

# *Natural Turn with Hesitation: Reconstructing the Choreographed Moment*

Submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Art and Design by Graham Hall, January 2006.

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### *Attestation of Authorship*

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements) nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Graham Hall

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a series of loops and a final downward stroke.

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## *Abstract*

This thesis explores the possibilities of sequential art conventions in relation to the reconstruction and enrichment of movement within the static image. Creating this sense of enrichment is achieved by manipulating and selecting images of feet position that show an enhanced and exaggerated movement. The Practical work, which represents 80% of this thesis, poses questions and possibilities with interpretations of time and space when reconstructing the choreographed moment. The documentation, which accounts for 20% of the thesis, records and interprets movement observable in both orchestrated public settings, as in marching and dancing, and in the public spaces associated with walking. The reconstruction of movement is recorded through digital photography and the repositioning of photographs, as a series or sequence of panels through the application of silkscreen printmaking. This multi-panel format is constructed by observing the way people move through space and questions whether or not this space is implied through social conditions or is learned through movement notation. The results of this exploration are a series of prints that offer possibilities of temporal sequencing, and a process of alternative readings that may occur between and among multi-panel images.

## *Introduction*

In the context of the sequential narrative the multi-panel format offers a range of possibilities in terms of the way story lines can be both developed and interpreted. When constructed in a linear format the transitions between panels are able to offer alternative readings through the manipulation of size and space. The use of the linear panel is central to this work as the extended landscape format allows for the sequential narrative to be extended beyond the immediate view encouraging participants to walk along the work. While this may occur in readings that are non linear, a linking movement can be suggested when the multi-panel structure is constructed in a horizontal linear form. This extended format allows for shorter and longer constructions to identify the length of the narrative where the sequence of events is supported within the frame of the paper. This exegesis explores the possibilities of multi-panel sequencing with the intention of visually reconstructing the choreographed moment.

The first chapter examines the historical context of sequential narratives and explores how the multi-panel format can be manipulated to generate alternative meanings. The writer then goes on to examine the split panel format in the context of the moving image. Chapter two examines the structure of the sequential narrative where

placement of individual panels may be manipulated to direct the reading, and where the variable gap between images enables the viewer to reach closure within the collection of panels that form the group, the series and the sequence. There are a number of ways a multi-panel narrative can be constructed and chapter three discusses the six applications of panel transition put forward by Scott McCloud (1994). These transitions are discussed in relationship to photographic images with the intention of reconstructing the choreographed moment and observing what might happen when the narrative is placed within the confines of an extended linear format. The photographs identify where movement occurs in choreographed settings and uses the actions associated with walking, marching and dancing as ways of showing how this exaggerated movement might appear within a static image. Chapter four discusses the construction and enrichment of movement and identifies the motion line as the way to visually describe notions of speed and movement with specific reference to the photographic image. These ideas are further developed in this chapter through the discussion and application of the motion line in the foot movement of marching and dancing, and where the construction of the visual narrative supports and enhances the notion of movement. The fifth chapter discusses the exhibition and the manipulation of work within the gallery space to suggest different ways of viewing and responding to the work with the intention that the viewer may become a part of the space of the dance.



The visual documentation chronicles the development of the project through the multi-panel constructions, where the placement of large panel sequential narratives is explored in relationship to the reconstruction of the choreographed moment.

### *Reconstructing: progressive chase to the right*

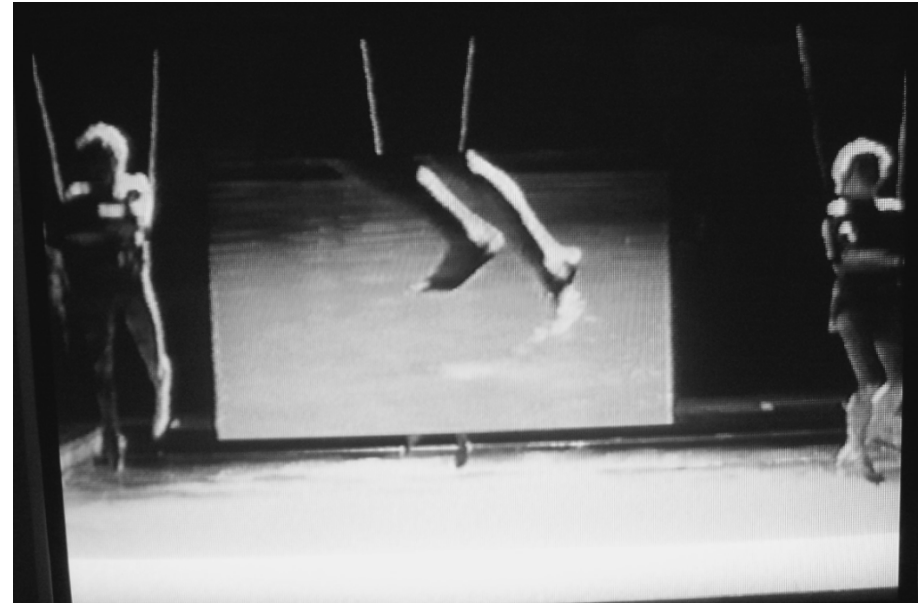
When constructing a sequential narrative, multiple panels may be placed alongside each other to develop options within storylines, and while this process has existed and been addressed in film theory<sup>1</sup> the applications of this concept are not often used with static imagery other than those found in the comic<sup>2</sup>. Filmmaker Peter Greenaway however, addresses the issue of the relationships between the moving and the static image, and in his films *Prospero's Books* (Greenaway, 1991) and *The Pillow Book*, (Greenaway, 1995) he introduces the viewer to a combination of static and moving screens within a dual panel format (fig. 1.1 and 1.2). Here Greenaway frequently explores both the moving and static image, and offers the possibility of creating meaning through the referencing of objects and ideas by combining a static photographic image, framed within the moving format of the motion picture.

*Greenaway frequently plays with the panels in the narrative, at times using a separate panel to illustrate simultaneous action in traditional split screen style, but more frequently using a panel to show action sited just slightly in the future, weaving a series of scenes and locations in one sequence* (Rhodes, 2003, p. 9).

While the narrative within film continues to unfold as the viewer watches the screen, when the static image is inserted into the screen there is an option to view the stationary panel as one would when viewing a painting.<sup>3</sup>

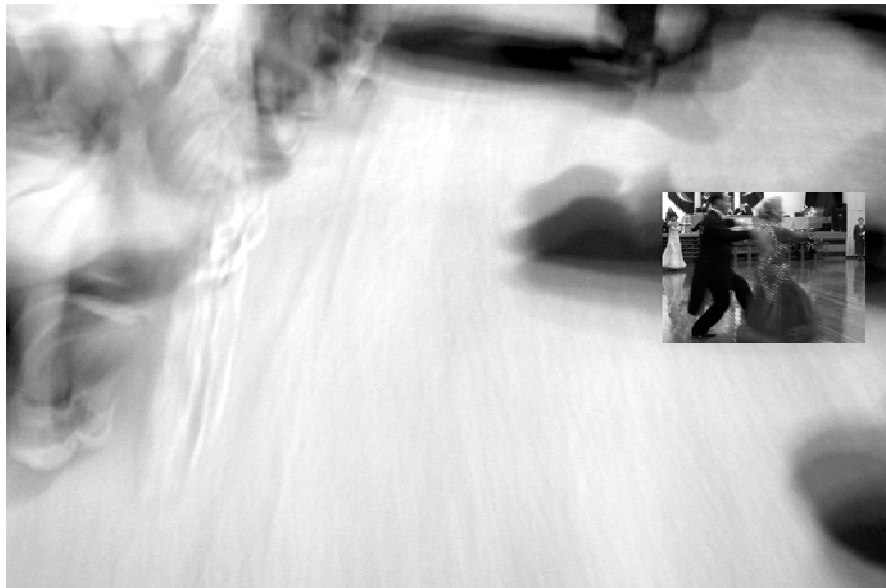


**Figure 1.1** Greenaway, P. (1995) *The Pillow book* [film still].



**Figure 1.2** Greenaway, P. (1991) *Prospero's books* [film still].

Greenaway manipulates the scale of panels in the narrative, using a separate panel to show actions within a traditional split screen format. In doing so Greenaway shows action slightly into the future, interlacing a series of scenes and locations within the sequence. The three panels (fig 1.1) show action from previous parts of the film, action that is about to be completed, and finally action that unfolds during the normal running time of the film. This way of offering additional information engages the viewer in the simultaneous reading of both moving and static imagery. The different panel sizes help to identify chronological events. The smaller panels may have occurred previously within the film or are soon to occur.



**Figure 1.3** Hall, G. (2005) *Dance shadow* [digital photograph, detail]

By applying one of the principles of Greenaway's split screen format in order to reconstruct the choreographed moment, the smaller panel may allude to an event that has yet to take place while the two larger multi-panels are able to refer to an action that could have taken place either before or after the dance. The shift in scale of panels may also place the smaller panel as an event that is likely to occur. The first panel depicts a large panel with swirling figures, with an insert showing a couple dancing. The intention with these two images is to suggest different actions that support a similar theme. The second panel may reinforce the intent of the narrative.

The combination of moving and static imagery that offer alternative storylines is a contemporary device, but is not the only way of constructing the sequential narrative. Multiple panels can be placed horizontally and read in sequence, or placed vertically and read in columnar form. When the panels are placed together, and storylines are established, the idea of sequential art is realised. Comic book theorist and author, Scott McCloud, describes this process of sequential art as "a way of constructing a story" (McCloud,

1994, p. 7). In *Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art* he defines comics as “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence intended to convey meaning and to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer” (McCloud, 1994, p 9). Hence his use of the term, sequential art. The use of panels placed in deliberate sequence is not a process specific to the traditional comic. There are a number of examples of pictorial sequencing and multi-panel imagery throughout history, and the idea of the sequence appears in Greek Attic pottery, in historic and contemporary tapestries<sup>4</sup> and in examples of Roman sculpture. For example, the *Column of Trajan: Forum of Trajan*, dedicated A.D. 112, was constructed in Rome in 106- 113 AD. Built to show the military campaigns of the Emperor Trajan, the two hundred metre frieze winds around the column twenty-three times. The scenes that comprise the frieze show the Roman army constructing fortifications and in battle with the Dacians, and features 2,500 figures shown in action with the Emperor appearing in 59 images throughout the entire linear sequence. Almost a millennium later, *The Bayeux Tapestry* (fig 1.4) depicts the events of the legendary Battle of Hastings in 1066. The tapestry is seventy metres long in horizontal form and, reading from left to right depicts the events of William the Conqueror’s invasion of England. While there are not the clear panel borders showing specific incidents usually apparent with transitions in comics, each scene is divided visually by discrete rendering of subject matter, making the narrative divisions in the tapestry clear to the viewer. The narrative is divided into scenes, each describing a particular moment in the battle, and these scenes are presented as a linear sequence allowing the viewer to read the entire story beginning with the first scene and progressing to the final act in the battle.



**Figure 1.4** Bayeux Tapestry (1070-1080) from Bayeux Cathedral. Bayeux, France [embroidered wool on linen. section]

King Harold shown twice: first plucking an arrow from his eye, and then being killed by a Norman knight. While there are no formal breaks of imagery within the tapestry there are sufficient non action areas to isolate specific events. While the large middle panel records the events in chronological order, the two smaller panels that frame the tapestry show additional events within the battle.

A tradition of sequential art narrative runs through the history of visual culture and in our contemporary technologically advanced society (which exhibits the use of multiple pop up window panels in most desktop computers), the multi-panel format is becoming a primary source of pictorial information and a preferred way in which digital information is accessed, viewed and interpreted.

Lev Manovich (2001) writes about the function of the computer screen and the influence it has on how an image is now viewed.

He states in his recent book *The Language of New Media* that:

*On one hand, rather than showing a single image a computer screen will display a number of coexisting windows. Indeed the coexistence of a number of overlapping windows is a fundamental principle of the modern GUI [graphic user interface]. No single window completely dominates a viewer's attention. In this sense, the possibility of simultaneously observing a few images that coexist within one screen can be compared to the phenomenon of zapping<sup>5</sup> (Manovich, 2001, p. 97).*

While the multiple panels of a computer screen may mimic structures located in other visual representations, the primary difference between the digital information and other forms of non digital visual image is the fixed structure of the panels. Whereas viewer actions enable panels within the computer screen to be moved, copied and changed, the structure of the panels in this project are fixed by the artist.

### *Sequencing: natural resolution with anticipation*

In *The Structure of the Visual Book*, Keith Smith (1995) breaks the organisational process of linear images into three categories: the group, the series, and the sequence.

*The group is a list held in union by a common denominator, such as subject matter and composition from a single source. A group is a compilation without structure or constructed moment. Reference is not made from picture to picture hence there is no order in the viewing* (Smith, 1995, p. 218).

While the group can be viewed as a collection of pictures, the connections within the images may have very little association with each other. Photographic albums could be described in this context where the collection of pictures may be united by a specific topic. The series however uses specific structures to support the reading and links images together in a straight line with each panel building on the information presented in the previous image.

*The series links a number of pictures in a straight line. A series is a linear arithmetical progression; each picture is an extension of the previous and an extension of the next* (Smith, 1995, p. 218).

In the context of reconstructing multi-panel images, when the panels are assembled in linear form, they are described as a series. Because a directed order of viewing may then be established the series helps to structure the notion of a narrative. The sequence differs from the series and is reliant on a reading where several images, not necessarily adjacent or in a linear format, help to establish the narrative.



*A sequence is constructed by cause and effect. Several pictures react to, but not necessarily with, the adjacent picture with a series (Smith, 1995, p. 218).*

The order of reading within a sequence is likely to be established over a number of attempts to construct the narrative. Where the sequence further expands from the series is in both the structure and placement of the multi-panels. As a way of providing some clarity with these terms, the group, the series, and sequence will be collectively known as a Plexus Trilogy. This neologism, developed by the author, refers to the plexus as the structure of the narrative but in the form of a network with interlaced parts. This network not only includes the linking of images, but refers to the specific action each movement offers and recognises the linking and conditional readings evident in both the series and the sequence.

*Serial movement is linkage forward, modified by recollection and preview. Movement is two dimensional, a linear arithmetical progression forward with momentary retreats and advances (Smith, 1995, p.112).*

Smith discusses this order of reading that describes conditional movement. The order is not set as a linear progression but relies on the references that the viewer makes to the multi-panels.

*Conditional movement makes references within, as well as from picture to picture. Reference might be made from one element to another, or from a similar element into another picture. Unlike the single reference from picture to picture in a linking movement, conditional movement may have several reference points (Smith, 1995, p.125).*

In conditional movement the linear progression of the narrative may not be as important where the directions for reading are expanded to include a global movement in linking the narratives. A linking reading will occur through the information presented within each panel, but the implication of the sequence may present further options through a conditional viewing of the multi-panels. The specific action of each link forms the network of the Plexus Trilogy.



**Figure 2.1** Hall, G. (2004). *North Island marching championships* [digital photographs].

Where movement shows a linking forward panels are able to be manipulated to invite a constructed reading. This can be achieved when combining the two series of the marching girls and the judge. By interrupting one series with the placement of another the linear progression can be broken. While the reading may occur with any individual panel at some point however, the reader will begin linking panels to establish their own narrative. While physical structure of the work helps to direct the reader there may be many ways of constructing the reading.



**Figure 2.2** Hall, G. (2004). *North Island marching championships* [digital photographs].

This example of the sequence shows how a reading may be conditioned by placement of panels and the progression a series may offer. While there is an opportunity to view more than one series, the disruption in the linear progression through changes in size of panels may allow for additional readings to occur. These additional panels may offer opportunities to link images that may not be adjacent to each other but support the reading. By introducing part images within the panels, the reader is encouraged to make connections with panels that depict similar action. The sequence may not rely on a direction of reading to establish a narrative but focus on the total multi-panel construction for meaning.

Central to the construction of the series is the separation of the individual panels. This separation is identified as a white area that frames the panel. When reading comics, using this multi-panel format, the viewer may be unaware of the gutter space that frames the individual panels, or the role that the gutter assumes in influencing the way the narrative is read. The gutter, often viewed as a white space between panels, is the area where closure is likely to occur. Will Eisner in *Comics and Sequential Art* refers to this white space as follows:

*The use of the panel border as a structural element, when so employed, serves to involve the reader and encompasses far more than a simple container panel. The sheer novelty of the interplay between the contained space and the non-space (the gutter) between the panels also conveys a sense of heightened significance within the narrative structure* (Eisner, 1985, p.49).

The panel shape of a photographic series can mimic the properties of the grid. When the layout is similar to that used in the comic format the gutter that separates each photographic panel can adopt a regular distance. When the gutter between panels is constant the work may be read quickly. Consequently, if the gutter that frames individual panels is extended the process of viewing may be interrupted. This extended space is called omission (Smith, 1995) a process which offers possibilities in the way the narrative can be read.

Smith (1995) refers to omission as *a gap or an intentional leeway in a series or sequence without weakening the structure, with the express purpose of foreshortening space, quickening space, and permitting the viewer to use their imagination* (p.141).

In constructing the multi-panels both the gutter and omission are used. While these are used as a linking space between the panels, for the purposes of my work the gutter is used to define a regular distance between panels and omission is used to identify larger areas of white space within the work.

When this panel shape is broken the white space of the gutter may become a part of the panel, and the visual information part of the gutter space. Where omission is used to break the continuity, the space helps to interrupt the tempo and reading of the narrative. This space which is present by implication offers a way of constructing the reading (refer figs.2.3 and 2.4). The placement of panels is significant in defining the size of the gutter space. Where the gutter may be constructed as a regular space between all

panels the narrative may be read with some ease. In writing about this gutter space McCloud (1994) discusses the process of closure, and the significant role closure has in reading, and states that:

*Comic panels fracture both time and space offering a jagged, staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous reality* (McCloud, 1994, p.67).

Closure, in this instance, may be defined as a way of reaching a conclusion between transitions. Closure may occur within a single panel or occur within the frame that the work occupies. With multiple panels, closure may also occur outside the work and in the gutter space between the adjacent panels. Smith offers a similar view of the action of closure, supporting ideas of linking and conditional movement. While the actions of reading dictate the direction of the narrative through the simple action of turning the page, watching film or video, the narrative is also predetermined as we are obliged to follow the directions of the producer. However there are a number of possibilities in the construction of a linear narrative. Where linear progression is not a condition of viewing and establishing the narrative, the audience is able to start with any panel. Conversely, in doing so, closure may take longer to establish. Smith states that “the notion of the conditional movement is not so much charted out as absorbed” (Smith, 1995, p.126). When the series is used the linking movement guides the reader along the multi-panels in a linear form. By combining the series and the sequence closure may then occur at different stages of viewing. As the difference in movement between the series and the sequence becomes apparent to the viewer, the rate of closure may determine the tempo at which the

narrative is read. Smith refers to this process of linking the panels together to create a narrative as “conceptual bookbinding” (Smith, 1995, p.128).

By manipulating the size of the work and extending the panel’s format it is possible to establish a number of transitions. In using this construction as a series, the linear sections within the work establish a closure. By using this construction as a sequence within the overall structure of the multi-panels, closure is also established. These combinations of the series and the sequence form the multi-panel narrative which is the basis of my work.



**Figure 2.3** Hall, G. (2005). *First academy of dancing, Wanganui, grading and examination classes* [digital photographs].

The gutter identifies the boundaries within individual panels and omission identifies larger areas of white space. Where the gutter space is consistent, relationships between the individual panels may be reinforced. The application of omission has the ability to isolate and confine individual panels. Where omission is used to separate different panel shapes the tempo may be confined to areas constructed in a series. In this instance the omission is identified as an integral part of the series and aids the reconstructing movement of the narrative.



**Figure 2.4** Hall, G. (2004). *North Island marching championships* [digital photographs].

With the introduction of an image where the marchers are stationary and then concluding with a panel where the marchers appear to have completed their routine, the panels between may suggest the action of marching that occurred between the start and the finish. By using images that suggest a rapid foot movement the reader may elect to identify these actions as part of one marching step and to possibly read the narrative as having parts of action and rest. The combinations of the gutter and of omission allow for numerous options when constructing the work.

When the omission space has little structural reference to any panel shape, the narrative may appear isolated and fractured. In this example the white space created through omission, has little in common with any panel shape. The initial reading may be directed by panel size, and subsequently by locating the series.

This way of constructing narratives and viewing panels can be referred to as synecdoche, where the viewer is invited to fill in the displaced sections of imagery not readily visible. This action is evident in fig.2.4 where the larger panels invite the viewer to relocate the information in smaller series within the multi panel. Synecdoche, a semiotic term, can be described as part/whole relationships, where the mechanics of viewing help the viewer to work between both panels. A visual synecdoche functions when a visual item represents a segment of something else.

*In photographic and filmic media a close-up is a simple synecdoche – a part representing a whole. Indeed the formal frame of any visual image (painting, drawing, photograph, film or television frame) functions as a synecdoche in that it suggests that what is being offered is a slice of life and that the world outside the frame is carrying on in the same manner as the world depicted within it. This is particularly so when the frame cuts across some of the objects depicted within it rather than enclosing them as discrete entities (Chandler, 2003, p.133).*

By using images that focus on a portion of footwork, the viewer is encouraged to complete the images of walking, marching or dancing. The use of visual synecdoche involves the viewer in a level of cognitive commitment not required if the entire person was depicted. This abstract relationship further supports a conditioned reading by viewing the constructions of the panels within the context of the whole work. When this notion of synecdoche is applied to the multi-panel format, there may be further opportunity to extend these sequential relationships through the variations offered in reading the panels.



### *Transitions: chasse from a promenade position*

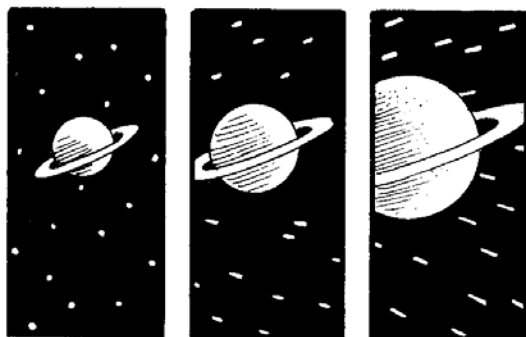
The transition between panels within a multi-panel format, contributes to the construction and reading of the sequence. Transition, used as the predominate mode of narration in film and television can be described as the logical progression, from one scene to another, in showing an order of events.

John Fiske (1987) in his book *Television Culture* describes the way the narrative is an integral aspect of television storylines and mentions strategies employed in order to understand, to view and interpret a number of narrative constructions. He explains the role of the realist narrative, and the way every detail within an image is required to define meaning. The notion of linearity is also an important component within the reading.

*I have assumed that realism is typically narrative in form, and this assumption holds good; indeed some such as Barthes imply that realism is always narrational; even a photo or a realistic painting is a frozen moment in a narrative, and understanding it involves reconstructing the narrative on either side of the moment presented to us (Fiske, 1987, p.24).*

As a consequence of the transitory nature of the moving image, the constructed narrative is inevitable in television. But by using the multi-panel format, the constructive narrative may be altered where transitions from image to image can be established at any point within the construction. By using these transitions and applying the structures described within the Plexus Trilogy, the narrative may aid in the construction of enriched movement within the static image. In order to understand how the idea of the

transition affects the way in which the multi-panel format can be constructed and subsequently viewed, this thesis will discuss a number of available transitional options. Scott McCloud (1994) describes a number of ways this process can be categorised and in his book *Understanding Comics* cites six clear ways in which the transition operates. While McCloud (1994) uses two and three panels to support his definitions the transitions may also be observed in a multi-panel format. To observe these relationships the following descriptors will include the drawings of McCloud (1994) followed by examples of photographic panels used to demonstrate reconstruction of the choreographed moment. The first transition is called moment to moment.



**Figure 3.1** McCloud, S. (1994). *Moment to moment* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p70). New York: Harper Collins.

In this first example the transition shows little change from panel to panel. We are able to observe the changes within each image as a moment to moment, which is likely to be a progression of the previous image. Both the chronological order and linear construction helps to identify the construction as that of a series.



**Figure 3.2** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photographs].

By applying this moment to moment transition to my own work we are able to observe very little change in panel information, except in identifying small amounts of movement with the dancer's hands. The time taken to complete the movement is very quick and so may become a component of closure. The transition from the middle panel introduces new characters into the narrative suggesting longer periods of time.

This initial process, identified as moment to moment, may duplicate similar information in adjacent panels, with minimal changes occurring from one panel to the next. The way of reading information between the set of connecting panels may happen quickly and support a tempo in the reading of the narrative. This tempo, or regular action of closure, may help to guide the reader to move quickly from one image to the next as they observe the changes from panel to panel. The emphasis on reading is placed on a sequential and chronological narrative with the image transition easy to follow. This notion of linear progression is a fundamental component of the series, one of the components of the Plexus Trilogy.

McCloud (1994) describes the second transition as action to action. In this transition, the notion of time and tempo may become a feature of the transition. The viewer is able to see the events as they unfold as the series is constructed in chronological order.



**Figure 3.3** McCloud, S. (1994). *Action to action* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p70). New York: Harper Collins.

In this transition there is an identifiable progression from filling the glass to burping. The gutter space is set at a constant distance and acts as an additional device in constructing the tempo of the narrative. In this example it is possible to observe regular periods of time in all three panels. The regular chronological shifts in action may also help to support the tempo.



**Figure 3.4** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photographs].

While the movement from panel to panel is clear, and the action to action transition is established, the regular gutter space becomes more active in establishing the tempo of the narrative. While the first two panels focus on the moment to moment where the hands are raised in readiness for the dance, the other panels show dancing that has occurred as a consequence of their initial actions. The linear format may help to support the direction of reading and the events depicted in each individual panel may also identify a chronological structure.

The preceding panels (fig 3.4) record movement within a series, where the act of moving is visible from one image to the next. The recognisable changes in information from panel to panel establish the linking narrative that may be easily understood and logical to follow. With a chronological progression the order of viewing is quickly established. By observing changes in the dancers' action, information evident from panel to panel, a tempo of viewing may be determined. Less time may be spent looking at individual panels, as the transitions established in 'action to action' could project the reader into the following or preceding panel depending on the preferred direction of reading.

The third transition, known as subject to subject, supports the sequence, the third part of the plexus trilogy.



**Figure 3.5** McCloud, S. (1994). *Subject to subject* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p71). New York: Harper Collins.

With the inclusion of subject to subject the chronological order may still be a feature of the construction but the shift in interpretation may move towards the notion of the sequence where a conditional meaning could be made after viewing all the panels.



**Figure 3.6** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photographs].

While we may be able to identify a series within the first three panels, the panel on the far right identifies a part of the narrative that may not support a chronological event. The final panel identifies an audience we assume may be observing the dance, but an element of uncertainty is possible in locating the specific event as part of the series.

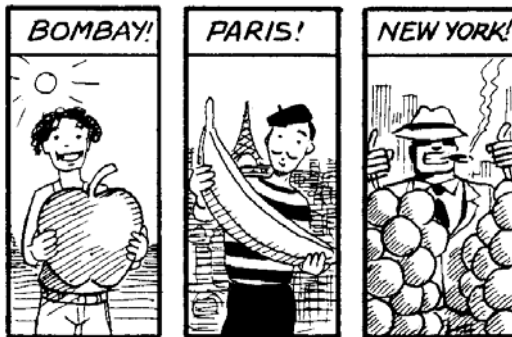


**Figure 3.7** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photographs].

When the size of the panel shape is evident and the gutter space manipulated closure between panels may be affected. In this example both the series and the sequence are able to be identified but their placement may offer conditional readings. Does the size of the panel establish a priority in reading? By including the waiting dancers within the two larger panels it is possible to change the order of reading. In this example the variable spaces made through omission may offer isolated readings. The irregular omission space separates the series format which is identified through the regular gutter space.

As a way of establishing the narrative in this transition, the relationships in all panels then become important as the linking reading may no longer be sufficient to reconstruct the narrative. This reading may be further supported when the construction of the panel shape and the subsequent gutter space is changed. By manipulating the size of panels and extending the gutter space the reader may have further options to construct personal narratives. As a construction device this could also signify a way of concluding in the narrative (fig. 3.7).

When the viewer has the option to search for the relationships between the panels, and from that construct their own narrative, the fourth transition is known as scene to scene.



**Figure 3.8** McCloud, S. (1994). *Scene to scene* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p71). New York: Harper Collins.

In this example McCloud demonstrates the significance of time and space within the work. While the addition of text identifies different countries the information within individual panels help to establish a different place. A conditioned reading may be more appropriate as the order of reading may not be important to the narrative. The House of Travel in New Zealand introduced a very successful Miss Lucy Campaign using the 'scene to scene' format where Miss Lucy (played by singer songwriter Marvey

King) was located on holiday in a number of different travel destinations. In each case the location changed while the character, Miss Lucy, continued with her dance sequence.



**Figure 3.9** Hall, G. (2004, 2005). *Central region ballroom dancing championships and First academy of dancing, Wanganui, grading and examination classes* [digital photographs].

This example shows two different dance activities. The first and last panel show a grading activity while the middle panel depicts a dance competition. The use of scene to scene helps to define the relationships among the panels.



**Figure 3.10** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photographs]. Hall, G. (2005). *North Island ballroom dance championships* [digital photograph].

The notion of scene to scene may be evidenced by the stationary figure standing to the right in every panel and close to the gutter space. While the initial reading may suggest a constructed and linear format the stationary figure offers an opportunity to construct an additional reading with the figure being central to the narrative. While the figure remains in her post the foreground changes. The final two panels show the same event, but twelve months apart. The construction of the series is not as clear, as the sequence may begin to control the reading, in this instance the change of scene.

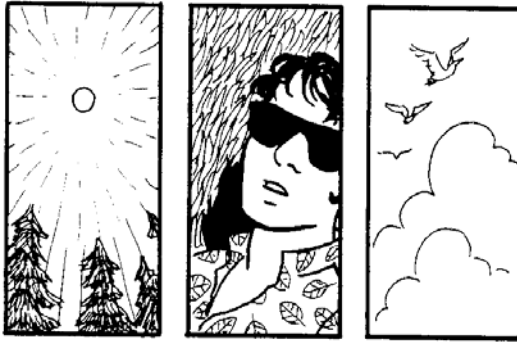




**Figure 3.11** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photograph]. Hall, G. (2005). *North Island ballroom dance championships* [digital photograph].

This enlargement of Fig 14 identifies subtle differences in the panels. The first photograph was taken at the 2004 Central Region Ballroom Dancing Championships, while the second photograph was taken a year later at the same venue. While this change in time is not evident to all people those who attended both dance competitions will recognise the differences in both panels.

The fifth transition, 'aspect to aspect', is a visual device used to establish a mood or sense of place within the panels. With this transition the placement of panels, as important as the focus of the narrative, has the possibility of establishing a quiet, reflective space.



**Figure 3.12** McCloud, S. (1994). *Aspect to aspect* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p72). New York: Harper Collins.

In this example of aspect to aspect the series construction may not be evident but recognisable by the regular placement of the gutter. While the panels offer a linear construction and may initially suggest a series, the order of reading is not important. The tempo of reading may change and the gutter no longer encourages closure between the panels. The reading may move from one panel to the next in a circular motion offering opportunities to keep returning to the narrative.

In these transitions, combinations of panels are used to form this single moment. Within this way of viewing, the linear progression is not as evident as in the previous transition types that use the series as a construction device, but all panels are combined to explore the notion of the sequence (fig.3.12).

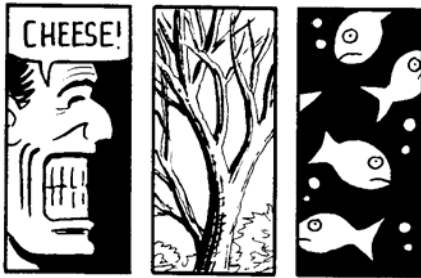


**Figure 3.13** Hall, G. (2005). *First academy of dancing, Wanganui, grading and examination classes* [digital photographs].

While the transition of aspect to aspect establishes a setting, the order of reading may be less apparent. The use of scale, and gutter space, may help the reader with an initial constructed reading, but the use of the series may not offer any reference to aid in the tempo of reading. The conditioned reading helps to gather the individual panels and assemble them to make a response to the work. The gutter space may no longer function effectively as a way of closure between the panels. The reader has the option of selecting their own order of viewing where a more contemplative reading is likely to be established. The circular reading may encourage the reader to continue viewing the work looking for references from one panel to the next. While the sequence occurs after all panels are read, it is possible to encourage an initial reading to occur with specific panels by placing an emphasis on panel size.

The sixth transition, non-sequitur uses panels that offer no immediate relationships. While there may not be any obvious relationship between transitional panels, the viewer often develops a linking between the panels and forms, or contrives a meaning with the work. When the panels are placed in a linear format a meaning will be constructed as the gutter space offers the opportunity for closure. This collection of images, described as a group, is the final component in the plexus trilogy but by the earlier definition it may be possible to identify any directed movement between the panels. The images may remain independent of each other but rely on a common structural format as a way of identifying them as a group. In previous transitions, the narrative

moves comfortably between or among the panels; with non-sequitur the reading of the narrative could possibly become jarred and discordant (fig.3.13 and 3.14).



**Figure 3.14** McCloud, S. (1994). *Non sequitur* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p.72). New York: Harper Collins.

The three panels are constructed as a group where reference is not able to be made from panel to panel and subsequently there is no set order of viewing.



**Figure 3.15** Hall, G. (2004). *Central region ballroom dancing championships* [digital photograph]. Hall, G. (2005). *Car park markings in Wanganui* [digital photograph]. Hall, G. (2004) *Outside Auckland domestic airport* [digital photograph].

The three panels use the structure of group as a way of random referral. The images within this group could remain independent as there is not constructed or conditional moment.

While these transitions have few common elements, the proximity of the panels may help to maintain connection, as the viewer may see each adjacent panel as a single narrative. Interpretations with this transition often rely on the similarities of construction and mark, found in both panels.

By manipulating the placement of individual panels it may be possible to offer further directions when reading the narrative. When constructing these multi-panels there is an opportunity to anticipate the likely actions of the reader by including their actions in reconstructing the choreographed moment. It is possible to direct the reader by extending the total length of the work and emphasising the linear construction to direct an initial movement. While this left to right direction of reading may be a consequence of a social conditioning, there is an opportunity to support and manipulate the reading. By further manipulating the requirements of the traditional (the place you might stand in order to see the panels) it is possible to direct the reader into some aspects of the narrative before moving to other panels. Smaller panels may invite the viewer to move towards the work and as a result of this action, independent narratives could be constructed. By placing two series of images within a parallel format the horizontal gutter between both panels offers additional areas for closure. As a way of physical construction, these parallel narratives could be read simultaneously. With the construction of the linear multi-panel format the tempo could be determined through the placement of the panel (fig.3.15 and 3.16).



**Figure 3.16** Hall, G. (2005). *First academy of dancing, Wanganui, grading and examination classes* [digital photographs].

When both the group and the sequence are used in the construction there is an opportunity to offer multiple storylines. As a result of the changing of gutter shape and scale of individual panels, the sequential narrative is liable to be interrupted. The larger panels offer an opportunity for initial reading by virtue of their size. This view supports a conditional reading where a cyclical action of viewing may occur. By changing the shape of some panels the gutter is able to intrude into the panel therefore offering a disruption in the reading. By using part/whole relationships the reader may look outside the frame to locate additional information where part of either the dancer or the walker refers to the whole image. This way of isolating the leg action within the picture frame exaggerates the movement and makes the action the focus of the narrative.



**Figure 3.17** Hall, G. (2005). *First Academy of dancing, Wanganui, grading and examination classes* [digital photographs].

If the western traditional reading of the narrative is disturbed by way of offering alternative beginning points, time may be spent establishing where a series or sequence of panels contribute to the narrative. When a series is placed parallel to each other there is further opportunity to read vertically as well as in a linear progression and then be engaged in a constructed and a conditional movement to form a narrative. This conditional movement could also make the order of reading less apparent and offer individual alternates of interpretation. The viewer may be encouraged to link panels of similar size and activity before observing the panels that are constructed in a series.

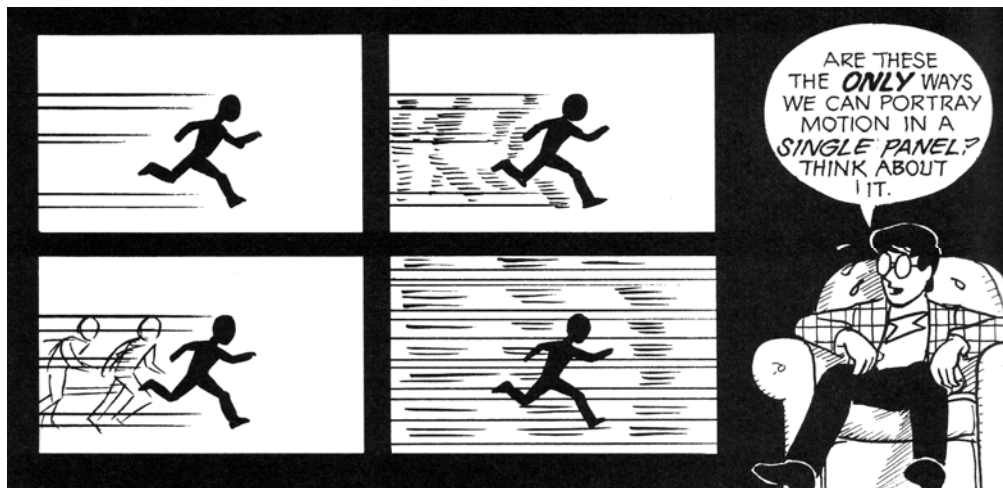
### *Space and speed: outer turn with two handed tuck*

There have been artists and art movements that have used the notion of speed as a theme of working as a manifesto and as a scientific study. Francis Bacon (1909-1992), a British artist who painted in London from the 1950's drew some of his inspiration from filmmakers and specifically the work of Eadweard Muybridge. His first reference to the work of Muybridge is found in the painting *Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1953, Des Moines Art Centre, Iowa. His papal series was influenced by Muybridge's technique of portraying movement as a series of individual panels. The Futurist Manifesto (1909) written by Tommaso Marinetti had among its ideals the concept of speed and technology where the car and the plane, symbols of speed, were important. Early studies in Biomechanics were carried out by Eadweard Muybridge (1872) where a series of trip wires and cameras recorded photographs of people and animals in motion.

One way to convey the illusion of speed in photography is through directional blurring. With photography, this effect can be created when the object moves while the shutter of the camera is open, the moving object creating a streak across the film. These lines of motion in individual images also are manipulated in post camera production. The effect of lines across the photographic image may blur information, but the lines emphasise a direction of movement.

While this notion of the blur seems somewhat simplistic, there are four possible ways of using motion lines to convey speed. In *Understanding Comics* McCloud (1994) describes this process as:

*The systematic decomposition of moving images within a static medium and the idea, that the sensation of motion could be reduced to single lines, [he] refers to these lines collectively as zip ribbons (McCloud, 1994, p. 108).*



**Figure 4.1** McCloud, S. (1994). *Motion in a single panel* [drawing] In *Understanding Comics* (p114). New York: Harper Collins.

McCloud (p114) looks at four stages where movement can be depicted within a static image. The first stage uses directional lines placed over a static scene. The second stage uses multiple images; the third and fourth stages incorporate the photographic techniques of streaking and panning. With panning, the camera moves with the object creating directional lines with the background.



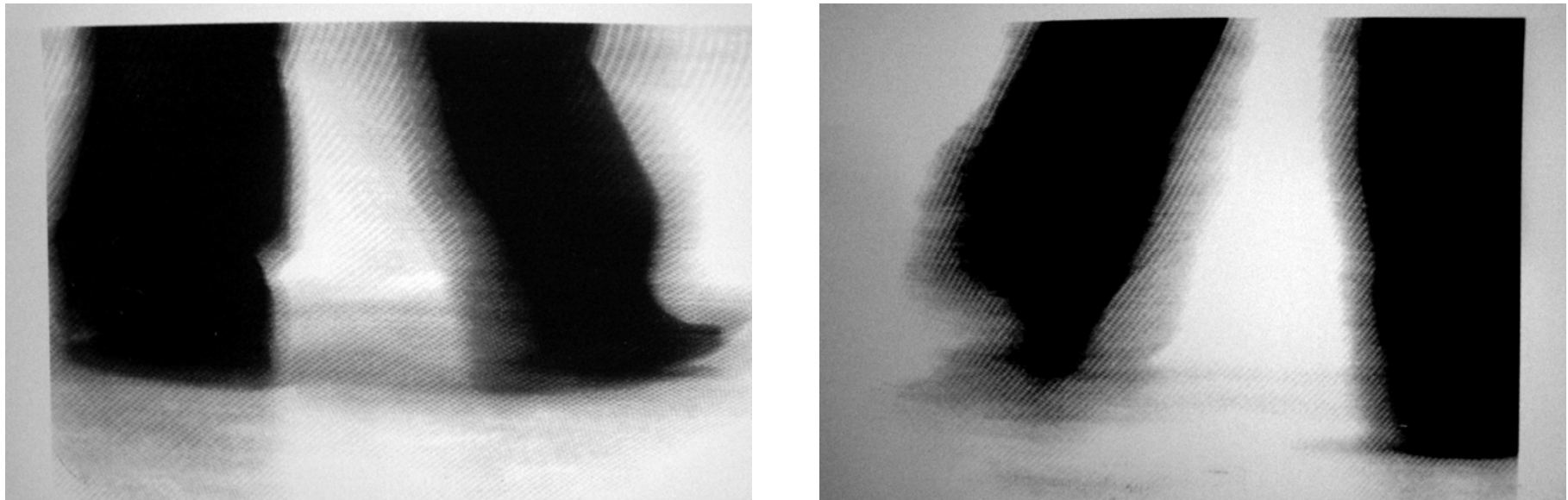
In making the practical work that explores these ideas, the camera was used primarily as a drawing tool moving with the dancers, recording the foot movements of people walking, and isolating the unifying patterns of people marching. By combining motion lines as additional structures within the plexus trilogy a sense of enhanced movement within a fixed image may be exaggerated.



**Figure 4.2** Hall, G. (2005). *North Island ballroom dance championships*, [digital photographs].

By recording directional lines the camera is able to draw the paths of moving objects through space. Different types of motion line are achieved by manipulating the function of the camera. When the camera is static movement is recorded as the figure moves across the viewfinder. When both the camera and figure are moving all lines help to convey the illusion of speed. In all instances the motion line accentuates the movement within the panel and in doing so may draw attention to a tempo within the panel.

While the digital photographs show the motion line as a drawing device within the camera, when manipulation occurs outside the camera, either through digital manipulation or through the printed mesh of the silkscreen, the motion lines are further able to be manipulated. This allows for the artist to take some control in the reproduction.



**Figure 4.3** Hall, G. (2005). *Promenade from open position* [silkscreen detail].

The two silkscreen images show the combination of the 90 degree silkscreen mesh overlaying the 45 degree angle of the dot screen film positive. The combination of the two angles creates a moiré effect clearly visible in both prints. By rotating the screen mesh prior to exposing the film the moiré pattern can be manipulated and controlled. The additional motion line allows for an individual control of directional mark and places the image manipulation outside the effect of the camera.

*Visual documentation: Hollywood slide pass.*



**Figure 5.1** Hall, G. (2003-2004). *The hidden sin series*, [multiblock and silkscreen].

The four woodcuts are from a group of seven works completed in 2004. The prints explore combinations of multiblock woodcut and silkscreen. In each instance the woodcuts develop early ideas of movement using multiple static image constructions as seen in the photographs of Muybridge, combining this observation of people in a number of environments identified as formal and informal space.

This chapter discusses, in terms of subject matter and ideas, the development of movement within a static image, the production of exploratory work, and the final exhibition of silkscreen prints. The initial series of work (fig 5.1) sought to explore visual relationships between woodcut and photographic silkscreen images by expanding on the early photographic studies of static multiple images by

Eadweard Muybridge and observing how people moved through both a choreographed and informal space. In the *Hidden Dimension* Edward Hall (1966) defined this field of movement as proxemics and argued that “the human perception of personal space can be used to connect individuals and create groupings of people” (Hall, 1966, p.108). Where the woodcut was used to record the static multiple movement, photography was ideal in recording the immediacy of movement. This methodology behind the combinations of woodcut, photography and silkscreen sought to define a “representational triangle of object, image, and viewer” (Burnett, 2004, p.15), and in his book *How Images Think* Burnett stated that “photographs suggest a [demonstrable] relationship between objects and subjects in pictures and what is seen, even though the activities of viewing are about different levels of visualisation and often, increasingly complex levels of abstraction and thought (Burnett, 2004, p.15). The multiple photographic panels were set to extend this representational triangle, and combined with the woodcut developed a sequential reading. This early work was largely unsuccessful as an exploration of movement because the coded relationship of object, image and viewer, and subsequently the small silkscreen panels, were unable to indicate any sequential narrative. By using the ideas of the group, the series and the sequence (Smith, 1994) and noting how the choreographed space of marching and dancing differed from that of the informal space of walking (fig 5.2), photography became the appropriate method of reconstructing these choreographed moments.

*As images, photographs encourage viewers to move beyond the physical world even as they assert the value of memory, place, and original moments. In that sense the flow of reference does not end with the photograph as an object. Rather every photograph that becomes an image pivots on a variety of contingent directions* (Burnett, 2004, p.28).



**Figure 5.2** Hall, G. (2004). Queen Street,[digital photographs].

The selected images record the way individuals within a group of people occupy a semi-fixed featured space<sup>6</sup> (Hall, 1966) while waiting for pedestrian lights to change. Through social conditioning individuals assemble by the side of the road, facing the same direction and wait to cross the road. What is of interest is the personal space surrounding each person. When more people joined the group, the space surrounding each individual was reduced. This notion of personal space has been interpreted and used as a construction device in my work as a way of isolating individual panels.



**Figure 5.3** Hall, G. (2004). Auckland airport, [digital photographs].

By moving from standing figures to those walking on the footpath the shadow made may set a dynamic setting where the foot, pivoting in space is ready to move. This is developed from Cartier Bresson (*Henri Cartier- Bresson 1932 Gare St. Lazare, Paris, Man Jumping a Puddle*) exploring the concept of the decisive moment. While this work led to future photographic studies on movement, the decisive moment did not capture movement within a still image. The footwork demonstrated any movement as frozen and rigid.

By observing and recording the options available to people as they move through a space there are times where physical conditions may dictate the movement. While the landscape may assume some control over the actions of walking, in marching and

dancing there are commands and specific notations<sup>7</sup> that are used to establish connections which enable participants to move through a space by a number of readily defined and shared actions. This connection is used in the open body position of marching and in the closed body position of partner dancing. By definition the open body position sees participants as self supporting while the closed body position defines the participants as supporting each other through contact.



**Figure 5.4** Hall, G. (2004). *Natural turn with hesitation*, [digital photograph]

When overlapping two distinct series where linking panels combine open and closed body positions the reader may work between both series to construct personal narratives. By manipulating the gutter and inserting images into the space that supports closure the reader may be prompted into a selected reading. The beginning of an additional narrative could occur at the point where the smaller panel enters the regular shaped space of the gutter. While the gutter space became prominent in future work the overlapping of images within each panel were discarded. In reading the series and the sequence, the gutter and the space of omission support an individual reading of the work. It was felt that the smaller overlapping panels were isolated and confused the reading of the dance series. The smaller panels produced an overlapping picture plane where the illusion of pictorial space was formed as a way to further isolate both narratives.



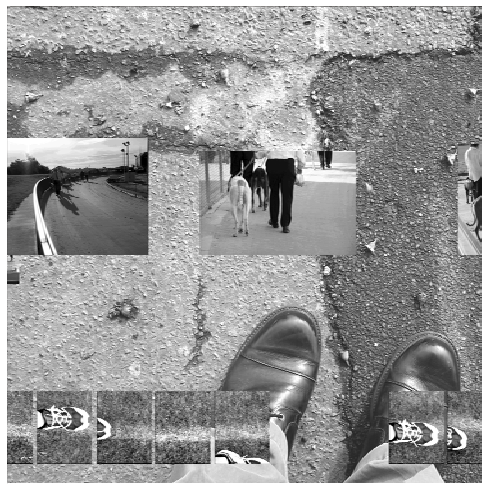
**Figure 5.5** Hall, G. (2004). *Natural turn with hesitation*, [digital photograph detail].

The detail from fig 5.4 explores part/whole images and shows relationships between the legs of the person walking on the footpath and the upper torso of the dancer. The line of one panel is continued into a similar line in the surrounding panel. The absence of the white border around the insert changes the way we see the whole work. By including the dancing information in the area normally seen as either a gutter space, or in the larger omission space, the viewer may see both works as they affect each other. Combining both panels was similar to the technique Greenaway employed where both panels may be read simultaneously.



**Figure 5.6** Hall, G. (2005). *Walk the dog*, [digital photograph].

By including the ground where walking might take place, and introducing an action associated with walking the reader might construct narratives between and among all images. While some panels are placed within the white space of the gutter, most panels overlap and the frame which defines their boundary becomes part of another image. Where these occur the reader may see the work as groups of images rather than a series, or a sequence.



**Figure 5.7** Hall, G. (2005). *Walk the dog*, [digital photograph detail].

This panel clearly demonstrates the effect of pictorial space in viewing the panel. The smaller images hover over the larger photograph. While successful in creating multiple viewpoints the illusory space affects the speed of the linear reading and was therefore discarded.



To reconstruct movement through a defined space, a number of elements may be used to support a linking reading. One such element involved the use of directional and numerical symbols that might suggest a cognitive reading. By combining the symbols with the photographic studies in walking, marching or dancing a pattern or sequential narrative can be suggested. The counting of numbers may help to mark out a tempo in the narrative and related symbols may direct the reader into linking the vertical panels.



**Figure 5.8** Hall, G. (2005). *Shadow walking*, [digital photograph].

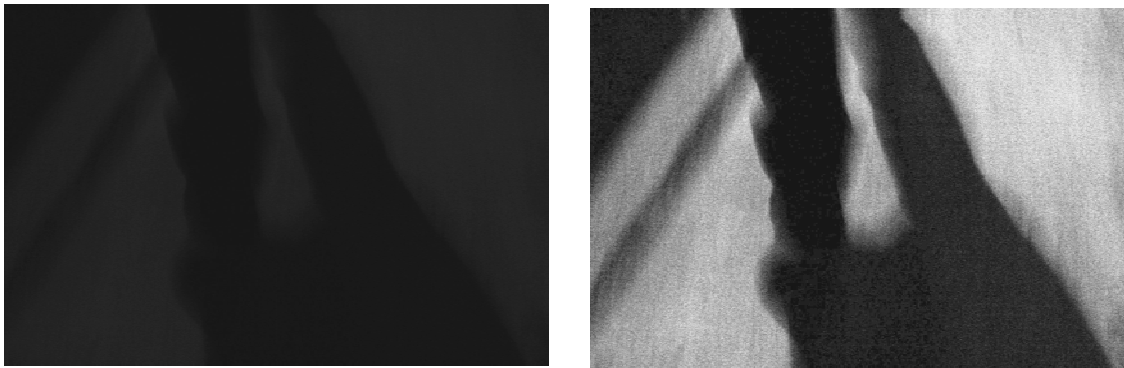
By exploring the ideas of numbers shown in column form the pattern may influence the direction of reading. By combining vertical and horizontal picture formats the series is contained within each panel. The linking movement may be directed by arrows and numbers. The gutter is defined as an uncluttered white space between panels. There may be more options of closure.



**Figure 5.9** Hall, G. (2005). *Shadow walking*, [digital photograph, detail].

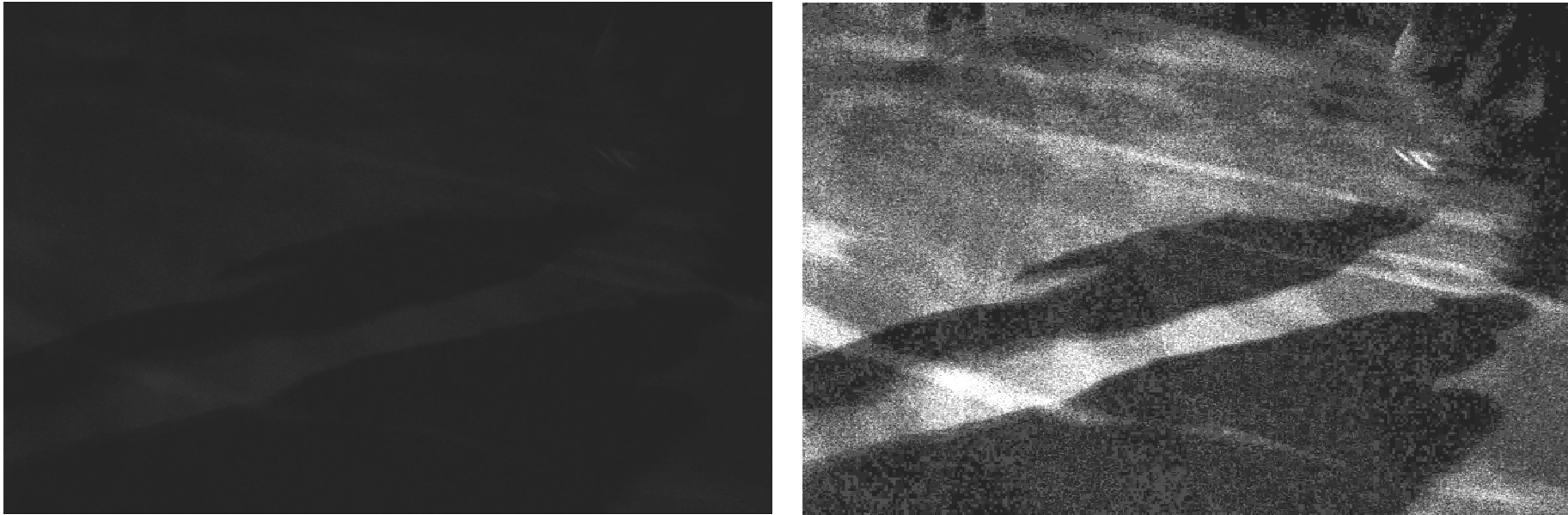
The detail from the top panel clearly defines the static images of people with the text suggesting an end point in a coded direction. Relationships are made between both panels where the text helps to inform the reading. Using numbers and text help as an arithmetical progression supports a directed reading. The use of text as an additional way of enhancing movement was successful only in the way of defining the one direction of reading. For that reason the use of text was discarded.

By photographing people moving in similar directions and manipulating the function of the camera, the next body of work observes the movement of groups of people and the way they move through a fixed space. In the writing of Edward Hall (1966) he states “Some aspects of fixed featured space<sup>8</sup> are not visible until one observes human behaviour” (Hall, p.106). By using the digital camera in very low light, and without using a flash, photographs were taken of groups of people moving toward a rugby stadium. While the photographs were unable to be seen, when manipulated through desktop publishing programmes images were revealed for the very first time. Observing the photographs some days after being in the crowd reintroduced a time frame once reserved for traditional film photography: waiting until the film had been developed. Although the viewfinder in the camera was able to show a darkened image it wasn’t until they were altered that the information was revealed.



**Figure 5.10** Hall, G. (2005). *Cake tin*, [digital photographs].

The post camera editing is clearly evident with the first darker panel showing little information. By altering the contrast levels the image is revealed for the first time.



**Figure 5.11** Hall, G. (2005). *Cake tin*, [digital photographs].

Where the light conditions were extreme the manipulated image showed areas of large pixilation to the point where the image started to disintegrate. The initial reason for taking the photographs was to record crowd movement, but the photographs offer more than a record of people in a fixed featured space. Here the marks within each image suggest movement. By using this idea within a series the reconstructing of a choreographed moment is supported by both image and directional mark. It was in these early photographs that the use of zip ribbons became a feature. In selecting images, the pattern of movement within a panel became a consideration when making either a linking or conditional narrative.

While the landscape may assume a form of control of movement, the movement through a defined space can be orchestrated by a series of commands and learned actions. In marching and dancing specific actions are used to establish directions and enable participants to move through space through readily defined and shared actions. The space required for movement and the times taken to complete actions are shown as a feature of this choreographed space.



**Figure 5.12** Hall, G. (2005). *North island marching championships*, [digital photographs].

Both panel placement and panel size become important in reconstructing the choreographed movement. By manipulating the gutter space to form an omission, a tempo in reading can be identified. The grid pattern on the floor defines the space and by exaggerating directional movement within panels, either by the zip ribbon or through foot placement, a sequential narrative may be identified.



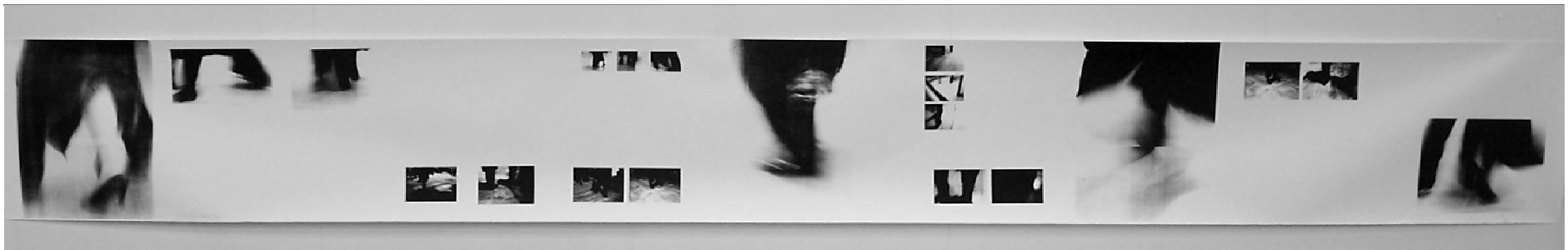
**Figure 5.13** Hall, G. (2005). *West coast swing with spot turn and hustle* [silkscreen 5000mm x 700mm].

By identifying both walking and dancing within the same silkscreen the viewer has an opportunity to link both movements into one narrative. The title of the work helps to identify areas within the work where the action might occur.

By extending the photographs into printmaking there is the option to involve the artist in the making of the work. When the images are printed with a digital printer, objective involvement is minimal and decisions can be made without the physical work being made.

Until the panels are printed in either digital form or by hand they don't exist. By printing the works in silkscreen the artist produces unique prints where the application of ink and the success of the prints are reliant on the skill of the artist.

As a feature of multi-panel construction both the length and quality of paper are important considerations. Rolled paper allows for the sequential narrative to extend beyond a direct view as the paper used in the silkscreen prints is ten metres in length. This allows for the linear narrative to be contained within the paper frame. The significance of this action allows for different narratives to be established, and by adjusting the length and width of the paper it is possible to suggest narratives that are reliant on the conditional reading of the sequence which is subsequently bordered within the paper frame.



**Figure 5.14** Hall, G. (2005). *West coast swing with hesitation and inside turn* [silkscreen 8000mm x 700mm].

In the large panels where the gutter space is not readily identified the edge of the paper helps to establish and define closure. While the construction of the series may be evident in the grouping of smaller multi-panels where the complete panel shape is not evident the linking movement may be questioned. When the panel is printed to the edge of the paper the white surface of the wall is used as a large area of omission. When the omission space is not contained within the paper frame closure may become less obvious.

The long panel format not only defines the margin of reading, but allows for a greater number of individual series of multi-panels to be included. By employing the flat black colour in all silkscreen, the images have the chance to signify the aesthetic of early black and white photographs. The zip ribbon, the gutter, and the omission space are all accentuated within the single panels. The use of black ink in all works offers suggestions of connection with the three forms of movement identified in the exhibition as walking, marching and dancing.

The exhibition that supports this thesis will reconstruct the choreographed moment through a collection of linear narratives. By manipulating the span of the sequential narratives there is an opportunity to direct the viewer in the reading by constructing both linking and conditional narratives. Where the reader is required to walk along the length of the work the placement of smaller panels, constructed as a series, may manipulate the reading. The titling of the work has a particular significance in supporting the narrative within the panels. Individual titles (Basic shadow movement with pressed forward walk in promenade position) are taken from particular dance movements which are then reconstructed to support the actions visible in the multi-panels prints. By alluding to a form of dance notation within the title of the work, suggestions can be made as to its contents. The use of these titles further enhances the notion of movement within a static image.

### *Exhibition: natural turn with hesitation*

The final exhibition of silkscreen prints gives the viewer the occasion to be engaged in three comparable actions of viewing. The open gallery space allows for specific prints to be constructed and presents the opportunity to manage the scale of the individual works. In producing three areas of audience participation there is circumstance to arrange the space within the gallery and to modify and manipulate the directional movement of the viewer. As a result of this manipulation the viewer has the chance to become a part of the dance. By observing the two landscape format prints the viewer has the chance to be engaged by moving along the works where the inclusion of both omission space and the gutter (chapter 2) are positioned to interrupt the walk. The first work in the exhibition (fig 6.1) placed closest to the entrance of the gallery is constructed to be read from right to left, creating opportunities in questioning the subjective way of reading both image and text. This creates the option to manipulate the direction of the viewer and to construct their movement. An additional multi-panel landscape print occupies one entire wall. The large silkscreen 10,000mm x 700mm is placed to sit behind other works hanging within the centre of the gallery. By interrupting the total display of this print the viewer is expected to move into an appropriate viewing space and walk along the work (fig 6.2). The print is constructed to be read from left to right, symptomatic of a sequence of events which begins by introducing figures in a stationary pose, indicating a beginning of a dance (fig 6.3), and finishing with panels that demonstrate energetic movement (fig 6.4). While the methodology is to manipulate the actions of the viewer and construct models that define a way of presentation the viewer response



to the gallery configuration is unable to be anticipated. While walking about the gallery, space is a natural consequence of viewing, the works are placed in such a manner to offer subtle directions to the spectator as they move throughout the room. By containing the multi-panels within the boundary of the paper, the landscape print is clearly accepted as being constructed as a single work and a single narrative. The combination of matt white paper and the matt black ink establish continuity within all works. The properties of black ink allow for consistent relationships between the image and the white of the gutter and the omission space.



**Figure 6.1** Hall, G. (2006). *Latin hip motion with anchor triple step and body contact* [silkscreen 6000mm x 700mm detail].

The print is constructed to show enriched dance movement with combined small gutter spaces to suggest vigorous action. This dynamic action is placed at the right end of the print. As the viewer walks along from right to left the information within panels change to indicate a slower deliberate foot movement to suggest the end of a dance.



**Figure 6.2** Hall, G. (2006). *Natural turn with hesitation*, [exhibition. detail].

Panels placed in the front of the second single landscape print define a loose corridor where there is a implication to walk along the multi-panel. The suspended works help to manipulate and define the viewing distance of the work. The larger gaps between the works offer an opportunity to step back from one work and enter the space of another. The works on the reverse side imply further sequences in the West Coast Swing.

The black multi- panels indicate the photographic quality of the work offering a number of questions to the authority of the dance movements.



**Figure 6.3** Hall, G. (2006). *Closed figure dance with contra body movement and heel lead* [silkscreen 10,000mm x 700mm. detail].

The set figures indicate the beginning of a dance. While the contestants wait for the music to commence, the audience are moving away from the dance floor.



**Figure 6.4** Hall, G. (2006). *Closed figure dance with contra body movement and heel lead* [silkscreen 10,000mm x 700mm. detail].

The cropped figures placed at the right end of the print indicate a fast moving dance. By manipulating the panel size and deconstructing the panel shape the energetic action located with the dance is enhanced and the narrative involved in recounting a dance is established.

The long format prints are constructed to bring about walking as a function of viewing, but when placing prints on top of each other (fig 6.5) there is an opportunity for this walking to be disrupted. The prints suggest a number of narrative links by viewing the multi-panels both horizontally within the individual paper boundary and vertically by overlaying panels between the paper boundaries (fig 6.6 and 6.7). This viewing may be further directed when images are used to provide visual links within the three prints. Combining a number of multi-panel prints in this structure then questions the use of paper edge as a device for containing the narrative. By

including segmented panels the function of the paper edge is changed specifically at that point, and assumes the function of a gutter. Where the sequence of events is contained within individual panels, the change in configuration connects all multi-panels as a single narrative.

As a way of reading a narrative this second action of viewing does not rely on the action of walking along the work. A viewing area is constructed through the placement of surrounding hanging panels (fig 6.8) which then identify an appropriate area in the gallery to examine the work. By containing this viewing space there are further possibilities to control the time spent on the analysis of the narrative. While there is an opportunity for a close examination of the work by observing the small panels there is less possibility to walk past. The suspended panels assume a role of directional markers where a path of walking and area for standing are inferred.

Where the first two actions of viewing involve the action of walking, placing panels in the centre of the room invite the viewer to duplicate dance steps, and to weave and circle around the panels by imitating the actions of a dancer. As with any person learning to dance they are conscious of their own feet position, therefore, placing this information close to the ground and curling the bottom edge of the print the viewer is positioned to read the panels and the titles of specific works by lowering their gaze.



**Figure 6.5** Hall, G. (2006). *Travelling dance with body kick and curved walk, Promenade position with reveres turn and toe lead, Spiral turn with standing leg and triple twinkle* [silkscreen 3,000mm x 3,000 mm]

While titled as three distinct prints all the work is constructed to be viewed as one work. By placing the additional multi-panels both above and below eye level, the viewer it is necessary to stand and view all three prints together.



**Figure 6.6** Hall, G. (2006). *Travelling dance with body kick and curved walk. Promenade position with reverse turn and toe lead*, [silkscreen 3,000mm x 2,000 mm detail].

**Figure 6.7** Hall, G. (2006). *Promenade position with reverse turn and toe lead. Spiral turn with standing leg and triple twinkle* [silkscreen 3,000mm x 2,000 mm detail].

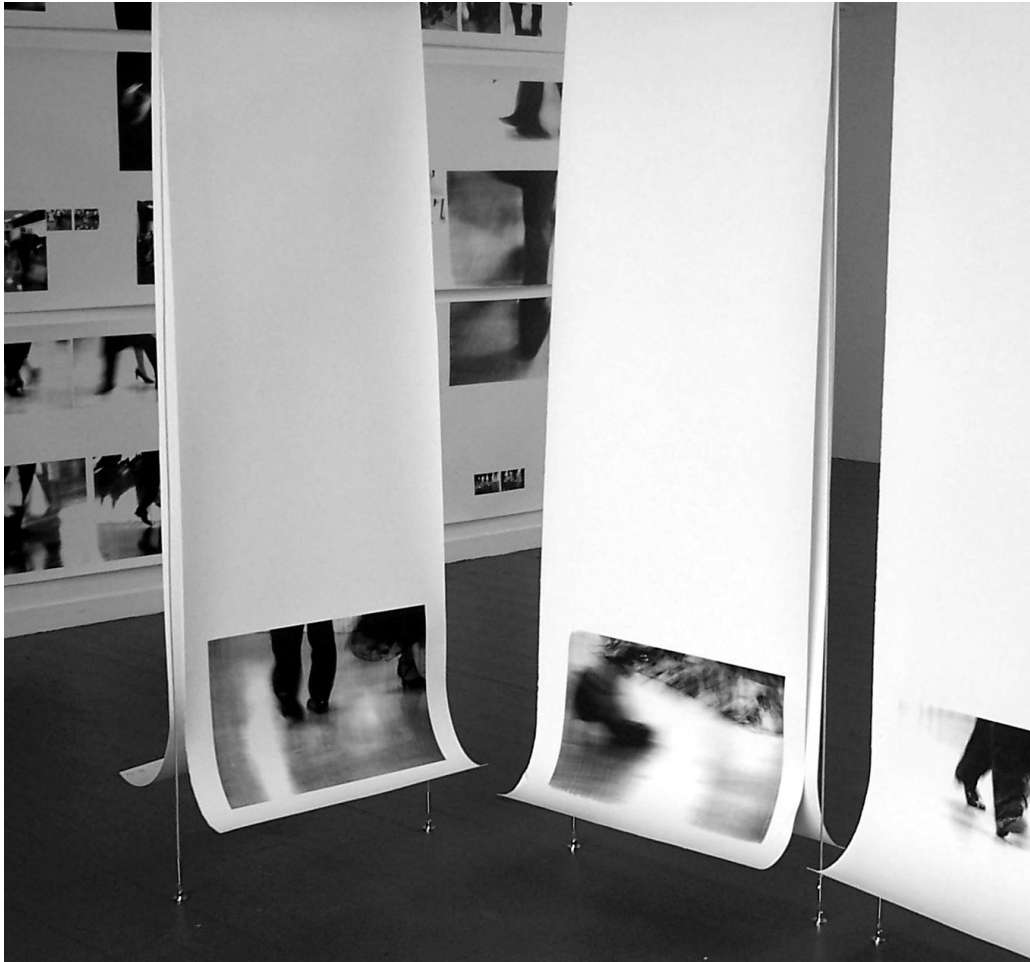
While we recognise the gutter that separates the panels the ideas put forward in closure may enable us to conceptually unite the separate panels. The directed order of viewing can now be seen as a series that moves both horizontally and vertically. The white space that separates the space between the two works becomes inconsequential as the common elements in both works identify them as one image.



**Figure 6.8** Hall G. (2006) *Natural turn with hesitation* [exhibition. detail]

The hanging panels in the body of the gallery are placed as a way to enclose and direct the viewer. As the panels are able to construct a corridor the open space in front of the three prints attached to the wall clearly identify a space to stand.





**Figure 6.9** Hall G. (2006) *Natural turn with hesitation* [exhibition. detail]

By placing the suspended panels close together areas within the gallery are able to be sectioned. The panels suspended in the centre of the gallery are placed in such a manner as to mimic a dance pattern. In the same way shoe prints are used to identify dance movements the panels are used to suggest a dance sequence and twist and turn to recreate a dance progression.



With the prints located on the wall the multi-panels are separated by the white space of the paper either in the form of the gutter or the larger space of omission. As a way of presenting another reading the individual hanging panels identify the gutter and omission space by means of an open area. When the gap between panels is extended to allow physical movement (fig 6.2) the viewer is able to enter this area and dislodge the sense of the narrative and modify the order of reading. When placed closer together (fig 6.9) the vertical panels construct their own viewing space and direct an order of viewing. As a way of unifying the vertical panels the titles of individual works share common information. All vertical panels begin with a specific dance style, West Coast Swing<sup>9</sup>, with additional dance notation used to describe the foot movement in each panel.

The open space between the centre panels allows for sections of the multi-panels located on the wall to be reframed and isolated from their original narrative. By looking through the gutter space the viewer has the opportunity to become aware of panels reframed by other works (fig 6.10).

While the exhibition was constructed to investigate a number of viewing conditions, the behaviour of the viewer relies on their own subjective reading.



**Figure 6.10** Hall G. (2006) *Natural turn with hesitation* [exhibition. Detail]

By constructing a small gap between the hanging panels other works hanging on the wall can be isolated from their surrounding images and viewed in isolation. This act of reframing isolates the narrative and questions the action of the gutter and the omission space.

### *Conclusion: natural with running finish around a corner*

The focus of this work has been the exploration and photographing of the choreographed movement in dancing and marching, the informal movement of people walking in public space, and subsequent reconstruction of invented narratives through the silkscreen process. Numerous photographs focus on the rapid foot movement of dancing and marching, and the multilayered movement of massed walking, when combined, allow for the construction of a number of multi-panel narratives. Through the placement of specific panels I have explored the way a sense of movement can be enhanced. The prints have been presented both in a linear format, and constructed to suspend vertically, silk-screened using black ink on matt white paper, with placement of images in groups, series and sequences redefined as the plexus trilogy. The writings of Scott McCloud (1994) and Keith Smith (2003) have been instrumental in defining panel to panel transition and multi-panel structures that have been the basis for the experimentation in this project. This specific mode of construction where the linear format is explored in preliminary work, and is a quality of the exhibition, conveys narratives and manipulates reader participation. The Plexus Trilogy has allowed for the manipulation of the space between panels described as the space of omission, where closure might normally occur.

As a consequence of these explorations, the multi-panel constructions allow for a visual reconstruction and enhancement of the sense of movement that may not be apparent in single panel works. Through the extended linear format and the suspended panel I have attempted to persuade a way of reading so that the viewer movement may also be choreographed

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> In film the split screen is the visible division of the screen, traditionally in half, but also in several simultaneous images, breaking the illusion that the screen's frame is a seamless view of reality, similar to that of the human eye. The split screen technique includes multi-layered visuals, as seen in movies, music videos, commercials and other media based on moving images. Movies with split-screen scenes include *Napoleon* (1927) directed by Abel Gance, in *Pillow talk* (1959), directed by Michael Gordon, and Quentin Tarantino's film *Kill Bill* (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Will Eisner writes about the structure of the comic where "the format of the comic book presents a montage of both word and image, and the reader is thus required to exercise both visual and interpretative skills. The regimens of art (e.g. perspective, symmetry, brush stroke) and the regimens of literature (e.g. grammar, plot, syntax) become superimposed upon each other. The reading of the comic book is an act of both aesthetic perception and intellectual pursuit" (Eisner, 1985. p.8).

<sup>3</sup> While the film format has the option to control and dictate the pace with which we view the narrative, the static image offers an opportunity to view the image as an intimate image. The viewer has an opportunity to view the work for a longer period of time than the moving image is able to offer.

<sup>4</sup> In the early 1980's a small number of English Quakers produced a seventy-seven panel tapestry depicting important events, persons and ideas from Quaker History. The similarities between the Quaker tapestry and the Bayeux Tapestry are in both the construction methods and in the division of panels.

<sup>5</sup> Zapping is a term used to describe the changing of television channels with a remote controlled device (RCD) in order to avoid viewing commercials. While the primary role of zapping is to avoid commercials, its role is sometimes extended to allow the viewer to watch segments of a range of programmes at the same time.

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<sup>6</sup> Hall describes semi-fixed featured space as the social space people will occupy when walking in a crowd, sitting in waiting rooms or adapting to the space of an office environment. The social space will change in different environments and cultural settings.

<sup>7</sup> Dance notation is the symbolic representation of movement. Various methods have been used to represent dance movement including abstract symbols and figurative representation. One of the more common types of dance notation was established by Rudolf Laban (1956) *Principles of Dance and Movement Notation* in which notation was used to show direction of the movement, the part of the body doing the movement, the level of the movement and the length of time taken to do the movement.

<sup>8</sup> “Fixed featured space is one of the basic ways of organising the activities of individuals and groups. It includes material manifestations as well as the hidden internalised designs that govern behaviour” (Hall, E. T. (1966). *The Hidden Dimension*. New York: Random House.

<sup>9</sup> The dance term west coast swing refers to a modern partner dance described as an upright-postured, smooth and warm, or a funky, hot partnered-jazz dance. Originally associated with dance styles of the 1930,s the dance term was first used in the 1950 American dance studios of Arthur Murray.

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