alien to one another. Yet the human machine dynamic was integral to modernism and could not be ignored. The machine had become embedded in the psyche of modernism and this was reflected in the philosophical and creative outputs of the age. The machine was a prosthetic for humans yet it was a joining that was problematic, raising questions of violated boundaries and disenfranchisement. The steel surface of the machine reflected back to humans the fear of power and death as both were locked in a union that could not be annulled. The machine- human aided technology built from automated constructions is a part of contemporary life so essential that without it, our daily existence would be halted. This dependence on machines, as I have explained, began with modernism and is a central tenant of the modern psyche. The machine is the conveyer belt that brings the enlightenment into the present, the pinnacle of the new ways of seeing the world where knowledge has come together to create unison of steel and energy in automated power. The machine is not to be taken lightly. It is both a reality and an ideal that has defined the modern world and continues to do so. The machine, also, can be seen as having a masculine aura around it. Cold, hard, powerful, it is connected to male ideals of strength and control. It captures and parcels time as it works through its units of power, just as the male scientist captured and parceled the world into units of study and categories. This force of machismo, the machine, not yet the robot, carried the young modern into the new century, reflecting all the while on its cold black surface the fear and trepidation humans felt for its potential.

While the Western world of the new twentieth century was in the full swing of a capitalist economy, its success underpinned by the co-workings of people and industrial mechanics, there was a deep mistrust of the machine in general. However, the machine already had a

¹⁶² Ulrich Bischoff. *Max Ernst 1891- 1976 Beyond Painting*, Taschen, Cologne, 1988, 18. Ernst's words as quoted by Bischoff.

difficult history in society, being the cause of many industrial accidents resulting in death and maiming. Its power to methodically injure its human operator was well known. In addition to this, the First World War offered a reality of mass killing aided by technology- the cold steel of guns, canons and bullets slicing flesh and devouring life.

The human and machine was a concept in opposition, the machine or body could only be joined positively or negatively, there was no middle ground.¹⁶³ Technology was seen as both an extension of the body, prosthesis, and a subtractor of the body, demonic. Hal Foster, writing of the time, calls this duality the “double logic of the prosthesis”.¹⁶⁴ Modernists, acting in this duality, sought to either resist technology through a return to the natural body, or accelerate technology by a move to a post natural body. The art movements can similarly be read along these lines and, Dada, in particular, can be seen as a critique of technology whilst Max Ernst’s Dadaism set and critiqued technology within capitalism.¹⁶⁵

Surrealism went further and exposed the Dadaist underpinning of technology and the body, presenting a body castrated and dismembered “the machine as a castrative trauma and as a phallic shield against such trauma”.¹⁶⁶ This is an idea bound in what Foster describes as a fetishistic logic which can be traced in the writings of Marinetti and Whyndham Lewis. Both these people, while having opposing views, were united in their use of the damaged body of the worker\soldier.

Both viewed the technological sublime in different ways, for Marinetti, it was an aesthetic pleasure of self-destruction, for Lewis, a shielding of the ego. As Marinetti and Lewis were describing the ways in which technology added to or took from the body, Freud was describing his notion of binding and unbinding- bound: submitted to control, unbound: open to discharge. Both were human states of instinctual energy. In individuals, the first binding occurs in the ego which then binds other states. When shock occurs, this process of binding integrating the bound is disrupted.

For Marinetti, the futurists suffered a death from the womb environment of pre-futurism and a rebirth as futurists- modern centaurs, half man, half machine. Marinetti sought to merge machine and nature, for both to procreate and create not just a reconciliation of man

¹⁶³ Hal Foster. *Prosthetic Gods*, MIT Press, Cambridge 2004, 109-110

¹⁶⁴ Ibid 110

¹⁶⁵ Ibid 113

¹⁶⁶ Ibid 114

and machine but a hybrid, a unified joining of man and machine. Technology is a phallic power and Marinetti, in his futurist rebirth, becomes that phallus. As he is reborn into futurism, he is cast into a muddy ditch by his upturned car and feels, “the white hot iron of joy pass through my heart”.¹⁶⁷ He has unified himself with machine and has re-birthed as the futurist machinic phallus, human/ machine in one. Marinetti advocated mass death and rebirth into technology. The modern experience should be a desire for death, for human self-annihilation.

Whilst Marx saw the worker as being subjected to the machine via capitalism, Marinetti saw the machine and technology as a way to a better state, offering a reconfiguration of man and machine infinitely better than before.

In “beyond the Pleasure Principle”, Freud wrote of the process he termed exogenesis. This is where a protective shield is extruded in answer to repeated external stimuli. This shield, or ectoderm, then screens stimuli for the preceding layers. This concept is very similar to Freud’s mystic writing pad and both arose as a reaction to the problematic nature of the human and modern life. For Wyndham Lewis, whose work explored human- technology interactions, the shield is a hardened crust transformed by stimulus and shock which protects a naked, pulsing, soulless interior. The body, when it becomes machinic, gathers its amour, simultaneously exposing the non human within the human.

Freud returned to his theories of trauma after witnessing the psychosis of returning World War one soldiers. His theory of the ego, as with Lacan’s, can be linked to the witnessing of fascist regimes, warfare and their fallout. In these theories, the disrupted ego fails to bind internally to make a whole and instead binds with external objects, thus explaining the fascist tendency to merge human and weapon and for war to become an inner experience. As one Frekurps officer asked of the time, “was I not machine-cold metal”?¹⁶⁸ Max Ernst served in an artillery unit of World War one and later wrote of the period that he died in 1914 and was resuscitated in 1918. On his resuscitation, he becomes dadamax, a machinic maker of machines.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Ibid 118

¹⁶⁸ Hal Foster. *Prosthetic Gods*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004, 155

¹⁶⁹ Ibid 114- 155

Surrealist concepts have the uncanny as an important underpinning. The uncanny, according to Freud, and as shown in surrealist works, results when something re-appears that has been made strange in its reappearance through repression. The surrealists, active in a time that saw the mass destruction of World War one, as well as the rise of industrial capitalism and its associated technologies, saw the machine as an agent of the uncanny because it confused the life/ death boundaries.

The truly uncanny objects were those such as wax works figures that confused the human and non human. A double, “is a primordial protector of the ego that, repressed, returns as a present harbinger of death”.¹⁷⁰ The surrealists utilized this idea in their use of the double tool/ machine, object/ commodity. Foster goes on to argue that the idea of the uncanny is dependent on the industrialization of the economy, where the person becomes doubled, taken over, by the machine. The machine is humanities’ doppelganger, made uncanny, harboring the ghost of the human beneath its external shell. It is alive without self-determination, a human without moral limits. The machine is our own repressed desire for violence and retribution, contained within steel and cable and channeled into working for the progress of humankind.

The machine began by aiding human actions in pre industrialization but in post industrial society it superseded the human who became a molded prosthetic to the machine. Thus the human is no longer able to utilize the machine as a tool; the machine utilizes the human as its tool. “The modern machine thus emerges not only as an uncanny double but as a demonic master.”¹⁷¹ The precursor to the modern machine/ human was the automaton, linked with the idea of the docile human and, in nineteenth century romantic literature, the demonic human doppelganger. The human machine was symbolic of the cult of the machine and was used to critique it and the states that embraced it- capitalist, communist and fascist. As technology progressed, the machine became alinged with the technological soldier- man-/ machine/ soldier of the state. The surrealists made what Foster describes as mechanistic grotesques- machine, human military combinations to attack the “technophilic movements”

¹⁷⁰ Hal Foster. *Compulsive Beauty*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1993, 128

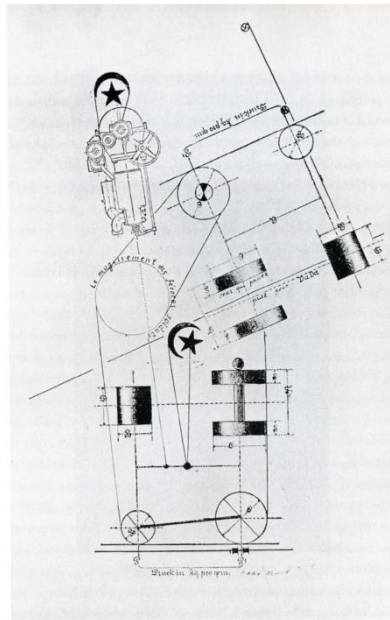
¹⁷¹ Ibid 129

of the time.¹⁷² The producing and consuming body had become automated, robotized and it was this conjunction that the surrealists parodied and critiqued.¹⁷³

Max Ernst was particularly interested in critiquing the role of the machine in society and much of his early work played out the notion of anthropomorphic machines. His collages were derived from engineering schematics, many of which were found in technical magazines, and printing blocks and he used impersonal, anonymous techniques to form the base of his images. Ernst drew on the DADA tropes of nonsense in both his layout of the images and in the titles he gave them, giving just enough information to allow his intentions to be decoded. His mixing of machine, sexuality and conventional art was met with consternation from the public, with his own father berating him for the shame he had bought upon the family name.

The collages seem to represent a society that has been dismembered by the war and rebuilt as a new human race, to which Ernst has provided the diagrams in what Foster sees as an armoring of male body. For Foster, Ernst's images are a direct violation of the "humanist ideals of art and individuality cherished by the classes that forced the war in the first place."

174



¹⁷² Hal Foster. *Compulsive Beauty*. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1993, 136

¹⁷³ *ibid* 125- 150

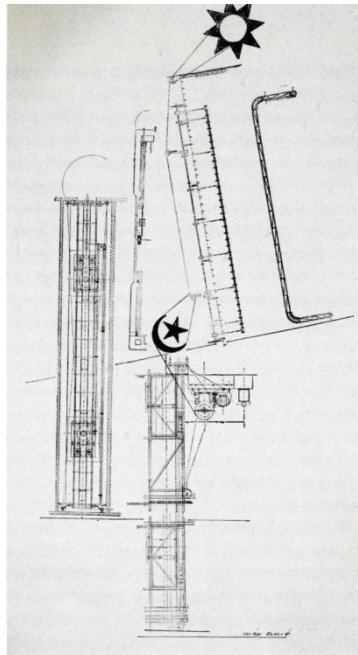
¹⁷⁴ *Ibid* 166

The Roaring of Ferocious Soldiers, Max Ernst, 1919- 20¹⁷⁵

Ernst blends machine and human, however it is a union that is dysfunctional, where the machine replaces the damaged functionality of the human psyche, scarred from war and almost offering itself to be consumed by industrial mechanization.

Ernst's images can be seen as diagrams of a dystopian future, parodies of the utopian ideas put forward by such thinkers as Vladimir Tatlin who embraced the ethos of industrialization as a way to transform society.

"The Ernst figures totter toward failure more than flight: indeed, his roaring soldiers, hypertrophic trophies, and self-constructed little machines point to phallic regimes in distress".¹⁷⁶



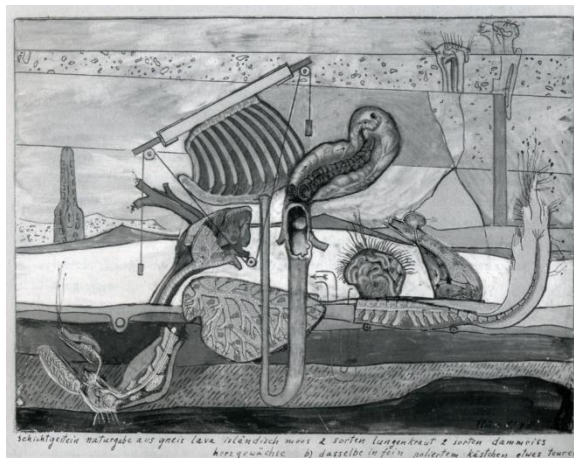
Hypertrophic Trophy, Max Ernst, 1919- 20¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Ibid 164

¹⁷⁶ Hal Foster. *Compulsive Beauty*. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1993, 174

¹⁷⁷ Hal Foster. *Prosthetic Gods*. MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004, 165

Ernst moves from these works to using pages from scientific and technical texts as a base for over painting. These images, however, are populated not by mechanical/ human pairing but by the seemingly vestigial parts of the mechanical body. His image, *Stratified Rocks, Nature's Gift of Gneiss Lava Icelandic Moss...*, shows an environment where the human has departed, leaving behind a place littered with organs which form the strata of the landscape. The mechanical still has a function within this bizarre world; however it is more as an aide to manipulating the environment of gross formations, maneuvering them into positions suggesting dominance and control.



Stratified Rocks, Nature's Gift of Gneiss Lava Icelandic Moss... Max Ernst, 1920¹⁷⁸

Ernst is able in his works to take images from the respected science of the time and subvert them to his own agenda, creating worlds which parody the supposed order of civilized industrial society, exposing its rotting underbelly of chaos and destruction, something which he witnessed firsthand as a soldier in WW1.

Ernst's magnificent suit of images, *Une Semaine De Bonté*, takes illustrations from popular magazines and using collage and printing techniques, creates a world of mythology where hysteria acts as a central element.¹⁷⁹ Hysteria played an important part in Dada and surrealist activity, as already discussed, hysteria allowed a direct link to the subconscious and the hysterical woman was admired for her ability to remain free from the tropes of civilized

¹⁷⁸ Hal Foster. *Prosthetic Gods*, MIT Press, Cambridge 2004, 188

¹⁷⁹ Max Ernst. *Une Semaine De Bonté, A Surrealistic Novel in Collage*, Dover Publications, New York, 1976

behavior. Ernst, in these images, embraces the hysterical women and what she symbolizes and creates what could be a handbook for the time- a society of politeness overturned by chaos, of symbols carrying empty meaning and of a ruptured world desperately trying to reassert itself. Ernst was prolific in the period between the two wars in the milieu of uncertainty before the cataclysm of WWII. He mapped the changing relationship between technology and culture, one that had lost its innocence and was soon to be embraced in the deathly grip of WWII.

Ernst's combined interest in machines, technology and psyche hark back to the idea of the machine as the uncanny demonic other. He seems to be injecting machines with sentience, proposing the question of a union with human and machine and asking what the offspring of that fateful propagation would be like.



From the suite, *Lundi*, Max Ernst¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Max Ernst. *Une Semaine De Bonté, A Surrealistic Novel in Collage*, Dover Publications, New York, 1976, 64



From the suite, *Samendi*, Max Ernst ¹⁸¹

Max Ernst presented a world that was fragmented. His collages juxtaposed diverse parts to make a new whole, to present what has been described as, “a disruption in representation and a disruption in subjectivity”. ¹⁸² The bringing together of disparate groups creates a feeling of anxiety which is found in both the collages and the later group of the *Une Semaine De Bonté*...etchings. Ernst’s work is like a litmus of the time, revealing a cultural anxiety over the direction that technology was taking society. This cultural anxiety is just as relevant today, however the machine of Ernst’s time has evolved and our anxiety is centered on the idea of the cyborg- the humanoid robot, machine based, highly intelligent, self determining and self replicating. The issues are still the same, although the protagonist is less steel and more plastic. The machine of today is digital.

¹⁸¹ Ibid 205

¹⁸² Hal Foster. Rosalind Krauss. *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism*, Thames and Hudson, UK, 2004, 184

I followed the model that Ernst set for the making of collages in my own group of collages in which I presented a mythical place of human\ machine birth and rebirth, collaboration and disjunction. Just as Ernst used humor to convey pressing issues, I ensured my own collages were slightly comical. I also sought to use the fragmentation and disruption of visual symbols in my images, whilst retaining their overall message. I intended to portray a slightly wacky world where machines and humans have begun on a journey together to a new utopia, a journey that that society is considering in our present digital age.



Bring forth your young, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 40x 34cm

The Paradoxical Utopian Pageant of Desires

Photomontage, or collage, takes the products of mass cultural imagery and reframes it for an alternative platform of discussion. It intervenes in the social and cultural psyche, piercing its very fabric- the mass produced image, the signifier of the symbolic order. The German Dadaists recognized the power of collage and it became an effective weapon against the rising propaganda of the German National Socialist Party prior to WWII, so much so that they risked political persecution through their work. By rupturing the visual hegemony through using popular photographic images presented in fragmented and disparate ways, they were able to disrupt the visual flow of the viewer and present a new commentary. The Dadaists of Berlin pre-war Germany later left the early focus on disjunction behind and began incorporating narrative and text as a way to directly reach a large audience. The climate they were working in was one of extreme tension and danger as the National Socialist party began moving closer to the devastating fascist policies they would implement in WWII and thus the Dada message needed to be delivered in a direct and political way. While keeping the

medium of collage the message was less ambiguously presented and reflected more closely the propaganda posters of the National Socialists.¹⁸³

I am particularly interested in the dada collage work before it became so overtly political- whilst I can see the necessity of the change and the urgency the German artists must have felt, in the calmer times of today I can appreciate the quiet and playful subversion that their less literal collages offered.



The Coquette, Hanna Hoch, 1922-25¹⁸⁴

It is from this starting point of playful subversion that I began my own series of collages, *The Paradoxical Utopian Pageant of Desires*.

I have always enjoyed looking through old text and instructional books. They usually date from around the 1950's and they are a way of seeing how the world has changed. This is reflected not only in the text and images, much of which is no longer relevant due to new discoveries in science, nature, and technology, but the age is also reflected in the actual physicality of the book. When you open the pages you are met with a distinct smell- musty and pungent. The pages have a feel that comes with age and with the use of older printing processes. The book has begun to break down slightly and sometimes there is mould growing

¹⁸³ Hal Foster. Rosalind Krauss. *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism*, Thames and Hudson, UK, 2004, 168- 173

¹⁸⁴ <http://madamepickwickartblog.com/2009/11/not-a-sugar-dadas-girl/>, downloaded April 2011

along the seams of the paper. The book is a link to a time long gone, a reminder of the continuous passing of life.

The books dealing with science and technology seem to have an optimism about them. They praise the wonders of mans achievements and technological prowess. They point to a technological utopia, where machines brilliantly help man (it is almost always man in these books) achieve bounties of wondrous advancement, but to what is uncertain. Technology here is reproduced over and over with man standing by, ready to jump in when needed like an obstetrician delivering a baby from a first time mother. These books are an archive of the post -WWII optimism where the wounds of the war have healed and technology can be used for peace time pursuits once again and man is most definitely in control and at the helm.

In my collages I wanted to maintain the authenticity of this time and use the images taken directly from the books I had collected over a number of years. These images were then juxtaposed with wallpaper, symbolic of the home life and perhaps the background of the rooms in which these books were first read. They were then finished with trimmings of lace and fringing, each image becoming a small theatre of dyslexic hope and desire.

I wanted the collages to present an idea of a machine dystopia, where humans and machine have joined and work together in an existential void, working endlessly and pointlessly towards some final purpose. I wanted to suggest playfully the birth of this union and then leave the viewer to interpret how that may have occurred. The images are meant to be humorous yet they hold a serious message for me which I have been teasing out throughout my research- the role of technology in society and where women fit in our journey along the technologically aided road. We seem to hope technology will bring us a utopia of equality and peace yet so far, there have been many examples of technology creating dystopias of war, death and destruction. These images are a little of that dystopian utopia. In this union which has not gone quite right, hearts are minced, babies drop out of machines, and things are put back together in incongruous ways.

Social theorist, Paul Virilio, who describes himself as an “art critic of technology”, has commentated extensively on the effects of technology on society.¹⁸⁵ Virilio takes a hesitant

¹⁸⁵ John Armitage. (ed) *Paul Virilio from Modernism to Hypermodernism and Beyond*, Sage Publications, London, 2000, 40

approach to technology and critiques our cultural acceptance of technological progress and positive outcomes. He speaks of the military industrial complex and the atomic bomb as bringing about a state of pure war, which arose from the invention of atomic power and the threat of WWII and total nuclear annihilation. Resistance to destruction became centered on threat rather than an actual enemy. WWII did not happen yet the threat was so large and real and the technology of destruction always ever more vast and devastating that there came about a resistance to the technology of war itself. "Thus resistance to pure war is of another nature than resistance to an oppressor, to an invader. It is resistance against science: that is extraordinary, unheard of." ¹⁸⁶ Technology has become a destructive global force that continues to evolve unhindered for Virilio and his writing seeks to unpack these negative outcomes of technological progress on society. He looks at our cultural understandings of technology and raises questions about the relationship between technological innovation and society. He describes every technological innovation as incurring also a loss- technology has in this sense a debt always with it, it takes as it gives. Taking the example of photography and cinema, he explains that these innovations, in their ability to capture images instantly, have bought about an aesthetics of disappearance where the emergence of an image in materials such as paint or marble has been replaced by images that occur via disappearance. The photograph captures something which is not there after the shutter has closed. It is an appearance made possible through its disappearance, an image erupting from the subject's own annihilation in time. ¹⁸⁷

My collages are an attempt to bring into visibility a world where machines and humans co-habit, a world of hybrids made from steel and flesh, where the impossible is quirkily real. It is the presentation of my internal space, from my psyche, compiled from the real world of texts, the creation of an imagined chaos out of the ordered habitat of the instructional manual. As I cut my images from their context and paste them into new ones, I am creating a place that I am in control of, a stage for my own version of events. That is the power of collage, it allows a re-ordering of already accepted and recognized components, rearranged for new programs of instruction.

The idea of the human machine hybrid is a construct which has moved from fiction to reality as we increase our reliance on technology as prosthesis to our human limitations, both

¹⁸⁶ Ibid 37

¹⁸⁷ Ibid 41

physical and intellectual. Rosi Braidotti sees technology as acting as a bridge between the consciousness and unconsciousness, allowing a way for the problematic issue of subjectivity in nineteenth century modernity to be approached.¹⁸⁸ Braidotti sees technology as forming a link, inhabiting a transition zone that is always gendered. The ultimate embodiment of technology- the robot, is made in the image of a human and is portrayed as either the impotent male, as in Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, or as the sexualized female, such as the female robot Maria in the iconic film *Metropolis*. The robot is the exotic technologised other, waiting to be given life via its (male) maker. It is akin to a corpse, inert, soulless and is raised from its deathly inaction through the power of technology. Technology gives life; it enables the harnessing of the natural world for the sole purpose of aiding human life. The robot is a slave in this endeavor, created as the machinic double of human, without a soul, able to do things that the human cannot. The robot, built from steel, made of cogs and gears and energized with the base power of electricity, is birthed from the human/ machine union. As the robot evolves alongside human and technological growth, however, the steel is replaced with silicon and the cogs with the computer chip. The robot has given way to the cyborg.



Lost in thought, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 40x 38cm

¹⁸⁸ Rosi Braidotti. *Metamorphoses Towards a Materialist theory of Becoming*, Polity Press, USA, 2002, 218



Intelligent design, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 40x 34cm



On the assembly line, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 40x 32cm



Out for a walk, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 42x 35cm



The birth of civilization, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 42x 35cm



The three sibyls, Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009 34x 40cm



The cyclic transformation (detail), Emily Windon, paper collage, 2009

Chapter Twelve: *The Glittering Schism of Newness*

"We are perhaps the wound, the sickness of nature" ¹⁸⁹

Just as the age of enlightenment and its resultant scientific discoveries brought about deep shifts in understanding the world and a corresponding uneasiness about the new modern age, today's discoveries in new technologies seem to herald a similar new way of seeing the world. It brings with it also a tension between the new and the old. The lens of modernism has been superseded by the digitalization of computer technologies and the digital world we now live in requests a remapping of the world seen through the lens into a world disseminated into information bites. This is a time of complex breaking down, where the body is mapped into genetic codes and the medical atlas is superseded by the human genome project, allowing each gene to be entered into a data base of knowledge whose ownership is highly contested and vied for commercially. Scientific undertakings such as the human genome project represent the need we have to understand the world in smaller and more detailed bites of information as we continue to map, order and catalogue the world. We are at the cusp of a changing understanding of the world and just as the body was central to the mapping of the world through the modern gaze, the body, or its disappearance, is central in the search for new knowledge.

There is a tension between new technologies and the older, analogue process and this tension is often played out in debates surrounding the fragility of nature. Technology is viewed as artificial, removed from the disorder of nature and the two seem to clash and compete. Many artists, in their dialogue and reaction to the growth of a technologically reliant world have focused on this tension of nature and technology in their work. Three artists in particular, work with the frame of the diorama to present what curator Toby Kamps terms, a "boxed reality". ¹⁹⁰ Using the frame of the diorama allows a constructed reality to be presented that questions the reality it draws upon, which is, in the case of these three artists, one where nature is continually buffeted by the demands of progress. Marian Drew, Kate Rohde and Beverly Veasey each approach their subject matter in a different way yet they all share a lingering doubt about the successful integration of technology and the natural world and the cultural implications of the jarring that nature and technology incur on everyday life.

¹⁸⁹ Georges Bataille. *Inner Experience*, State University of New York Press, USA, 1988, 169

¹⁹⁰ "Small World Dioramas in Contemporary Art" Museum of Contemporary art, San Diego, Toby Kamps curator, Jan 23- Apr 30 2000, D>A>P Distributed Art Publishers, 16

Shared amongst the artists is a common dialogue with science, nature and gender and a recurring sense of dis-ease.

Marian Drew

Marian Drew looks at wildlife and nature and the effect that humans have on the natural world. Drew meticulously stages the settings for her images, composing dramatically lit still lives in the tradition of Dutch vanitas paintings. The subject of the still lives, however, is not the abundant harvest of the farmer or hunter but the deceased road kill of Australian wildlife.

I remember when living in Tasmania being overwhelmed by the abundances of wildlife, the rampant wilderness of the bush and how teeming with native animals it was. I also vividly remember the large numbers of squashed animals lying on the roads, killed by passing cars. On my own twenty kilometer stretch of road a flyblown carcass would appear every fifteen or so meters. I couldn't understand how it was possible to hit so many animals but they would always be there, old rotted carcasses replaced by new ones daily.

Drew takes these deceased animals as the starting point for her images, restaging them in a luscious setting of fruit, velvet drapery and objects of domestic life. Drew pays meticulous attention to lighting, her use of long exposures and her technique of painting with light allows her to give the images a painterly quality with rich hues and deep tonal ranges, a quality she describes as photographic verisimilitude. By giving the images such a painterly quality and placing them in the visual tradition of the still life, Drew allows us to find in the familiar questions about our own natural resources. By placing the animals on settings of the female domestic, such as embroidered table cloths and delicate, painted crockery, Drew also positions the images within a dialogue of colonialism and femininity.

These animals, part of the valued natural resources of pre-colonial indigenous Australia, became pests upon European settlement and are still thought of in that way by many Australians. Like much of our native flora and fauna, they have lost their connection to our everyday life and culture, meeting their deaths so often under the wheels of cars that continuously rush their occupants to their destinations. The animals in Drew's settings sit amongst a beauty anomalous to their unsightly and often gruesome deaths, allowing us to

move beyond the needless violence of their demise and question what role they have for us in contemporary Australian culture.

Drew works with the intersection of contemporary culture and the natural world and illuminates the jarring that occurs as the two meet. She shows us the uneasy relationship that nature has to our modern, fast paced life and the fragility of the animals that fight for a place alongside us in the contemporary world. She draws upon history and subtle symbolism to allow us to enter her critique gently and knowingly whilst valuing the importance of aesthetic traditions in presenting unpleasant subjects.

Possum with Five Birds, Marian Drew, 2003 ¹⁹¹

Image of Possum with Five Birds can be found at

<http://mariandrew.com.au/index.php?mact=Album,m4,default,1&m4albumid=38&m4returnid=50&page=50>

Kate Rohde

Kate Rohde is a sculptor who is interested in presenting nature to us in its most fantastical and excessive forms. Rohde draws inspiration from Baroque and Rococo styles and recreates the wunderkammers of the European collections of the enlightenment. The Wunderkammer was a mirror of its culture where nature was gathered and re-presented in the ordered collections of the upper class gentleman. It sought to illustrate the depth of knowledge that the owner of the collection held and to stand testament to their hierarchical status as overseer of exotic cultures, primitive artifacts and the natural world. The Wunderkammer was a place where nature could be observed without the need to undergo the dangers of travel and adventure and it was presented purposefully in ornate and decorative cabinets, emphasizing its rarefaction and dissociation from its original source.

Rohde recreates in her dioramas this same excessiveness of decoration, emphasizing the Wunderkammer's tendency to deviate from an accurate portrayal of specimens in the service of creating an aesthetically pleasing display. Her sculptures of creatures in highly ornate cabinets are dripping in decoration. Like sugary creatures from a fairytale, they sit amongst flowers, crystals and have coats that are bejeweled and sweetly fluffy.

¹⁹¹ "Death Becomes Them", *Photofile*, volume 79, summer: 55, 2007

Rohde makes all her own sculptures, casting each piece in a laborious process which allows her to have full control over the final result. She uses the readily made craft materials of polystyrene, faux fur, costume jewelry beading and craft glue. Her pieces are deliberately unfinished, in the sense that beneath their decorative surface lurks a knowing un – sophistication. This is no professional museum model; Rohde is an intense version of the household hobby folk artist.

Rohde seems to be mirroring our own culture back at us, just as the Wunderkammer mirrored the culture of the enlightenment to its viewers. However the culture that Rohde shows us is one of culture of wasteful excess. In our rush to acquire and consume we end up with mountains of glitzy detritus harboring an emptiness which comes through as the erosion of newness sets in. We look to nature for meaning away from the emptiness of acquiring yet we want a nature that suits our purposes, one which is carefully controlled and packaged for the needs of the consumer.

In speaking on her work, Rohde explains:

“I have been incorporating decorative elements typical of Baroque and Rococo style over the last year. The highly ornate nature of these styles reveals on closer inspection that much of the patterning is drawn largely from flora and fauna. The combination of motifs from these movements, with dioramas featuring faux specimens of animal, vegetable and mineral, create a sense of the richness and excess of culture intertwined with the splendors of nature to produce a spectacular example of humans seeking to have control over their environment.”¹⁹² The nature Rohde presents is slickly sweet, a juxtaposition of real and artificial that mimics our desire for authenticity with a need to be pampered with altered truths. Beauty slips into garishness in her work, she presents an excess of consumption and a frenzy of decoration balanced precariously yet ably with the ideals of fine art.

Flourish 2008 mixed media installation, Kate Rohde¹⁹³

Image of the installation Flourish can be found at <http://twma.com.au/exhibitions/event/kate-rohde-flourish/>

¹⁹² http://www.saatchigallery.co.uk/yourgallery/artist_profile/Kate+Rohde/7269.html

¹⁹³ “Kate Rohde: Flourish, TarraWarra Museum of Art”, *Artlink*, vol 28 no 3: 87 (review)

Beverly Veasey

Beverly Veasey's work looks at the interaction of humans and nature, in particular the effect that the activities of humans have on the natural world. In her series, *elsewhere*, 2003, Veasey captures an urban environment in which almost all signs of life are gone.¹⁹⁴ There is a disquieting absence in the photos. The spaces she presents are empty and vacant, surreal like in their abandonment. Any human presence in the images seems out of place, people become trespassers in an uninhabited, voided landscape. In these images, Veasey shows us an environment from which we are disconnected and alienated.

Melissa Miles writes of the photograph as being able to act like a representation of the psyche. When the camera shutter closes, it is as if we close our eyes and the camera turns inwards, capturing the inner workings of the mind.¹⁹⁵ In this sense Veasey's *elsewhere* images are like a projection of a dream. Eerie, unsettling, the camera lens has closed and shown us a world where presence is found only in absence and emptiness pervades the spaces we inhabit. Veasey's series presents for us a reflection of how modern life seems to disconnect people so easily, leaving a sense of emotional loss.

Speaking of the places in the series *elsewhere*, Veasey says they are, "transitory locations in our lives. Time is suspended, the air is still. These are the worlds we pass through. Snippets of life forever paused".¹⁹⁶ Veasey is highlighting the discordance of our modern lives and in this work has begun a long running investigation of the effect of contemporary living on the environment and its inhabitants.

Her 2003 series, *future in reverse*, shows the detritus of technologically obsolete items cast adrift into the outer atmosphere of space.¹⁹⁷ Familiar yet outdated equipment, such as the electronic typewriter, or an old, basic iron, float weightlessly through space. Cast against the background of outer space, they drift towards an unknown future, perhaps connecting with other obsolete items of space junk also discarded in the global space race to gain a foothold in the unclaimed territories beyond the earth's atmosphere. The items which Veasey casts

¹⁹⁴ Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2003 <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/elsewhere.html>

¹⁹⁵ Miles, M. 2003- 2004 "Daneille Thompson: Marks of Light" *Eyeline Contemporary Visual Arts* Number 53 p 30

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/elsewhere.html> from artist statement accompanying the elsewhere series

¹⁹⁷ Multiple Box Gallery, Sydney, 2003. <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/reverse.html>

into space are ubiquitous in their size- heavy, bulky, their dimensions alone betray their age. We live in a time where the technological revolution creates objects which are ever smaller, allowing, as Paul Virilio explains, a colonization of the body.¹⁹⁸ Devices can be inserted into the body so technology stops being a prosthesis and becomes assimilated into the body itself. By casting her objects into space, Veasey is able to draw links to the way technology inhabits spaces and assimilates them, quickly becoming an essential aspect of life. The objects floating in the open territories of outer space are so plainly out of context that the viewer is jarred into seeing them in a new way. They become symbols of the eternal quest for technological advancement for its own sake, a quest Virilio terms technological fundamentalism, involving a religious like belief in the absolute power of technology.¹⁹⁹

In Veasey's 2008 series, *Habitats*, she continues her investigation the effect of humans and technology on modern life by looking at the plight of animals, in particular animals in captivity.²⁰⁰ For this series, Veasey photographed empty animal enclosures in various zoos, aquariums and animal shows around the world. Here the wild animal made captive is absent, what is left behind is their empty artificial habitat. The images are melancholic, emitting sadness and a pervading sense of loss, abandonment and loneliness. The artificiality of their enclosure is compelling in its desolation, made more so with the absence of the animal it is made for. Veasey explains that this series questions what will happen to the world's animals if their natural environment continues to be destroyed and asks if we will be forced to engage with them on this unreal and controlled platform if their habitats are lost. Veasey continues this proposition in her related work, *Natural History* and *Natural History #2*.²⁰¹ In this work, animals are presented in simple, grey rooms devoid of objects apart from the platform they are standing on. They are like laboratory scenes and we are reminded of the reality of animals in research such as Dolly, the cloned sheep. These animals, always alone in their artificial, clinically blank world, face us with poignancy; they are excerpts from a

¹⁹⁸ Armitage, J. (ed) *Paul Virilio from Modernism to Hypermodernism and Beyond*, Sage Publications, London 2000, p 49

¹⁹⁹ Ibid 44

²⁰⁰ Johnston Gallery, Mosman Park WA, 2008. Stills Gallery, Paddington NSW, 2008. Hugo Michell Gallery, Beulah Park SA, 2009. <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/habitat.html>

²⁰¹ <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/nhistory2.html> <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/nhistory.html>, these two bodies of work have been exhibited in multiple venues from 2006 onwards. *Natural History* was an earlier body first exhibited in 2006 and *Natural History#2* was first exhibited in 2007.

devastating future where animals can only be experienced in a technologically mediated way.

Study of a goat: Capra hircus, Beverley Veasey, 2006 ²⁰²

Image of Study of a goat: Capra hircus can be found at

http://www.stillsgallery.com.au/artists/veasey/index.php?obj_id=series_03&nav=3

Drew, Rhode and Veasey each look at how nature is interacted and dealt with by humans and the impact this has on animals and, following that, on us. Their constructed tableaux present visions of dystopian worlds, or worlds suffocating under excess where technology, consumerism and the haste of modern life create a world of death and emptiness. Poignant, comical and clinical, the images these artists present to us have a patina of loss and nostalgia where the authority of the modernist viewpoint and its technological output is undermined with the pathos of a utopia that offers a deathly embrace.

Drew, Rohde and Veasey each show us how the diorama so aptly creates a stage for critiquing the interaction of humans with nature. They place their work in a museological frame when they create their tableaux and it is this framework of the constructed authority of the museum diorama that I began my own photographic series using flora and fauna from the natural world.

²⁰² "Death Becomes Them", *Photofile*, volume 79, summer: 57, 2007



The Parables- untitled (Odyssey), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm

Metamorphoses on the Sea of Dreams

In my own ongoing series, *Metamorphoses on the Sea of Dreams*, I have also used elements from the natural world to create a dialogue about what I see is the dislocation from nature that contemporary life seems to encourage and the unease with the self that often results. Technology is easily embedded in infrastructure and in turn, infrastructure is most commonly placed in urban centers, so the loss of nature is most keenly felt in the urban environment. In order to rectify this, there is a drive to green the urban landscape. However, this is a greening that, while effective to a degree, is artificially constructed- put in place after the fact and closely monitored and controlled. Beverly Veasey's *Elsewhere* series, discussed earlier, has captured this sense of urban isolation and displacement.²⁰³ As an artist concerned with the rub of the artificial against the natural, her interest in urban isolation is well placed- in the city streets nature itself is almost artificial in its sway to the demands of regulations and debt to design portfolios.

It is this sense of isolation that I have intended to recreate in my *Metamorphoses on the Sea of Dreams* series and the related series, *The Parables*. In both works I have used animals so often unwanted or out of place in the urban environment, like mice and rats. Mice, rats or small birds are usually seen as pests and are trapped, poisoned, run over by cars or killed by domestic pets as they attempt to inhabit the same spaces as humans. They are symbols of nature in excess- dirty and germ infested carriers of disease and markers of poverty or

²⁰³ Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2003 <http://www.zipworld.com.au/~bev/gallery/elsewhere.html>

disorder. They are small yet carry the weight of a dialogue of the need to control and separate elements of nature and, as such, they have become important, iconic characters in my small vignettes of life in miniature. The images I have created suggest a narration that parallels the human conditions- trust, betrayal, guilt, transformation. The images are like small novellas or vignettes, each one telling a story that says much through quiet suggestion. The objects become characters of sorts yet their subjectivity is futile- after disassembly, the objects of each diorama lose their significance and become specimens, ornaments or items of a collection, packed and stored in their box.

We see nature in terms of classified units, existing within a hierarchy of the natural order, with humans, as interpreters of the natural world, at the forefront. In this work, I am creating an alternative narration of the natural world, where objects are imbued with their own stories, dramas and challenges. The objects are playing out a very human dialogue and in this sense they are still being interpreted within the human hierarchy yet it is one that ignores proper conventions of representation, instead willfully acting out narrations of dystopia, escape, and entrapment. These vermin of the natural world inhabit their own artificial world that I create for them; the actions they play out and the landscape they move within are all constructed by me while the animals themselves are lifeless. They are re-animated artificially into their artificial natural environment, zombies for the new age of techno-utopia where all is not what it seems and nature can be called up via digital bytes and downloaded into a readymade scenario. As I make and remake the scenes that the animals inhabit I imbue them with the pathos of modernism. They are weighted, tied down and trapped by their surroundings. They seek freedom and travel always to a utopian paradise yet they never quite get there. Trapped under the camera lens, they become caught in the circling of life and metamorphose in and out of dream life and cold reality.



Abandonment, Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Adrift and Alone, Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Calling, Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Joyful reunion, Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Renouncing the Past, Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



The Parables- untitled (demure), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



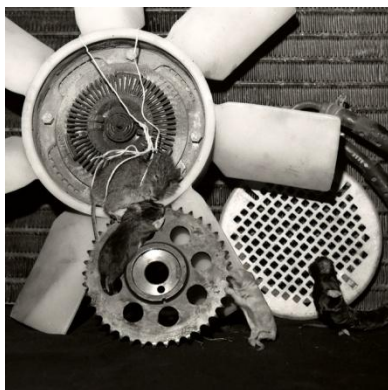
The Parables- untitled (Babel), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



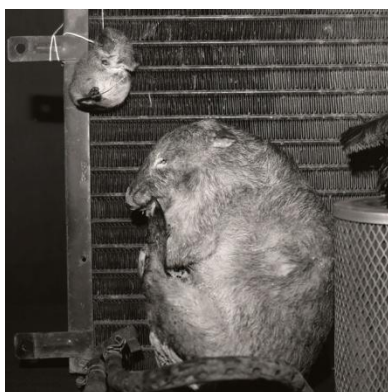
The Parables- untitled (visitation), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



The Parables- untitled (Rejection), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Mechanics and Mice (untitled- revolution), Emily Windon, 2009 20x 20cm



Mechanics and Mice (untitled- companions), Emily Windon, 2009 20x 20cm



Sticks and Steel (untitled- flight), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Sticks and Steel (untitled- collapse), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm



Sticks and Steel (untitled- reprisal), Emily Windon, 2009 40x 40cm

Chapter Thirteen: the Hysterical Robot

*"The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the light into the peace and safety of a new dark age."*²⁰⁴

If we recall, for a moment, the hysterical woman, we will remember that one of her characteristics was the refusal to follow the rules of anatomy. The woman could not, literally, be pinned down, something which extrapolated into her transgressions of the boundaries of woman.

When we think of the cyborg (who is almost always thought of in terms of a woman), she is also someone who cannot be pinned down. She is rebellious, she discards the boundaries of physicality, and she approaches things on her own terms. But who is this cyborg and is there a place for hysteria in the cyborg?

A cyborg is a blending of machine and human. The idea of the cyborg is a popular science fiction notion, yet we are increasingly looking towards technology to fill in the gaps left by our body's physical limitations. We may not be about to become cyborgs but we are able to blend flesh and machine with an ease that is unique to our contemporary life.

If the true cyborg did come about, if the machine equaled or even overtook the balance of flesh to robot, then what would become of the memory of the human? Would it simply sit there in the recesses of vestigial biology or would it rise up through the rift of old and new and find its way out in the production of hysteria, in a twisting and contorting of the physical, robotic body as it searches its way through history to a place of flesh and blood. Landing in the annals of perhaps the Salpêtrière. We could also conjecture that the cyborg would unite with its hysterical flesh, recognize in it the transgression of boundaries that is shared and together travel in hysterical fashion to a new ground, a true utopia of unmapped territory where the hysterical cyborg dissolves hegemonic boundaries, taking the flesh and machine with it. We need hysteria in our cyborg; the utopia set out so far is still pinned to its pre-history of the machine of modernism, where woman were contained within the patriarchy

²⁰⁴ H.P. Lovecraft *The Call of the Cthulhu*, Prohyptikon Value Classics, USA, 2010, 3

and whose bodies have simply birthed the cyborg which slips quietly into the patricides of new technologies. We are changing eras yet we are forgetting to change the body with us, to jar it from its bonds so it can be as new as the technology it wears. Only a radical disjunction can do this, an embracing of the hysterical cyborg, a retrieval of the love of the object, a reveling in jouissance and the ecstasy of the woman.

Rosalind Krauss, in writing of Jean Francois Lyotard's idea of phenomenological and unconscious space, sees the unconscious as allowing an invisible collection of contrasting forms- more than one thing can inhabit the same space at the same time and relatedness is not necessary. She terms this the matrix and sees it as different from phenomenological space in which the body moves. This space is always unfolding to accommodate the movement of bodies and it makes visible the forms within it, the form of the gestalt. Thus the space of the gestalt is seen but unseen and is that which modernism seeks to map. It is different again from the invisible matrix of the unconsciousness and again from the order of empirical vision. Lyotard sees the primordial intuition of phenomenological space as being one of passivity, where the density of the body wells up and inhabits the gestalt, the visible/ invisible space through which the body moves.²⁰⁵ There is another space again, the linguistic space where speech occurs. Into this seeps desire, the speech like a mesh through which desire pushes up. The framework of the voice and speech allows the dance of desire to interplay meanings beneath conversation. Desire, bouncing around beneath speech, operates with the rhythm of the Eros and Thanatos, the pleasure principle and the death drive. This is a rhythm of compulsion, a need for continuity which is the next beat in the rhythm and which holds at bay the finality of death. This rhythm is what compels us to the mechanics of optical instruments like the camera. Its shutter falling is that which captures the body's movement in space as it waits for the next fall of the shutter, knowing it will come with the reliability of the machine and knowing that that will stave off the silence of death, of the end of rhythm.²⁰⁶ As the technology moves into more complex conceptions of optical devices, the rhythmical recurrence of the camera shutter is made ever more reliable and the thanatos is held more firmly and securely at bay. Wrapped in the compulsion to photograph, thus, are the threads of desire. Furthermore, the camera, in making visible the invisible, shines a chemical light on the optical unconsciousness; it is a mirror to the invisible, an eye

²⁰⁵ Rosalind Krauss. *The Optical Unconsciousness*, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1994, 217- 21

²⁰⁶ *ibid* 224- 225

on the shutters of movement that surpass the mnemonic devices of the conscious to embed directly in the psyche. The camera, the machine of the mind, the eye of the unconsciousness, is the harbinger of the soul of machines. It is the partner of the cyborg in the flight to utopia.

The use of the machine in the pursuit of utopia was exemplified in the Soviet Union, Stalin implemented drive to a full socialist state- a utopia of freedom and equality. The Soviet landscape was being remade with the human labor force and a cult of the machine grew out of the drive to create a new utopian state, which built upon a culture that already saw the human body in machinist terms.²⁰⁷ In the first five year plan beginning in the late 1920's, one of the effective ways of mobilizing the workforce was to engage in shock work, or *udar*. This was a concept that described a mixture of physical, natural and machinic forces in a shock strike which would push the goal of socialism closer, utilizing the energy of the shock to engender change. The use of the machine aided in the harnessing of nature for the utopian goal where nature was not so much conquered as admired for its vitalist force. Machine, human and nature became melded into the earthiness of the new socialist drive where the peasants tilled the field for the masses and the urban dwellers constructed the infrastructure of the communist working state. The machines of communism were without the capitalist drive that the factories of the west operated under and as such they shared a wholistic relationship with society where the worker and machine formed a heroic unison as opposed to the deadened and numbed worker of the west.²⁰⁸

The western worker labored under the regime of capitalism, itself a drive for a utopia, yet one based on wealth and plenty. Whereas the outsider in the Soviet Union was physically expelled from the production of and the sharing in the utopian state, the outsider of capitalism is excluded from the workforce and driven to the lands of poverty, either a geographical state in the case of slums, or more commonly an economic state. In order to be a part of the projected utopia in both societies, one must be a part of the labor force and must agree to share the labor with that of the machine. In this way, the worker and machine move forward together. The final form of worker\ machine, where the flesh and the robot

²⁰⁷ Susan Buck- Mors. *Dream World and Catastrophe, the passing of Mass Utopia in East and West*, MIT Press, Massachusetts 2000, 105

²⁰⁸ Ibid 98- 133

have combined into the form of the cyborg, is dependent on an agreement of a productive input to the building of the utopian state and, being dependent upon that agreement, it is simultaneously tied to the hegemonies that have produced its ideals. There is no hysterical cyborg in this outcome; there has been no disavowal of presumptions, no redefining of the flesh on new and radical terms. A utopia that follows a standard progression of patriarchal ideals, which may preach equality, as the socialist utopia did and as some sections of capitalist theory does, fails in its quest. Always left out are some voices of the community, those which were already undermined when the utopia first came into the social consciousness. The women of communism simply changed the patriarchy of the household to that of the state. The women of capitalism still fail to meet the same economic standards of men. In the bliss of utopian discourse it is easy to assume that all people are catered to, yet without a radical redefining of the terms of the discourse the same inequalities perpetuate.

In the fast pace changes that new technologies are bringing about, many which are centered around the body and biology, it is vital to keep track of the flesh, of gender, of who is part of the new utopia of new technology and who has been excluded.

This need became paramount in my own work, *Dance for the Cyborg*, where I used the body as the inscriber of meaning and weighted its movement with the arc of ritual.

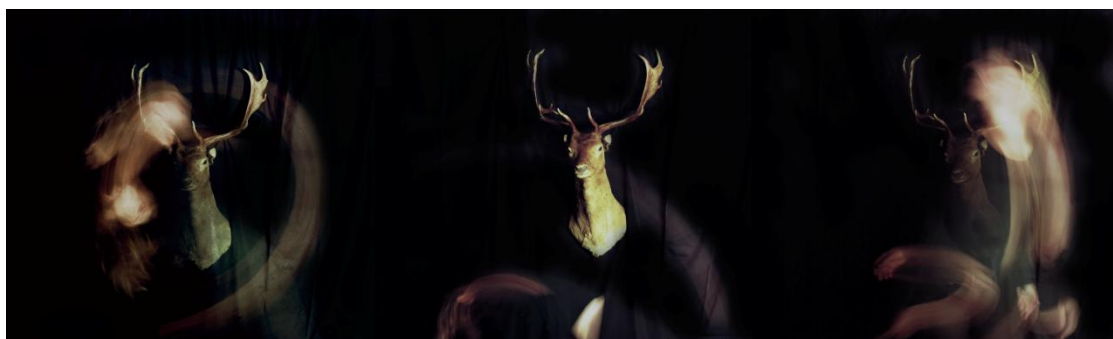
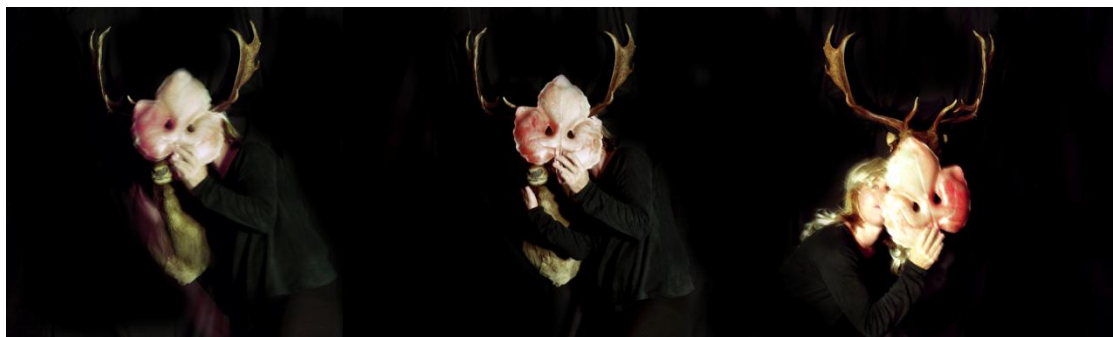


Dance for the Cyborg

I am dressed in black against a backdrop of black, allowing only my hands, feet and face to register properly on the photographic frame. My flesh is retained where I need it- my feet to walk and jump, my hands to manipulate objects, my face to remind myself and others of my origin as human. I dance around this backdrop on which hangs a deer head, itself an object of the desire to control nature and a reminder to me of my fleshy past, of my biology of blood and muscle, tendon and bone. Rising from my depths is an electricity of emotion which infects my movement, the memory of my beginnings seeks to find a place in this space, it flings about the present and is captured in the flash of the camera as the hysteria takes hold, finally blurring the events into a new containment, a new memory, a new frame of the psyche.

From the camera to the psyche I dance in hysterical remembrance.

I am the mystic of the woman reveling in her jouissance. I have entered a world of my own, a world of ritual and ecstasy. I am dancing for my hysterical sisters, for the weight of their history of subjugation, for the lost world of nature, for the chasm that is present in the world. I am unfixed, a movement travelling across the frame. This is my psyche, the camera has inverted and I look into the eye of my unconsciousness as I am reflected in the lens. I dance for the cyborg who is the future and who has forgotten her past.



All images detail from: *cyborg dance*, Emily Windon 2010 100x 170cm

Chapter Fourteen: The eye of my mind....Joel Peter Witkin

"I was a man falling on all sides, breaking into pieces of myself- which were made of images" ²⁰⁹

Joel-Peter Witkin (1939-) uses historical dialogues in the creation of his images; however his work is also threaded with themes of symbolism, mythology and the making visible of the unseen world of the psyche. His work brings together the threads that modernism offers- he uses the camera as a way to bridge the ether between the mind and the body and he uses the fleshiness of the body to articulate the spirit. Witkin's work is the parenthesis to Marey, Charcot and Freud. He knows the importance of the body to the pursuit of modernist ideals yet he makes the body almost transparent. When we see his confronting images, we look beyond the skin's surface to something deeper, to what Witkin is searching for, a glimpse of the infinite, however milky that glimpse may be. His work in many ways brings a crystallization of the ideas I have been researching and it is his work that I look to as a way to answer the questions that my research has raised.

Witkin is an artist whose work is equally loathed and loved. His images are confronting, yet have an enigmatic beauty about them that rise above their often unpalatable content of cadavers, the disfigured or the sexually marginalized. Witkin has always maintained that his work is essentially a search for the divine and his tableaux can be viewed as a reconstruction of this quest.

Perhaps it is best to start, however, when talking of Witkin, with what he describes as his first visual experience and which sets him upon his life's journey. As a young child walking with his mother to an outing, he hears a clash of cars and moments later looks down at the head of a young girl rolling towards him, decapitated from its body in the process of the accident. He bends down to ask the head a question but is whisked away before he is able to. This grotesque and traumatic scene has been much referred to in writings on Witkin and its importance is recognized by Witkin himself as being a central moment in his development and the scene bears strong resemblance to the images he later makes.

Witkin, in witnessing the disembodied head, experiences a feeling of the body without boundaries and a corresponding unraveling of his own body within space, of his own existence and of the ties that bind the ego, or self, and the body. Parveen Adams, in writing

²⁰⁹ Joel- Peter Witkin. *The Bone House*, Twin Palms Publishers, New Mexico, 2000 (i)

of his work, argues that his images are a continual remaking of himself, a reconstruction of his own ego through visual imagery, a premise that Witkin himself has confirmed.²¹⁰

Witkin's work concerns life and death and he questions where he fits within these dualities. Each image is a singular treaty on this, a relic or artifact of his quest. His images are a construction of psychic space and each exists within its own framing pictorial device, offering themselves as a window into Witkin's psyche.

When he takes up photography as a sixteen year old, Witkin recalls that he realized in a moment of epiphany that when he was holding the camera, he was actually holding the head of the girl from the accident he witnessed as a child. Thus this traumatic childhood event marked for him the need to find the boundaries of life and death, to bring to ground the spirit and pin it to the picture frame, and the central role of the camera in this process.

Witkin imbues the act of photography with a reverence that accompanies each step. His is a search for the infinite in a space beyond the visible that takes place even when the negative has been exposed. He describes the darkroom as a holy house and speaks of his images in terms steeped in religion and spirituality. While his work deals with the flesh and the body, he aspires to represent the infinite, the spaces between body and spirit; the spirit that rests within the flesh and, ultimately, within his own flesh. Witkin takes the dead, the cadavers and body parts, and knits them with the living, putting them into scenes shared with people who themselves transgress boundaries in various ways, through disfigurement, gender, sexuality or anatomy.

The camera, for Witkin, is the face of the girl who first embodies for him the world between flesh and spirit and thus the camera is the medium to unite the carnal and the holy. Unable to ask the head of the girl the question he intended, he asks instead each image he creates, seeking the answer to the unuttered in the photographic act.

Witkin describes his work as a reconstruction of his birth, into an enclosed world that he recreates as an antidote to the depravities of the real world.²¹¹ He works within the readymade framework of art history, allowing him to explore within the safety of an

²¹⁰ Parveen Adams. (ed) *Art Sublimation or Symbol*, Other Press, New York, 2003, 101

²¹¹ Germano Celent. *Witkin Scalo*, New York, 1995, 11

historical frame built upon myth and symbolism the rebuilding of a new world into which he is continually reborn. Witkin's use of confronting imagery is also made palatable to the public by its fixing within the respectability of an art historical dialogue. In fact, it was the images that most directly referenced art history that first brought Witkin professional respect as an artist and introduced him to the wider public.²¹²

Witkin, in photographing the socially marginalized, does not do so as a social commentary but as a philosophical reflection on the divine. He weaves his own personal history with references to mysticism and is open and forthright about his need to find an image of the divine in his art. He seems to be someone whose everyday reality is woven with a sense of the mystical and his work is almost a product of that, a projection of his own religious fervor that imbues everything he does. He desires so deeply to experience firsthand the divine and brings that desire into a repeated rebirthing through his images, continually constructing and reconstructing a photographic world for his new born self to inhabit and to perhaps be touched by the infinite.

Witkin's use of the mask on his models recurs in many of his images and is a way for him to blur the distinctions of identity. The model, in wearing the mask, is released from their identity and becomes able to take on a new self, a self that is Witkin's own psyche, played out in his photographs. In talking of his sado-masochistic themed images of women, Witkin explains them in terms that circle back to himself and the role that photography plays in his life. "I created a true photo- physical metamorphosis in which my fantasies were manifested by the most voyeuristic and perverse means... (in the hope that they would become)... my personal Revelation, the end of all my doubts, confusion and pain".²¹³ He reaches metamorphosis through eroticism, using *jouissance* as a way to seek the divine and to gain an understanding of the infinite reality of a divine moment.

Witkin's images revel in flesh and eroticism, in the body multiplied and pierced. The fleshiness of the images is carried into the photographic surface itself with each image being worked into, layered and scratched, making the emulsion itself another layer of skin. This layering of flesh upon flesh seems to release the imagery from the constraints of reality into a dark space of *jouissance*, dream, and otherworldliness.

²¹² Joel-Peter Witkin, Pierre Borhan. *Disciple and Master*, Fotofolio, England, 2000, 5

²¹³ Celent *Witkin*. Scalo, New York, 1995, 18

Witkin's images are in many ways like the images of hysterics from the Salpêtrière. They are documents of excessiveness- excessive physicality, sexuality, eroticism, gender. Looking at the images you feel a voyeur of somebody's private theater, you sense the desperate nature of the search that Witkin begins anew in each photograph and you know that each time that search is unresolved, necessitating a continual repetition. You sense the urgency of each frame to hold something and that rawness of unfulfilled desire creates an aroma of danger, of excess falling towards death and you realize that this very moment, when excess and jouissance flits over into death, is what Witkin is seeking to capture again and again, yet never does. He is forced to repeat the machination of his desires, his fruitless rebirthing and abjection, continually in his imagery. Faced with his art, we feel an intruder on this personal search yet Witkin offers each image to us as proof of the divine, for the proof rests in the very faith that he will one day capture it.

Witkin's work, in his twinning of jouissance and the abject, in the depiction of the body in pieces, invites us to fall into the work alongside him and to emerge ourselves anew, our old selves shredded in the transformation through jouissance and the tangled, leaking and boundless body.

Witkin shows us how the mystical can transform images when it is authentic, when it is paired with ritual and ideas of infinite being. He demonstrates the seeping of that ritualism into the art work and the importance that this offers in a world of life sped up, a world dominated by new technologies that create a shimmering blanket over everything and that often deaden our senses to something that is intangible, something that Witkin describes as the divine or the infinite, that exists in the flitting moments between abjection and jouissance, life and death, ritualism and reality.

Witkin's work is able to show me a way to find a non empirical space, to embrace the flesh and allow it to carry me, through jouissance, into a place where the mystical can be felt and the body is paramount in becoming bodiless.

Woman on a Table, New Mexico, 1987 Joel- Peter Witkin ²¹⁴

Image of Woman on a Table, can be found at <http://www.phillipsdeputy.com/auctions/lot-detail/JOEL-PETER-WITKIN/NY040112/165/3/1/48/detail.aspx>

²¹⁴ Joel- Peter Witkin. *The Bone House*, Twin Palms Publishers, New Mexico, 2000

Testicle Stretch with the Possibility of a Crushed Face, New Mexico, 1982, Joel- Peter Witkin ²¹⁵

Image of Testicle Stretch with the Possibility of a Crushed Face, can be found at

http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=4744772

Potraits from the Underworld:Countess Daru, Monsier David, Madame David, 1994 (detail) Joel- Peter Witkin ²¹⁶

Image of Potraits from the Underworld:Countess Daru, Monsier David, Madame David can be found at

http://www.faheykleingallery.com/photographers/witkin/exhibition/revisited/witkin_ex_revis_05.htm

Still Life, Mexico City, 1992 Joel- Peter Witkin ²¹⁷

Image of Still Life, Mexico City can be found at <http://www.edelmangallery.com/stilllifemexico.htm>

²¹⁵ *ibid*

²¹⁶ Joel- Peter Witkin. *The Bone House*, Twin Palms Publishers, New Mexico, 2000

²¹⁷ *ibid*

The Shimmering, Painted dance and Painted Animism

It is with Witkin's ways of reaching the unseen via the camera that I embarked on my final photographic work. I had already used the idea of ritual in the hysterical cyborg series yet I wished to push this further and truly embrace ritual as a way to escape my own parameters and travel somewhere different. In a way, I was attempting a rebirthing of the kind that Witkin discussed in his own work. However, in order to be birthed, you must first leave yourself and your usual existence behind. I had to become someone else. In order to do this, I drew upon the knowledge I had already gained in my research and earlier studio work.

I approached this new work armed with the knowledge gained from the re-performing Augustine images. By placing myself in the role of the hysterical woman, I was able to experience some of the loss of self that hysteria allows. I recognized in hysteria the value it offered for ritualism and breaking away from physical and psychic boundaries. I also brought with me my ideas from the mystical landscape. That work had allowed me to feel the unseen energies of nature, to make tangible the prickle of shadow on skin, the sense of being amongst something that is invisible yet present. Finally, I decided to use the feathered figure as it offered a physical masking that was important for a visual and metaphorical inscription of an otherworldly presence.

I began the first part of this series, *The Shimmering*, by returning to the forest. However this time I was a part of the images as I acted the role of the feathered figure. Covering myself in paint and feathers and masking my face with a dark cloth, I walked through a state reserve pine forest, with my partner documenting the work using a camera and tripod I had previously set up. The forest was quite isolated and crossed with logging roads that were rarely used. I found the experience exhilarating; I was transgressing the boundaries of acceptable behavior through my shedding of clothes and my attire of paint and feathers. I felt close to what I was hoping to achieve, a feeling of leaving something behind, some part of my physical self, and in the process of the paring back of physicality allowing my unconscious self to spill out. Doing this, I felt, would get me closer to not just my psyche, but to the mysticism that must animate life. When I had exposed all my film, I went to the forest water hole. This is a sink hole and just centimeters from the edge the water drops down to deep depths that cannot be reached in one breath. I have always found the idea of sink holes unnerving. In Tasmania we lived near an area renowned for its sinkholes and whenever I

visited them, I would feel a shivering sense of a malevolent presence. I did not see the sinkholes as comforting; they were too connected to the underground, the water mixed with the depths of earth that is too deep to be visible, chilled and unknown. This same feeling overcame me at the sinkhole I went to after my photographs and it was in this water that I intended to wash off my feathers and paint. Actually jumping in was hard, I had to fight the panic that was overcoming me and I jumped in quickly before the panic would make me unable to go further. Once in I was overcome with fear. I know this was irrational yet it was there, the water around me was icy, I knew that the ground dropped deep below me, I knew that if for some reason I sank I would not be found. My breathing came in gasps, I was overcome with a terror that I could not control and I quickly climbed out of the water again. In my immersion of a minute or so, all the thick paint and feathers had washed off, leaving in the water an eerie trail of white feathers. I felt a calmness descend once I had climbed out and I knew that I would draw upon this experience of terror in my later work. It was an important merging of my unconscious and conscious self with the unseen.



Emily Windon, *the Shimmering: 1*, Digital Archival Print 100x100cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *the Shimmering: 3*, Digital Archival Print 100x100cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *the Shimmering: 18*, Digital Archival Print 100x100cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *the Shimmering: 9*, Digital Archival Print 100x100cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *the Shimmering: 26*, Digital Archival Print 100x100cm, January 2011

For the photographic series, *Painted dance* and *Painted Animism*, I used the elements of body and face masking in order to remove the connections to physicality as I had done with the *Shimmering* work. However, I decided to return to the studio and to use props as I had done with the hysterical cyborg images. I liked the containment of the studio and the ability to frame each image with a backdrop. The studio also offered privacy that being outdoors did not have. I had already made a group of images along these lines, the *Dancing with Animals* series, but I felt that visually, there were too many elements competing in the photographic space. So for the painted dance and painted animism series I decided to use fewer props and to focus on the figure as the central element. I also wanted to make the images darker to increase the sense of otherworldliness, and the idea of surreptitiously viewing a private scene. I felt it was important to impress the private nature of the work, that the photographs are as much documentation as composed images and that the viewer is observing a scene after it occurs. I held with me also the work of Pierre Molinier (1900- 1976) and his private odyssey into sexual fetish that he self documented.

Pierre Molinier, *Autoportrait, assis de profil avcc porte- jarretelles et loup*, 1955-56²¹⁸

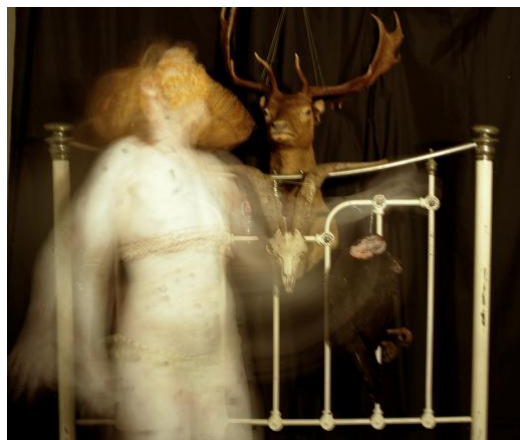
²¹⁸ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/pierre-molinier/>

Image of *Autoportrait, assis de profil avcc porte- jarretelles et loup*, can be found at <http://www.artnet.com/artists/pierre-molinier/>

While Molinier was using fetish and eroticism to explore his inner self and sexuality, I realized that these images would also have an element of sexuality in them, as they are dealing with jouissance, with the female nature of hysteria and ritualism. All these themes are intertwined with eroticized energy. I also decided not to use feathers as I felt these altered the shape of the body too much and it was important to retain the female physical form. I decided to use instead just body paint and a mask, and two belts, one around my chest and the other over my pelvis so that the sexual markers of womaness were not as prominent and thus did not thematically overtake the image.

Once attired, I began taking the images. I had already fixed a camera in place meaning that my partner could expose each frame when required. I then tried to get into a mind space that was less rational and more unconscious. Then, using my props of animal skulls and masks, and remembering my experience in nature of sensing, feeling the unseen, I danced and threw my body around, exposing each frame at regular intervals.

The resulting images are windows on this performance, documents of my attempts to get beyond the conscious space of our fixed and measured reality and to sample a moment that is enclosed yet free, that questions physicality whilst using the body and its physicality to do so. The images show us the flesh of the body in tangible space, enveloped by energy and the raw moment of ritualism.



Emily Windon, *dancing with animals in the chasm of sleep*, December 2010 20x 20cm



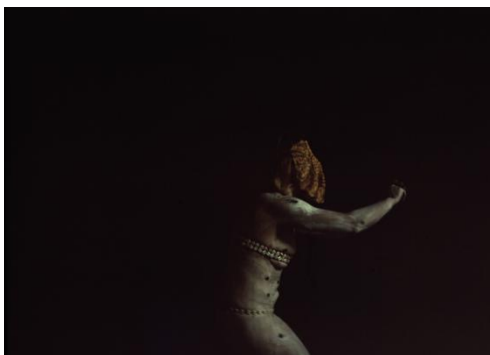
Emily Windon, *dancing with animals in the chasm of sleep*, December 2010 20x 20cm



Emily Windon, *Painted Dance- ecstasy*, Digital Archival Print 70x 50cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Dance-grief*, Digital Archival Print 70x 50cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Dance-search*, Digital Archival Print 70x 50cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Dance-joy*, Digital Archival Print 70x 50cm, January 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Animism 2*, Digital Archival Print 110x 92cm, February 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Animism 12*, Digital Archival Print 110x 92cm, February 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Animism 16*, Digital Archival Print 110x 92cm, February 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Animism 21*, Digital Archival Print 110x 92cm, February 2011



Emily Windon, *Painted Animism 18*, Digital Archival Print 110x 92cm, February 2011

Conclusion

"The other is the one toward whom we advance in darkness, the disclosure of their coming never being revealed in the light of day" ²¹⁹

This hypothesis that I have been researching could well have been called simply the ghost in the machine as at the end of my research journey, I have realized that that is the question and answer I have ultimately been exploring. What is the machine to us, to me, to women, and is there a space for humanity in it, for mysticism, and the intangible. Furthermore, if there is such a space, how do we get there?

I have experienced the machine first hand in the form of the institution and I have felt the smothering of life that the institution affects as it slowly weighs down upon you, forcing a commitment to its goals or release through death. The machine is both structure and institution and these dual concepts both offer a gateway to a supposed utopia, yet it is necessary to conform to the machine's dimensions before entering. This machine does indeed respond to the gendered body as society is delineated along gendered lines.

It is through a release of the constraints of physicality that liberation from the machine is possible. The hysterical women of the Salpêtrière first showed the way of this release and the machine of the camera captured their historical feat for later deconstruction. The trigger to this freedom, this release, is jouissance, and the way to jouissance is ritual, a leaving behind of our humanity in order to become more human.

I love the rusting, hard and looming monolithic steel of bridges, factories and industrial sites. They remind me of the impermanency of life. Their rusted surfaces show us that these gigantic structures have a limit to their endurance, that they too can crumble and decompose. The steel of today is shiny, covered in skins that glitter in their newness. It is light and easily held close to the body. Technology today, wrapped in its new, plastic skin, seems to seep into the very fabric of our flesh and I feel a sense of panic when I think about where I fit within it. I want to be able to become hysterical, to burst with jouissance, to harness the power of excess, to use the erotic ritual as a way to gather power and surge through life. Yet in today's world, mediated, segmented, wrapped in plastic metal skins, this is hard to do. So it is through art that I am able to continue the journey to physical and

²¹⁹ Luce Irigaray. *The way of Love*, Continuum, London, New York, 2002, 155

psychic freedom, to keep off the bindings that I felt as an institutionalized teenager and to retain my sense of who I am. With the use of ritual, the sense of an urgent need to find something in the spaces between light and dark, dream and reality, I am able to remain free. The camera is the eye to my psyche; it is a camera obscura window into my mind that dualistically projects the outside world into my unconscious and my unconscious onto the outside world. It is my own mystic writing pad and with it I am able to search continuously for the ghost within the machine. Perhaps one day I will truly capture it. If we were ever to become post human, and the mythic cyborg became a reality, I would hope that my blended body of machine and human would indeed become hysterical, that I would allow my steel components to twist and bend and shock my flesh into a new utopia, one of my own creation, where flesh and machine cohabit, where my gendered post human body falls into the jouissance of femaleness and where the spaces left by the bending and buckling machine are filled with something infinite and divine. Surely that would be utopia.

*My soul is awakened, my spirit is soaring,
And carried aloft on the wings of the breeze;
For above and around me, the wild wind is roaring
Arousing to rapture the earth and the seas.*²²⁰

²²⁰ First stanza of "Lines Composed in a Wood on a Windy Day" by Anne Bronte (1842) Cook, T.(ed) *The Wordsworth Book of 19th Century Verse*, Wordsworth Editions, Hertfordshire, UK. 1995, 133

Outline of Exhibition Structure

: *Machinic Desire-*

Hysterical Machines:

For the installation of the works in the exhibition, I decided to make a distinction between the two halves of the gallery. My work has been an evolution, or a voyage, over the time of my thesis research and I wanted the exhibition to show the progression of images as each series of works was begun and worked through. I felt that the right half of the gallery would be the place where I could show this journey and felt the best way to do this would be to group each series in grids of images. Thus as the viewer entered the right hand space of the gallery, they would be able to see each series as a separate unit, in its grid of images, as well as being able to see the progression of works as a whole. The images in the gridded groups would be the black and white images that I have made over the progression of my research using natural objects and animal carcasses. Each individual image is printed on a small scale, allowing each to function both individually and as part of their group. The viewer can see the images as a whole unit yet to view each one adequately they must also get close and physically disconnect each from its surround. These images have been about the unconscious and the psyche and the interaction between the psyche, the person and technology. They are a space where the cultural necessity to categorize and place the natural world within an empirical framework is meshed within the space of dream, narration, and symbolism. It is a place where the dream space rubs against the material and creates a dialogue for the viewer that is interactive, setting the place for the major works which are presented on the opposite, left side of the gallery.

Also within this side of the gallery are the collage images. Placing the collages in this part of the gallery allows them to create a dialogue with the images around them, introducing the idea of the transformed, fertile machine amongst the symbols of a compromised, confused nature.

In a room to the side of this part of the gallery are the images from the mystic landscape series. These have been put onto a continuous loop and allow the viewer to quietly immerse themselves in the mysticism of nature and to experience the feeling of nature alive with the unseen and unknown. They offer an alternative nature that is fecund, moist and writhing with a quiet but powerful energy.

As a bridge to both gallery spaces are the Augustine works. The concept of hysteria has been the underlying and unifying theme of this project. It allows me to take the idea of hysteria as a powerful metaphor where the subjugated female body breaks from its cultural bonds and finds its own space, where it is free to roam amongst ungrounded dialogue, where it floats in a timeless moment that is of its own. This is a metaphorical space that the real history of hysteria gives birth to. The hysteria images showed me the way to liberation through *jouissance* so it was important that they be central in the gallery, connecting the weighted space of the trapped with that of the liberated.

The hysteria images prepare the viewer for the main colour works, where the body is present in each image, performing within the photographic space. The body on show is one that is masked in some way, either with an actual covering over the face or with paint and feathers masking the body itself. This is the space of the liberated body, floating in and out of dream, symbolism, the psyche and the real. The places it inhabits are filled with the objects of the natural world and the body performs a ritualistic dance within its frame. This is the place the body has found at the end of its journey, where it cohabits with its psyche, where it is freed from entrapment, where it has made its true utopia.

This body is post human, it is gendered, yet is in control of its womanhood and it is in union with its flesh. This body that the viewer meets with is complete, without boundaries, unformed, yet whole, fluid yet dense, touching and touched, and looking at the viewer through the frame of the camera lens. It is the twitch of space between myself and the viewer, united by the technology of the camera and the weighted history that the lens incurs.

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