

XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX
(Variable-Span-Variable)

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—Abstract

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX explores moments of art-making practice contained within the heterotopic space of art encounter—a conflation of spaces ‘drawn out’ and ‘drawn together’. Studio methods relating to the miniature (as a rescaling device and a space in its own right), sculptural support structures (like pylons), tableau, and installation become devices for testing spectatorial reception, trembling demarcations and delimitations.

Initiated through studio practice and backgrounded by the literary theory of Susan Stewart, this project aims to build upon existing scholarship relating to sculptural practice, installation, and spectatorship, in the context of the under-theorised areas of the miniature and volatile states of reverie. Here, the miniature, through its operations of alignment, tableau, and island-like characteristics, is deployed as a means for complicating notions of encounter, temporality, and installative space. Notably, a variety of artworks occurring in 1:1 scale are examined via the operations of the miniature,

creating a contribution to analysis of contemporary art in Aotearoa New Zealand and further afield.

Accumulative methodologies propose sticky, surface-laden, temporal accretions, attesting to the passage of the project over time, while articulating an event-space of art encounter and temporal spectatorship.

In the context of contemporary debates about activity/passivity, spectatorship/participation and antagonisms in art encounter, I offer a reconsideration of installation experience as a speculative and partially unknowable space, thus expanding conceptions of how art is encountered.

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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.

Signed:  **Date:** 28/01/2015
Anthony Cribb

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—DESIGNATED SPACE #-1:

Preamble: Methods of Accumulation

—XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX:

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX is quick and straightforward, consisting of 3 characters: X, forward slash, en-dash, or X/–. The title adheres to a gregorian calendar structure that notates a date in text. The ease of interpretation is aided by constant repetition; one text after another. The ‘en dash’ is used to indicate a range (like a span of time), and as a time and space-saving substitute for words like ‘to’ or ‘from’. The ‘em dash’ differs from the en-dash—indicating a rupture—it is often employed to separate thoughts in a sentence. ‘X’ denotes another ‘placeholder’ and is translated with ease, however, XX/XX as date/month or month/date format, may differ depending on the part of the western world you inhabit. Taken in its entirety, XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX is translatable as an unspecified duration bookended by two as yet unspecified dates. These ‘dates’ may also be interpreted as structural positions that are as yet unoccupied (or unfulfilled). The process of unpacking the title has taken roughly one-hundred-and-fifty words to communicate, but when read, the de-archival of existing knowledge and structure, decompresses in an instant of recall to recognition. Phonetically pronounced XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX becomes clunky and verbose. To relate this title through the mode of speech one must go through the motions—at least initially as abbreviation can only occur once a communicative landscape is shaped. Within this requisite space of speech, instantaneous communication of the inscription is drawn out. The repeated pronunciation of the ‘X’ variable opens up the potential for confusion. The traversal of X–X may result in mispronunciations, the speaker (or listener) may become lost requiring backtracking and clarification. The title is less suited to speech because, when spoken, it becomes inefficient requiring more energy and focus, it requires the expenditure of more time.

The title, as a kind of critical signpost or tool for navigation, might provide a allegorical framework for the intellectual excursions of this project: movements must be played out—like the performance of the title one must ‘go through the motions’ (or the throws). Applying the extended logics of the title to this practice-led thesis—already understood as a synthetic union of practice and text that often arrives later—individual ‘letters’ must be

‘enunciated’, space must be traversed before it can be mapped and abbreviated. The reasons *for* this space are varied: it is a means for contending with years of practical experimentation and the plastic values of the exhibition; it is the wrestle to achieve some sort of parity (or at least cohabitation) between visual arts practice and academic research models (that so often base themselves upon scientific study). Within this context, and as an attempt to expand the scope of practice-led projects, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* positions the exegesis as not simply an exposition of praxis, but as part of a parallel text that works to unfold the structures of thinking. This is a relationship that plays out across a critical (or tragic distance) shaped for speculation. Exposed in this process is the necessary tension between these two aspects of creativity, the necessary dislocation between different yet nonetheless linked modalities. As an appeal to open up terrain (that is often vague), this exegesis (and project) contains its own byways, switchbacks, and apparent dead-ends—its own duration that must be traversed and reconciled with external durations—of the reader, the artwork, or the spectator. As exegesis, already partially amputated, the document may *amble* or *ramble*. This section as *preamble* sets up a formative space where *title* becomes a tool for exposition. As such, some spaces are contentious, jargon-filled, deliberately abrasive, some are tongue-in-cheek, some speculative, some are spaces of desperation and sometimes fear—for artistic processes, for the circumambulation of ideas and ideologies, as just *one* end of speculative process.

—***Conservation Strategies:***

The act of recounting the development of the title (*XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*), also recounts the development of the research that it titles. The project’s titling regime (that will be unpacked later in this section) was conceived as an ‘expedient’ method of archival practice, although as outlined in the drawn out inscription of *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, this might not be the case in all conditions. As such, exposed in the project is an internalised hypocritical schema, often manifesting as a tendency towards

verbosity or meandering perambulation that must somehow coexist with ‘conservation strategies’: ambitions for expediency and the regulation of expenditure. Artworks may begin simply and without complication, but the generative and reflexive act of making can be like feeding a void: a reverie of making leading to the exponential expenditure of resources—be it labour, time, materials, or capital. The practice of expediency looks to regulate art-making labour, thereby privileging a preservation of energy and of resources. There are practical reasons for this approach. Adhering to principled stances like reducing ecological spoor, the minimisation of expenditure might inform an increasingly ‘economic’ and *more* modest method of practice. Also, minimising excessive deployments of materials can mean *more* storage space, *less* things, a *reduced* need for disposal, and when times are tight, provide resilience: *more* spare parts or backups. Conversely, an economic practice might allow for greater overall expenditures: the production of larger volumes of works, or works of larger scales due to reduced material costs. Sensibilities that inform the project (like expedience and efficiency) play off notions of irreversible and inevitable change that might be regulated in some way. Provoked by concepts of entropy,¹ material employments that are informed by conservation strategies might be apprehended as a type of fetishised economic strategy *and* entropic contingency: planning for the eventual heat death of the universe (or some *other* hyperobject).²

The conservation strategies of this project are expressed in how materials are distributed after deinstallation. Rather than discarding the material of the artworks, they are often accumulated, put ‘on hold’ to be accessed again at another time. In addition to hoarding, consolidations of

¹ This project’s approach to entropy will be elucidated in a forthcoming (and more appropriate) section of the exegesis.

² Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects* [kindle ebook]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Defining hyperobjects, philosopher Timothy Morton writes: “hyperobjects to refer to things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans. A hyperobject could be a black hole. A hyperobject could be the Lago Agrio oil field in Ecuador, or the Florida Everglades. A hyperobject could be the biosphere, or the Solar System. A hyperobject could be the sum total of all the nuclear materials on Earth; or just the plutonium, or the uranium. A hyperobject could be the very long-lasting product of direct human manufacture, such as Styrofoam or plastic bags, or the sum of all the whirring machinery of capitalism. Hyperobjects, then, are “hyper” in relation to some other entity, whether they are directly manufactured by humans or not.” p. 1.



Cribb, A. (2011). *05/03/2011–13/09/2011*. [installation]. Auckland: Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts.

matter *as* relic of the artwork are given away freely at the end of an exhibition event in an act of counter-entropic charity. *05/05/2011–01/05/2011* provides an example of ‘post-event’ distribution. In this work a set of olive trees were employed for their sculptural properties (tall, thin and spindly). The trees also activated a community recollection at the site of the artwork: the historic existence of an olive grove that formerly inhabited an interior courtyard space at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts. When the exhibition event drew to a close the ‘re-inscribed’ (or perhaps historically re-authorised) olive trees were adopted, replanted in the backyards of Te Tuhi staff members.³

Relics of the variety cited above foreground thinking on the porousness of events, how they might live on in some way. Such an awareness has led to the development of several lines of enquiry that

³ Another example of this redistribution is located in the work *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*. As part of this work a modest stairway was built in ST PAUL ST Gallery to facilitate access to the ‘Front Box’ exhibition area. This was part of a crafted encounter where spectators would traverse a series of open and (en)closed spaces. The stairway was subsequently adopted (or retroactively ratified): the stairs existence as an instance of site-specific ephemera was extended and cemented due to pure utility—no one had gotten around to constructing stairs before, so all agreed that they were a positive addition to the site.

consider whether the ‘end-of-the-event’ constitutes the ‘end-of-a-work’. Artworks have a propensity to ‘haunt’, in their spectral remains lies the potential for reincarnation: conglomerations of ‘holding pattern’ or ‘cached’ materials reconsolidating to reform as a different physical manifestation in a different time and a different place. Here, a reincarnated work might not be the exact same work, but may not be an entirely different work. These lines of thought developed into a series of further questions: if the location of a work’s ‘end’ is unclear—in the context of complicated temporal delineation—then where exactly do we locate the work? Where does the work lie or occur? Is it possible to isolate and identify the work in a porous system of interaction between event, materials, prior thinking, and reflection? Sol Lewitt once posited that the execution of conceptual forms of art was perfunctory, the idea functioning as a mechanistic assembly that produces the art.⁴ But, operating some four decades later, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* questions the easily definable, preliminary space of planning. The artwork seems to rapidly flicker between a series of spaces, never comfortable in just one single site. In the context of how we encounter these porous events, Simon O’Sullivan, in *Art Encounters*,⁵ writes:

Rupture and affirmation are then two moments of the same encounter, two moments that only seem opposed if considered in the abstract, outside of actual experience. Art, in breaking one world and creating another, brings these two moments into conjunction. Art then is the name of the object of an encounter, but also the name of the encounter itself, and indeed of that which is produced by the encounter. Art is this complex event that brings about the possibility of something new.⁶

O’Sullivan locates art in a largely undecidable and porous temporal duration relating to the experiencing of a state spanning presentation and reception. It is in this context that my project considers ‘open-endedness’ in art and/or the potential for reoccurrence, referencing Rebecca Schneider’s theorisations

⁴ LeWitt, S. (1967) “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art.” *Artforum* (June): p. 80.

⁵ O’Sullivan S. (2006). *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*. New York: Palgrave. p. 1–2.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 1–2.

of re-performance, re-enactment, and reoccurrence in performance art.⁷ Additionally, the thinking of Miwon Kwon becomes influential, like Schneider questioning what occurs when an artwork is re-performed, particularly, when a supposedly ‘fixed’ site-specific work is re-sited. Accumulated, these theorisations of the boundaries between events contribute to the complication of how art is located or demarcated.⁸ Provoked by this thinking are questions of what art might ‘drag with it’ from place to place: How does an artwork change? How does it stay the same? Schneider elucidates an idea of ‘temporal lag’ where the past is dragged into the present and although it is not the same it is *not* not the same. In a similar vein, Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek proposes the pseudo-material ‘spectral supplement’ that haunts reality, forming the nucleus for all ideologies, thus all frames for understanding.⁹ I am intrigued by the idea of works (or projects) dragging something with them—dragging themselves into the present in a state of ongoing accumulation.

—*Accumulating Materials:*

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX explores transitional states of materiality and the dematerialisation of the sculptural object. Works dematerialise; they dissolve, degrade, or disappear and rely on a continuity of their dialogue via documentation, through retellings by witnesses and by their material traces. Conversely, aspects of a work—now *accumulated*—may reemerge in subsequent iterations. In XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX, terms such as ‘dematerialised’ and ‘dematerialisation’ refer to temporal conditions, namely, the capacity or tendency an artwork has for ‘disappearance’, a question of how the artwork sits in time. Many artworks of this project subscribe to a working method of site-specificity, often characterised by ephemerality, or

⁷ See Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains: Art and war in times of theatrical reenactment*. [Kindle version]. Retrieved from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

⁸ Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

⁹ Žižek, S. (1997). *The Plague of Fantasies*. London: Verso. p. 155



Alÿs, F. (1997). *Paradox of Praxis 1 (Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing)*. [Performance]. Mexico City.

the capacity to recede or disappear after a certain time has past. In this regard, the practice of site-specificity can be located within a historical narrative in sculpture that charts the ‘dematerialisation of the sculptural object’—a development in post-object art practices where the limits of what can be considered sculpture has undergone a multidisciplinary conflation. Here, dematerialisation indicates a freeing up of sculptural practices that are no longer tied to a discrete object that stands against time. Francis Alÿs’s *Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing*¹⁰ can be understood to operate in this territory. In this work, Alÿs pushes a slowly dissolving block of ice through the street of Mexico City. Alÿs’s performance is framed as a critique of capitalist means of production where, after a days work, local workers (in the area surrounding Alÿs’s studio) have little-to-nothing to show for that day’s labour. Significant in Alÿs’s work, is a tendency to employ materials that do not adhere to traditional sculptural expectations (expectations that may in turn allow for rapid commodification). Here materials are deployed as vehicles for the critique of contemporary economic

¹⁰ Alÿs, F. (1997). *Paradox of Praxis 1 (Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing)*. [Performance]. Mexico City.

systems, specifically the machinations of capitalism that frame the life-experience of a majority of the world's population and thus the studio-environment of many artists.

By comparison, *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* engages with 'the material' *and* dematerialisation: the nature of materialisation (with specific regard to labouring or laboriousness) and dematerialisation in forms of art production. Generally, this project's exhibition practices are predicated on an eventual movement of the material sculptural object through to its dematerialisation. Works such as *05/03/2011-01/05/2011* are entangled with a specific space and time and are demolished (their materials put into a holding pattern for reuse) after the allotted timeframe for the event is exhausted. A dialectic plays out between materialised and dematerialised forms of making as *foils*. Concerned with temporality and the visual/anti-visual that accompany the paradigm of the (de)material, and by foregrounding states of transition that occur between dyads,¹¹ *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* positions itself with respect to the economic and social. Efficiency and expediency are both contaminated with economic implications; often employed in hyper-individualistic aspiration (more/better for me). Or conversely, by the community minded (more/better for everybody). Or otherwise, in the purportedly agnostic, utilitarianism of the technocratic (more/better by dint of being quantifiably more/better). Thus, the (de)material paradigm of *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* operates in a 'hypocritical schema'¹² of conflation or *superposition*: manifest as ambivalent, rebellious, complicit, or coincidental responses within the horizon of late capitalist society. In this regard, the gravitational allure of expediency as a quasi-ethical endeavour set against a 'death drive' of expenditure and excess can be approached as a fundamental and perhaps irresolvable antagonism or point of collapse. Such a conflict might also be traced to questions relating to the function and utility of art, and

¹¹ As a note, ternary structures also become an interest of this project.

¹² See Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity: Lévinas, Blanchot, and Agamben*. [Kindle version]. Retrieved from amazon.com. This term is borrowed from Thomas Carl Wall who will feature in a discussion in the final chapter of this exegesis.

expectations that art should justify its existence in broader and more quantifiable terms generally drawn from current economic rationality.

—*Things Should Have Titles:*

Artworks, seminars, this exegesis, and other *things* within this study are titled by their duration, a temporal inscription of the event where a ‘thing’ occurred *or was* intended to occur. The titling convention of this project was formulated and implemented to conserve time and energy in relation to archival strategies, influenced by a preoccupation with expediency and the regulation of expenditure. Alongside the titling regime, an expression of this preoccupation can be found in a related aspect of this project’s archival—the operation of photographic documentation. Early in this project, the thorough documentation of artworks consumed a large amount of time and energy. Also, the results of that expenditure were partial at best when compared to experiencing an artwork in-situ. So, in avoiding the (digital) clutter of hopelessly partial photographic and video documentation, a self-limiting, self-regulating documentation convention was adopted. Now, a single image records each ‘event’, documentation occurring at a point that is considered to represent the end of the installation period and the beginning of the exhibition event. This image stands as the ‘official’ documentation of the work (although no limitation is set for any other party that seeks to document the work). The conceptual background for this convention developed from an observation that artistic documentation was often positioned in terms of remembrance, as punctuation, or as an *obituary* for a work. This was considered inappropriate in relation to the project’s stated concerns relating to open-endedness. The relocation of documentation’s temporal positioning and an attendance to its inherent partiality was an attempt to trouble traditional archival operations.

Returning to titling, it is well established that an artwork does not necessarily require a title, but the title does serve a purpose in classifying and cataloguing. To title is a soft yet coercive obligation when working with institutions that engage with publicity and archiving. However, meeting this

obligation might produce unintended consequences for an artwork: a title that appears apt and serves a purpose at the beginning of an exhibition may become irrelevant if a work changes over its duration. Also, a bad title (like a bad band name) runs the risk of influencing the how the artwork is apprehended. A titling convention like the one employed by this project, can be considered a risk mitigation strategy, less trite than *Untitled*—‘opting out’ from the ‘clever title arms race’, all the while making a move for the conceptual high-ground.

EXAMPLES OF PRE-TITLING CONVENTION TITLES

WAIT/WEIGHT

MICRO-SITE (revised from *View From a Concrete Staircase* due to embarrassing titling)

2 MINUTES 31 SECONDS (TUNGUSKA ITERATION)

UNTITLED WEIGHT

EXAMPLE OF TITLING CONVENTION FORMAT

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX

Significantly, the naming convention has encountered several unintended complications, an unravelling that began with the work *05/05/2011–01/05/2011*. Briefly touched upon earlier in this section, *05/05/2011–01/05/2011* was located in the internal courtyard of Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts in Pakuranga, Tāmaki Makaurau. Te Tuhi is an arts and community centre that is part art gallery, classroom, dance studio, community hall and cafe, catering to diverse groups ranging from the arts community to religious groups that use the site as a place of worship. *05/05/2011–01/05/2011* was conceived to engage with elements of the complicated and intriguing social matrix at Te Tuhi. An iterative approach was conceived as a response to a contingent environment, offering the ability to act, reflect, and react to whatever criticisms, feedback or new observations were provoked by previous modifications. To balance resources like time, money, and energy, a self-imposed limitation of three major iterations occurring over a three month period was set. In terms of the site of these iterations, the decision to locate the artwork within the courtyard (there was also an indoor option) was

informed by factors such as the site's architectural features, and also its use by the Te Tuhi community. Initially, the work was to begin its habitation of the site by engaging with the courtyard's physical or material nature. After an informal period of research in the Te Tuhi Library archive, and interviewing¹³ people on their memories and experiences of Te Tuhi, the response modified to consider the historical usage of the site by other artists and by artworks. Alongside historicising, a nascent concern was developing on the potential for the space to meet expectations of how it should act as a courtyard, how it should *perform* or *be* courtyard. So the sensibility of the work moved in part to occupy a do-it-yourself¹⁴ spirit of renovation or improvement, attending to the use of the space by the varied groups of people who use Te Tuhi. The courtyard was a place for people who had classes to eat lunch or have a sneaky smoke (although the courtyard was probably a designated non-smoking area), when church was on it was a playground: kids ran around with little care for any status the artwork might hold. Throughout all this, the site was still an exhibition space containing an installation artwork. The varied relations and uses tied to the site formed a set of limitations to work within (and to chafe against).

Late in the development of 05/05/2011–01/05/2011, I was requested to continue expanding the work, to keep modifying and working past the planned duration of the project. All told, the work ended up exceeding the expectations placed upon it by its own title by about four months. The excess of the fixed timeline delineated by the work's title, as indicated by an inscription on the wall by the space, in documentation, and in various other publications (like catalogues and websites) became a running gag at Te Tuhi—replayed each time the hyperextension of the work extended a little more.

¹³ This was a series of fairly informal conversations with Paul Cullen who had exhibited in the courtyard and conversations with Nanette Cameron who had a long relationship with the site.

¹⁴ Across a span of this project's works, a DIY ethos (and a material aesthetic influenced by DIY), has developed due to the self-determination it grants in regard to making, and also the lower budget of this research project. The DIY approach is also considered in terms of how artworks might communicate their materiality to the spectator. In using common materials and construction methods it is proposed that the spectator might further unravel the making of the artwork, provoked to exclaim (or think) "I could do that!". In this way, converse to approaches that might erase presence from the artwork, XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX opens itself up to the possibility of spectatorial presence where an engagement with materials could constitute the self-inscription of the spectator into the work through their capacity to 'make'.

At the end of the exhibition period the environment of Te Tuhi had provoked a series of about 6 major iterations in the work and countless numbers of minor modifications. At the conclusion of that excessive span of making, and after more shared openings than a single work deserves, a situation was created where the work violated its own informing delineations. Duration was largely the work's conceptual provocation, a certain amount of work was supposed to happen over a specific amount of time. In this way, duration was its title and its boundary. If an aspect of the artwork can be thought of as a set of conditions informing an axiomatic mechanistic assemblage that produces through a predetermined specular structure (albeit with allowances for some variability within this structure), then to produce in excess of these conditions is to produce into a contingent space where the work is in violation of itself: a kind of surplus production into a space of excess.

—Disambiguating Title and Artwork

Although *05/03/2011–01/05/2011* can be considered the first example of the unforeseen consequences that stem from the restrictive titling convention, other complications soon arose. These could only be discovered through the repeated use of the convention, and posed a set of intriguing problems for the project to consider. As the outputs of the project accumulated, the titling convention failed to function efficiently. Although fulfilling general naming criteria, in that the names are unique and accurate, it nonetheless became difficult to differentiate one work from another:

EXAMPLES OF TITLING CONVENTION

24/01/2013 – 17/02/2013

*05/09/2012 – 16/09/2012**

17/03/2012 – 10/06/2012

06/10/2011 – 21/10/2011

23/08/2011 – 27/08/2011

05/03/2011 – 01/05/2011

15/12/2010 – 10/03/2011

09/11/2010 – 15/11/2010

24/04/2010 – 01/05/2010

When viewed in isolation, as memory fades, or as they accumulate on mass, the titles become more and more devoid of context. Although the titles imply the occurrence of some *thing* in, or over, a specified duration, there is little indication as to what that thing may actually be, causing recollection to be much more difficult. In this way, privileging attendance, the naming convention may be of greater utility to a spectator located within the temporal demarcation indicated by the title rather than as a method for proper archival. A title like *05/03/2011–01/05/2011* can assure a spectator caught within those bounds, that something is happening: the title is an indicator of being at the right place at the right time. In this way, the title can be interpreted as a signal to the spectator that something has been happening and is in process. The spectator then has an indication of when this thing will supposedly end, so can go about formulating judgements or observations on progress or lack of progress, and on potential changes in the state of the work like growth, fading, degradation, dissolving, building, addition, subtraction, dematerialisation, substitution, and accretion. Relying on an ‘inaccurately accurate’ temporal duration as a descriptor (as was the case in *05/05/2011–01/05/2011*) can even be troublesome for the maker.¹⁵ This is not to say that the works themselves as conglomerations of objects, sites, people and other things are ambiguous, indistinct, or hard to differentiate. But instead, that the assigned signifier is suggestive of a lack or an absence, and due to that lack, the process of disambiguation is drawn out.

As a response to this operative ‘lack’, over the course of this project, works have slowly accumulated diminutives to better aid recall. Aiding clarification by providing an alternative name can also be interpreted as giving in to the traditional methods of titling [see *Untitled (free/still)*]¹⁶ while avoiding the appearance of being overly invested in titling practice. It can be considered the pragmatic erosion of (self-imposed) boundaries or codes, the

¹⁵ If I was to identify and differentiate specific work from other works without the aid of supporting information (like photographs, site or location as examples), the process of disambiguation would entail; first locating a referential temporal landmark that relates to a physical work, and then to historicise, by unfolding forward (or backward) in time locating, placing, and differentiating works within that continuum.

¹⁶ Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)* [participatory installation]. New York: MOMA.

flip side of expediency: convenience gained by possible impropriety or immorality.

EXAMPLES OF DIMINUTIVES

BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)

14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)

12/01/2013–XX/XX/2013 (ARCADES)

The use of diminutives is distinct to the nicknames that a work may acquire, either by my hand as maker (which might be significant as titling or naming of any kind is often executed by authorial fiat), or by people connected in close ways to the project, such as supervisors Chris Braddock and Andy Thomson (which might also be significant as the nickname can be thought of as a seizure, occupation, or intervention in the sovereign authority of the author). In this way, works may have multiple nicknames, sometimes relating to a notable physical feature of the work (when named by myself), but often relating to a location or site (when (nick)named by someone else). Locative nicknaming may become problematic when works reoccur in the same place, *Gallery 3* may refer to both a successful work, an unsuccessful work, and a future work, *K Road* may refer to a wide range of works as it is a locus of artist run spaces in Auckland. To name in a locative fashion is perhaps more beneficial for ‘one off’ engagements, and less suited for reoccurrence.

EXAMPLES OF NICKNAMES

<i>BLOCKS/Hamilton work</i>	<i>BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)</i>
<i>LOIC/K Road</i>	<i>14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013</i> <i>(LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)</i>
<i>Arcades/K Road</i>	<i>12/01/2013–XX/XX/2013 (ARCADES)</i>
<i>Dog park/Waiheke</i>	<i>24/01/2013–17/02/2013</i>
<i>Sambuca/Ferari</i>	<i>05/09/2012–16/09/2012*</i>
<i>Farm Work</i>	<i>7/03/2012–10/06/2012</i>
<i>Heater–Seat/K Road</i>	<i>06/10/2011–21/10/2011</i>
<i>Shitty Work/Gallery 3</i>	<i>23/08/2011–27/08/2011</i>
<i>Courtyard/Te Tuhi</i>	<i>05/03/2011–01/05/2011</i>
<i>Greenhouse/CNZ</i>	<i>15/12/2010–10/03/2011</i>
<i>Masters/Gallery 1</i>	<i>09/11/2010–15/11/2010</i>

An interest in processes disambiguation (as expressed in the accumulated diminutives of the titles) was itself accumulated after observing Wikipedia's method of resolving antagonisms—the often hilarious and vitriolic conflicts between 'editors'.¹⁷ ~~XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX~~ took the term 'disambiguation'¹⁸ to refer to a process of clarification relating to an ambiguous structural position that might plausibly be occupied by multiple *things* (an example is the word mercury: god, element, planet). In applying such a term to contemporary art practice, an object or signifier may reference multiple concepts simultaneously or perform multiple functions. For ~~XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX~~, 'working' disambiguation becomes a method for prolonging the processes of clarification, sometimes to the point of leaving clarification unresolved, or irresolvable. It could be understood as an attempt to delay or subvert the process of identification.

Accordingly, this study makes use of situations that draw out, or complicate encounters via the process of 'disambiguation'. A drawing out of this process of identification or clarification—often through a deferral of local context—becomes reliant on a displacement of art and experiences of the 'everyday'. Within the rapid tempo of the 'everyday', although they may technically be undecidable, meaning and identification are necessarily much more immediate, and processes of clarification, of *disambiguation*, must be resolved with greater pace, often proceeding unattended and unchallenged. Ernesto Laclau notes that the undecidable is resolved or decided through the execution of hegemonic power.¹⁹ In the context of the 'everyday', hegemonic power might be approached via Jacques Rancière's theorisation of the

¹⁷ For an example of this behaviour read a wikipedia "talk" page on a contentious issue. Articles on philosophy and politics are always a good start.

¹⁸ In the context of Wikipedia disambiguation is described as "the process of resolving the conflicts that arise when a single term is ambiguous—when it refers to more than one topic covered by Wikipedia. (A "topic covered by Wikipedia" is either the main subject of an article, or a minor subject covered by an article in addition to the article's main subject.) For example, the word "Mercury" can refer to a chemical element, a planet, a Roman god, and many other things." See Wikipedia:Disambiguation (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Disambiguation>.

¹⁹ See Laclau, E. (1996). *Deconstruction, Pragmatism, Hegemony*. In C. Mouffe (Ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism* (pp 47-69). London: Routledge.

‘sensible’. Here, the ‘distribution of the sensible’ is defined as the conditioning demarcations, systems, and structures that “delimits the horizons of the sayable and determines the relationship between seeing, hearing, doing, making, and thinking”.²⁰ For Rancière, politics provides a site for interrupting the distribution of the sensible by supplementing it. He employs the term ‘police’ to refer to organisational systems of power that seek to distribute the sensible. He writes that:

the essence of politics consists in interrupting the distribution of the sensible by supplementing it with those who have no part in the perceptual coordinates of the community, thereby modifying the very aesthetico-political field of possibility. It is partially for this reason that Rancière defines the political as relational in nature, founded on the intervention of politics in the police order rather than on the establishment of a particular governmental regime.²¹

In this context, the art encounter becomes a site for shifting modes of engagement *and* understanding—and for embracing multiplicity and substitution—a crucial space for the playing out of relations like disambiguation, like the undecidable, a space of structured variability, a site of intervention in the sensible.

06/10/2011–21/10/2011 was an installation artwork produced as part of this research project. A platform was built from pine lengths, forming a construction that wrapped around an existing concrete pillar in the gallery space. The dimensions of the ‘seat’ were contrived to promote an inevitable contact of a potential sitter’s body with the cold concrete of the pillar. The orientation of the platform was redolent of a quotidian sensibility, reinforced by the employment of the 50x50 pine clears (a Bunnings Warehouse *do-it-yourself* trope): easy to handle, easy to cut, easy to work, and the square dimensions make it easy to make mathematical calculations. This was set against a counterpoint of formalised craftsmanship—the joinery techniques and ‘finishing’ of the platform accessed ‘Scandinavian’ design. In proximity, but not immediate proximity to the seating, was a chromed, heated towel

²⁰ Rancière, J. (2004). *The Politics of Aesthetics*. London: Continuum. p. 4.

²¹ Ibid.



Cribb, A. (2011). 06/10/2011–21/10/2011. [installation]. Auckland: Karangahape Road.

rail. This object was stripped of wall fittings, and lay directly on the concrete floor of the exhibition site, slowly radiating heat into the cold concrete. The rail is redolent of middle-class domestic excess—a bit of waste or expenditure but not an extreme amount, it is a regulated excess that is measured out and accounted for. When a person made use of the platform as a point of respite in their navigation of the gallery space, contact with the pillar initiated a slow leaching of heat through the boundary between their live body and the inert concrete. This process mirrored the invisible radiation of heat exchanged from the rail to the concrete floor. In a certain way, the body and the object are both positioned as *other* to the space of the gallery through the activation of the domestic. In the case of the seating, this is through the cultural position of the platform/seating as a point of recuperation: a temporary suspension of current activity as analogous removal from current context. When people encountered the rail, there was a recognition of function, but although existing associations suggested that it shouldn't be hot enough to cause harm, a shift from the context of the domestic to the floor of an inner city exhibition site provoked an apparent mistrust of this information. A fleeting and cautious touch of the rail confirmed if it was performing its

recognised operation of transferring heat from one body into another in a safe and orderly manner. Once classified as safe, sustained contact was made with the object as they let the heat radiate into their fingertips. This contact (if these were the same spectators that made use of the platform) might be considered a recuperation of sorts—energy lost and energy retrieved. These two aspects of the installation invited bodily contact through an identification of function: a seat is made to be sat upon, the radiator is made to transfer heat.

Although the relationship between the two objects might be considered esoteric, such a relationship becomes contingent on a human subject to participate knowingly or unknowingly if the workings of these objects are to resonate. Here, the spectator becomes a conduit, or constructed position, that interpolates between two existing structural positions. Using the example of *06/10/2011–21/10/2011*, the troubling of disambiguating processes become more apparent in the ‘quotidian’ platform rather than the heated rail, as the rail, although recognisable, could be considered to more acutely present as rupture due to contextual displacement and the way its ‘radiation’ might draw out the spectator. In regard to ‘ruptures’, O’Sullivan, uses Guattari’s *Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse* in theorising a concept of ‘rupturing encounter’ as a deterritorialization—according to Guattari—which manifests as an atypical encounter where recognised forms are declassified (deterritorialized) producing some new association.²² In this essay Guattari uses M.M. Bakhtin’s *The Problem of Content, Material, and Form in Verbal Art* as a way of understanding an idea in Kantian aesthetics of the ‘disinterested viewer’.²³ Guattari focuses on a concept of ‘rupture’, that in viewing an object, displaced or dislocated from usual associations, a break forms, signalling an atypical encounter with the object where new associations can be made. Guattari sees this as a *deterritorialisation*, and a space in which reinvention and recreation can occur. For Guattari this ‘disinterested

²² O’Sullivan S. (2006). *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari*. p. 1

²³ Guattari, F. (1996). *Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse*. In G. Genosko (Ed.), *The Guattari Reader* (pp. 193-203). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

response' acts as a model or strategy for the creation of multiple subjectivities.²⁴ In this context, materials and objects might *perform*, particularly in the context of how Guattari sees the viewer forming a relationship with a part of an object. Understood as rhythm or movement, or perhaps a smell, these 'parts' present as detached objects forming an atypical encounter of new associations, constituting performative materials less bound by form. Performative materials, as alluded to by Guattari, could be viewed to perform by their nature. This is observable in movement over duration such as liquids running, wood sagging, sand shifting, or a heated rail that draws out the spectator to perform an act of bodily contact. Ostensibly the rail is suggestive of a disjuncture in a system, as a direct intervention in the sensible: not in a bathroom, not installed in the correctly prescribed manner, not performing its designated function. Due to this oddity, the heated rail retains immediacy in an identification as art. In this way, the rail and the platform are positioned as covert objects extending, deferring, or affirming the process of disambiguation: to draw out the tension between classifications (or identifications) of art and the everyday. Disambiguation might be presented as a 'quasi-liminal'²⁵ interval where a spectator (or a non-spectator acknowledging the possibility of non-identification) may not be entirely convinced that a *thing* is demarcated as an artwork or as institutional support. Accordingly, these devices can become significant in engaging interrogatory registers, creating conditions for openings or anomalies; for the opening of portals to places far more intriguing.

—*Testing/Hyperextension:*

Visible in the ostensibly esoteric relationship between the pillar and radiator of 06/10/2011–21/10/2011 is a method *and* attitude towards experimentation. Couched in the euphemistic term 'hyperextension', the

²⁴ Ibid. p. 198.

²⁵ The concept of liminality is used in the context of 20th century anthropologist Victor Turner and will be discussed in more depth (although not great depth) later in this text.



Cribb, A. (2010-2011). *15/12/2010–10/03/2011*. [installation].
Auckland: Creative New Zealand.

process of testing might just as easily described by turns of phrase like ‘drawing-a-long-bow’ or ‘going-out-on-a-limb. Nevertheless, forms of hyperextension are embraced by *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* as the inherent capacity of the artwork for ‘free’ speculation, positioning art making as a ‘test-site’, set toward simultaneous, enactment, dissemination, documentation, and presentation of research. Here a penchant for testing and experimentation echoes observations made by Bishop in her critique of ‘Relational Aesthetics’ in *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*.²⁶ In this text, Bishop notes a historical trajectory where contemporary spaces facilitating art developed from a ‘static’ white cube format (home to the ‘finished’ artwork) to that of the experimental laboratory—thought to more accurately mirror the vitality of studio practice.

An example of speculation/hyperextension/going-out-on-a-limb was the artwork *15/12/2010–10/03/2011*. This work tested the thinking of

²⁶ Bishop, C. (2004). “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.” *October*, 110 (Autumn): 51–79.

Marcel Mauss²⁷ and of Jacques Derrida²⁸ in regard to concepts of the gift and charity; specifically on obligations between the giver and beneficiary of the gift. Manifest as a multiple-use greenhouse; operative as a sculptural object, and also functioning as means for producing food (for which Creative New Zealand staff were beneficiaries), 15/12/2010–10/03/2011 played off a tension provoked in an ‘attempted’ shift of beneficiary/benefactor relations. In 15/12/2010–10/03/2011, troubling the performance of beneficiary/benefactor roles, made palpable a state excess, operating in the space of imbalance between institutional funding for the project (that was woefully insufficient), and the interpretable value of what was reciprocated back to the institution (CNZ). Exaggerating that imbalance was the always unexpected and excessive abundance inherent to the productive garden. Within the larger project, testing might take the form of flippant dalliances or probings. These operate outside any expectation that a tested concept *should* become an influential or prevalent aspect of the study. As demonstrated in 15/12/2010–10/03/2011, concepts such as ‘the gift’²⁹ were not initially related to the core interests of the study, but, ideas of this variety can accumulate in unforeseen or unanticipated ways.

—*An Interjection and an Abbreviation (X–X)*:

The title of this thesis, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* will be abbreviated and referred to as *X–X*, phonetically annunciated as ‘x to x’.

Still operating in regard to the undecidable, we might further contextualise both the naming ‘titling regime’ (and the disambiguating process) through Derrida’s later thoughts on deconstruction. Writing in the 2000 essay *Et Cetera*³⁰ he outlines the principles of deconstruction:

²⁷ Mauss, M. (2002). *The Gift: the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge.

²⁸ Derrida, J. (2000). “Hostipitality.” Angelaki: *Journal of Theoretical Humanities* 5 (3): 3–18.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Derrida, J. (2000). *Et Cetera*. in N. Royle (Ed.), *Deconstructions: A User's Guide* (pp. 282-305). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Each time that I say ‘deconstruction and X (regardless of the concept or the theme),’ this is the prelude to a very singular division that turns this X into, or rather makes appear in this X, *an impossibility* that becomes its proper and sole possibility, with the result that between the X as possible and the ‘same’ X as impossible, there is nothing but a relation of homonymy, a relation for which we have to provide an account.... For example, here referring myself to demonstrations I have already attempted ..., gift, hospitality, death itself (and therefore so many other things) can be possible only *as impossible*, as the im-possible, that is, unconditionally.³¹

In this context, the titles of the project might be read in two ways, *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* as a refusal to act in the “night of non-knowledge”³²—a refusal to give in to finite conclusions, a refusal of origins (although as the structure indicates there is urgency to act in *some* way). In addition, the ‘accurate’ durational descriptors (*05/03/2011–01/05/2011 et al.*) and their diminutives might be understood as traces of the instant of decision, a ‘giving in’ to the moment of madness. Reading further into the outline provided by Derrida, indicated with clarity in the project’s abbreviated form of *X–X*, the unfulfilled ‘variants’ of the title might diagram the nature of Derrida’s deconstruction, as a teasing out of the span between ‘homonyms’—the paradoxical articulation of event, or presence, or the gift, or any other ‘*X–X*’ made possible by impossibility—the awareness that any containment is partial, set against the drive to do just that. From this perspective the project (*X–X*) might be ‘thought’ in terms of the ‘relation’ between a series of ‘homographs’ (as structural positions) for which “we have to provide an account”.³³

Further, Derrida’s reading of Charles Baudelaire’s *La fausse monnaie*, or *Counterfeit Money* provides another avenue for expanded thinking on the titling regime. Referring to *Counterfeit Money* he contends “As title, it does not form a sentence, it does not say to what it refers”.³⁴ When considering

³¹ Ibid. p. 300.

³² Jacques Derrida. (Mar 19, 2014). *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/derrida/>

³³ Derrida, J. (2000). *Et Cetera*. p. 300.

³⁴ Derrida, J. (1992). *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

the titles of this project, the signifier assigned to the artwork (or this exegesis) suggests a lack or an absence in its alignment—“its referential trait, as well as its referent, remains relatively undetermined”.³⁵ Perhaps as Derrida describes in the case of the title ‘*Counterfeit Money*’, as soon as it is recognised as the ‘title of the title’ it ceases to act as title, obligating the reader to contemplate what the title is—true, false, falsely true, truly false, and ‘non’ which is neither false nor true.³⁶ In addition, the recently discussed work *15/12/2010–10/03/2011* might be understood in the context of ‘counterfeit money’. In teasing out the relationship between beneficiary, the benefactor, and ‘the gift’, twice-speaking as artwork, *15/12/2010–10/03/2011* (as referee and referent) becomes “the coin, a piece of counterfeit money provoking an event and lending itself to this whole scene of deception, gift, forgiveness, or non-forgiveness”.³⁷

—*Caching/The accumulative methodology of XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*:

The art research project *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* is informed by a working ‘methodology’ of accumulation. Through the process of accumulation different *things* are gathered purposively, or otherwise, may unwittingly collect by happenstance, becoming retained and thus imbedded in the project’s surfaces, over time accreting, sedimenting, and consolidating. Motifs like the coloured dots of filler that propagate joinery of the project, or the gossamer strings of hot glue residue (and materials like twigs, plants, concrete, steel and so on) are *things* to be collected and cached. Once identified in the sedimentary layers these sublimates are de-sedimented for redeployment in subsequent works. The framework of accumulation was intended as a method for modelling practical studio methods and their occurrence and recurrence in the artwork. In her text *Performing Remains*,

³⁵ Ibid. 84.

³⁶ Ibid. 87.

³⁷ Ibid. 86.

Schneider elucidates a model of ‘temporal lag’,³⁸ drawn from her interpretation of the operations of performance documents.³⁹ Temporal lag, according to Schneider, is an operation where times appear to touch and the past is said to be ‘dragged forthwith’—dragged into the present.⁴⁰ What this might be interpreted as is the drawing together, or even enacting, of two structural positions (such as the era). Due to a palpable proximity, the process of disambiguation that demarcates or separates the past from present might be blurred or troubled (remembering that these are both positions structured *from* the present). Thus *a* past but not *the* past is drawn forth and incarnated, merged with the ‘present’, and evoked in this conflated (or collapsed) space is a sense of inhabiting or occupying the actual *past as happened*. Backgrounding ‘temporal lag’, Schneider engages the metaphor of civil war re-enactment to further elucidate the space created between occurrence and reoccurrence. Described by re-enactors as a state called the ‘wargasm’, participants in the re-enactment claim to lose themselves in a reverie like loss, inhabiting a non-differential and approximated space between the past and present. This space is described by Schneider as a ‘syncopated’ temporality of the reenactment, where the past and present are interspersed, and the (re-en)actors work to access an ‘other’ time, trying to bring this previous time to the present.⁴¹ Of significance to this project is Schneider’s highlighting of transmission between borders (which she

³⁸ The term temporal lag (or time-lag) is originally sourced from Homi Bhabha. Providing background to the notion of time-lag, Bhabha states: “This is where the influence of Walter Benjamin has been formative for me. His meditations on the disjunctive temporalities of the historical “event” are quite indispensable to thinking the cultural problems of late modernity. His vision of the Angel of History haunts my work as I attempt to grasp, for the purposes of cultural analysis, what he describes as the condition of translation: the “continua of transformation, not abstract ideas of identity and similarity.” His work has led me to speculate on differential temporal movements within the process of dialectical thinking and the supplementary or interstitial “conditionality” that opens up alongside the transcendent tendency of dialectical contradiction -- I have called this a “third space,” or a “time lag.” To think of these temporalities in the context of historical events has led me to explore notions of causality that are not expressive of the contradiction “itself,” but are contingently effected by it and allow for other translational moves of resistance, and for the establishment of other terms of generality.” See Bhabha, H. (1995). “Translator translated. (interview with cultural theorist Homi Bhabha)” [interviewed by W.J.T. Mitchell]. *Artforum* 33(7): 80–84.

³⁹ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p.41.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 2

describes as (in)discrete) that define the so-called beginnings and ends of events and objects. In a significant passage that demonstrates a great deal of shared territory between Schneider's research and this project, she writes:

I am interested in repetitions, doublings, and the call and response of cross- and inter-authorships. I am interested in the citational "getup" of the before, during, and after of any action taking place in or as re-action: the affected effects and after-affects of art/ events posed as relative to origin(al)s. I wonder here not only about the "as if" but also about the "what if": what if time (re)turns? What does it drag along with it? I am interested in the attempt to literally touch time through the residue of the gesture or the cross-temporality of the pose.⁴²

This project looks to explore the space between now and then, occurrence and reoccurrence. As a practical method some artworks become operational relics through methods where they undergo change, often embodying and documenting that change in their own forms; wood greys, ages and cracks; earth dissolves, liquids evaporate; plants bloom, and the evidence of this change can be inferred from their own degraded or generated forms. Apparent in the previously cited *05/03/2011–01/05/2011*, in the durational progression of the artwork, materials occupying the space aged, bloomed, changed position, or modified in form. In these changes the occupying materials displayed the accumulated evidence of their temporal trajectory. This was intended to impress on a person encountering this work what they had missed, what had happened before their arrival, and what may happen after they depart. Specific material changes in the work were anti-visual, by being so glacially slow (or fleetingly quick), that the capacity of the spectator to *be* present was challenged. In concert, these material changes illuminate a central ambition of *05/03/2011–01/05/2011*: to provoke in the spectator an embodied sense that their presence (in the space) might only attend to a small facet of an artwork, particularly an artwork that makes use of extended duration.

As indicated by the accumulative methodology, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* explores the idea of works dragging something with them—

⁴² Ibid. p. 26.

drawing out significant challenges for the project in identifying, or demarcating, what, or where, the end of a work is, where one work begins and another ends. Of equal interest, is the tension between concepts of reoccurrence and reenactment in art and the troubling of terms such as authenticity in regard to the accumulative project. In addition to Schneider's thinking, I refer to the writing of post-marxist thinker Ernesto Laclau in regard to formations such as social structure. Laclau in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*⁴³ sees the domain of the social as 'undecidable' due to decentered nature of subjectivity. He considers deconstruction as making possible a widening of the field of what is structurally undecidable, allowing for theorisations of the decision made within that territory, he writes:

deconstruction also requires hegemony, that is, a theory of the decision taken in an undecidable terrain: without a theory of the decision, that distance between structural undecidability and actuality would remain untheorized. But that decision can only be a hegemonic one – i.e. one that (a) is self-grounded; (b) is exclusionary, as far as it involves the repression of alternative decisions; and (c) is internally split, because it is both this decision and also a decision.⁴⁴

Laclau looks at the social and political as undecidable terrain, despite absolute meaning or finality of decision being deferred (or impossible), due to an inability to extinguish possibility or extinguish dissent. Regardless, we still make decisions in the undecidable. The choice of 'A' over 'B', may be made but since we are unable to extinguish that alternate possibility, a decision made in this manner must be constantly reappraised and reconfirmed. There is a degree of antagonism occurring in decisions over what is included and excluded, what is chosen and what decision is repressed, and so he looks to theories of hegemony to inform the undecidable decisions. In this, Laclau sees as a way to try and realise the full political potential for deconstruction, by theorising what informs or allows for the undecidable decision made in actuality.⁴⁵ A focus for this project is

⁴³ Laclau, E. (1996). *Deconstruction, Pragmatism, Hegemony*.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 60

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.62.

that the landscape of the undecidable, of differing and deferral, may not operate indefinitely in praxis, it may not automatically occur nor have the efficacy that is modelled in theory. It is in this undecidable terrain that *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* operates, employing, engineering, and testing situations that may exaggerate the undecidability of many taken-for-granted relationships. These probings become an important means of learning to inhabit, occupy, and navigate this domain.

Over time the methodological model of accumulation informed by Schneider's *drag* and Laclau's *undecidability* gathered the geological and entropic metaphors employed by Robert Smithson. Smithson's interests in the geological site 'ravaged by time' gave form to thoughts on the exposure of sedimentary layers, a process of accumulation over unfathomable timescales.⁴⁶ Together these three understandings; temporal lag, the undecidable, and the geological (the entropic or systemic), coalesced to inform a nascent, but until then unarticulated way for understanding a 'responsive' practice—not only reliant on its historical weight, but open to modification according to sites inhabited and exchanges made with the social environment of that location. Over each fragmentary iteration of the project, new methods and new concerns were accumulated. This perceivable weight became modelled as a moving and imminent cache, a structural position as method for understanding intertextual relations between fragments of the project.

—The Accumulation of 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON):

An expression of the accumulative methodology of *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX*, *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* was conceived as a 'timely' artwork that would become a platform for articulating a rolling cache—a work that would inevitably provoke new and unforeseen developments in the larger project. The title of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013*

⁴⁶ See Smithson, R. (1996). J. Flam (Ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. Berkley: University of California Press.

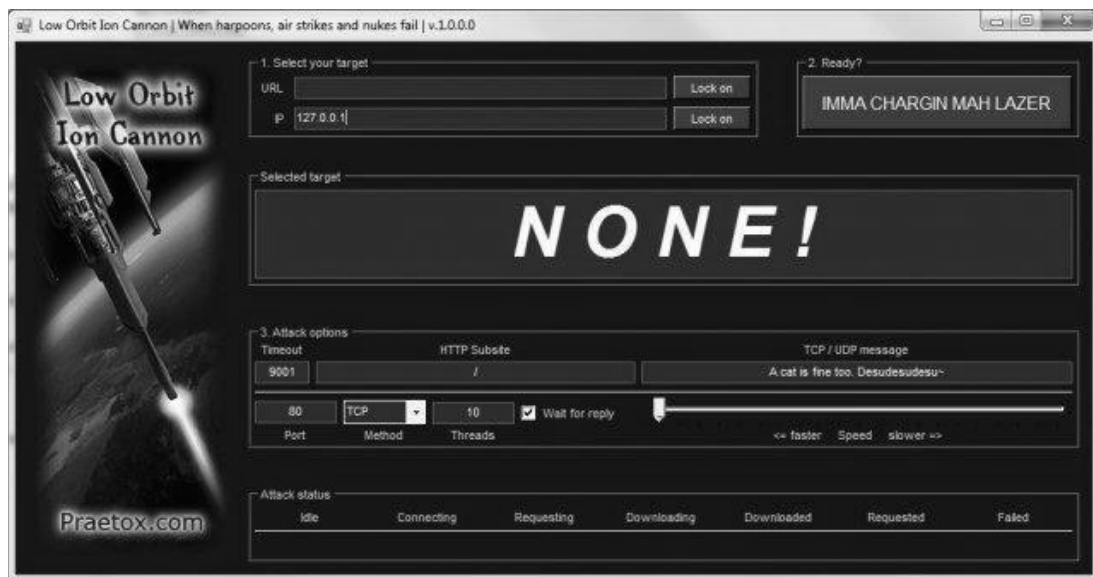


Cribb, A. (2013). 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013. (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*). [installation]. Ozlyn: Auckland

(*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) largely adheres to XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX's entrenched titling convention. The 'diminutive' of *LOW ORBIT ION CANNON* refers, in part, to a fictional, orbiting satellite-based weapon of mass destruction (WMD). Taken from that fictional 'super weapon', *Low Orbit Ion Cannon* has been adopted to name a computer programme 'intended' for network stress testing, while moonlighting as a more insidious or deviant means for launching DDoS (distributed-denial of-service attacks). *Low Orbit Ion Cannon* (the programme) is often utilised by as a tool to make internet resources (like websites) unavailable to users as a form of 'hacktivism'. In one instance a multitude of internet users were fooled into launching a web-based version of *LOIC*. Involuntarily co-opted into a botnet⁴⁷ by hacktivist group *Anonymous*,⁴⁸ users became unwitting participants in a DDoS attack. As 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT*

⁴⁷ Biddle, S. (19th January, 2012). *LOIC: The Tool Anonymous Is Using to Essentially Turn You Into a Botnet*. Retrieved from <http://gizmodo.com/5877719/heres-the-tool-anonymous-is-tricking-the-internet-into-using>

⁴⁸ See this article for a background on Anonymous: Cadwalladr, C. (8th September, 2012). *Anonymous: behind the masks of the cyber insurgents*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2012/sep/08/anonymous-behind-masks-cyber-insurgents>



LoicNewEraCracker. (n.d). Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:LoicNewEraCracker_-_from_Commons.png

ION CANNON) was an attempt at a ‘total’ unveiling of the *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* research project, this work will function as an expository tool for this exegesis. In the execution of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* almost all key aspects and concerns of *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* are attended to in some manner. As a platform for disclosure, *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* operates in tableau, as a spatio-temporal designation, where past and present may be drawn into compressed proximity.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #0:

Introduction



Cribb, A. (2009). *An early series of miniature diorama*. [sculpture].
Auckland: Auckland University of Technology.

This project can trace its origin to the studio method of constructing miniature diorama. These miniatures were intended to function as propositional 3 dimensional diagrams, to sketch out a series of sculptural actions and interventions that were to take place at ‘real’ sites. The spaces in these miniatures were the sites of an event, operating like a stage for action, but were characterised by an *absence* of event. This seemed to charge the diorama in some way—with a kind of latent potentiality or sense of imminence. So the ‘unanticipated’, imminent, diorama—that was intended to function as surrogate placeholder—initiated a cascade of questions on the nature of space, site, and encounter. These *miniatures* provoked thought on how spaces are delineated and demarcated in relation to art-making, and questioned the capacity for the artwork to challenge and/or re-articulate and re-code spaces, sites, and systems. In this regard, the miniature, belying its scale, appeared to problematise and intervene in contiguous spaces, disrupting what were until then perceived as stable relationships. So began a purposeful preoccupation with space, scale, and site. The art-making method of the miniature (using this term as a catchall for the miniature dioramic

landscape and its support mechanism) still retains significance in the project, but as the artistic practice of this project is understood to operate in the context of the ‘expanded field of sculpture’, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* is not bound by any specific form.

As discussed, the project makes use of an accumulative methodology, however, it would be unwise to interpret this in terms of ‘the archive’. Instead, the accumulative contents are visualised to function more as ‘cache’ in the context of computing, like the data held within the proximity of ‘random-access memory’; a structural positioning counteracting the implied stasis or preservative aspiration of the archive.

—*Skein of Inquiry:*

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX concerns itself with a conflation of various sites that present as the event-space of the art encounter. Using Michel Foucault’s diagnosis of ‘heterotopia’⁴⁹ as a starting point to imagine *site as tableau* (the conflated event-space of the art encounter), a set of art-making methods (with specific focus upon the mode of the miniature diorama) are employed with an objective of testing and troubling processes of demarcation, delineation, and delimitation: a set of contiguous terms whose subtleties are played out and activated in the encounter of the artwork. Here, a diverse set of philosophical concepts are drawn forth from what can roughly be described as the post-structuralist dialectic and used to theorise the heterotopic event-space of the art encounter, and the way in which art-making occupies and inhabits this space. Many of these concepts, such as ‘le point-de-caption’⁵⁰ and the ‘antagonism’⁵¹ of the subject may be initially located in the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, however, they are parsed through contemporary thinkers like Slavoj Žižek, Chantelle Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Jacques Rancière, and Claire Bishop. This theorises how

⁴⁹ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias” *Diacritics*. 16 (1): 22–27.

⁵⁰ Lacan, J. (1997). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*. London: Routledge.

⁵¹ Laclau, E., & Chantal, M. (2001). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso Books.

contingent spaces, conflated at the *site of art* are stabilised and given consistency, and importantly, how the artwork might move to rupture this system, remaking it in the process of its dissolution. Methods of making, including the miniature, support structures, and the device of tableau are approached in relation to their ‘spatialising’ potential and capability in modulating encounter. While backgrounding the practice of the project, theoretical precedents like the literary theory of Susan Stewart sit alongside more recent thinking on site, encounter, and installation by Boris Groys, Miwon Kwon, Simon O’Sullivan, and others.

Of particular significance to this project is the capability of artworks to make ‘more-available’ states of reverie, and how the conflated space of the encounter effectuates conditions for such a state to foreclose the spectator. The potential of reverie, so often characterised as loss, touches upon the ‘radical passivity’ of Thomas Carl Wall, is parsed through the ‘radical immanence’ of François Laruelle’s non-philosophy, and Rancière’s model of the emancipated spectator and the distribution of the sensible. Recent rhetoric surrounding ‘participation’ in art operates as a foil for this discussion. In this regard, as evasive stratagem, object-based practice is often approached through modes such as participation and performance. This circumambulation is offered as a freeing from the ‘ground’ of sculpture, allowing for periods of unbridled speculation. What is approached in this dialectic between point and edge, is the capacity of reverie in performing a reading of art, and the potential capability for such a reading as a repositioning, providing new locations for both the making and discussion of art.

A key contention of this project is that the site of the art encounter operates as a conflation of a number of *other* spaces, be they social, ideological, animal, mineral, physical, or spiritual, that are brought together in tableau, occasioned by the artwork. This site of encounter maps onto Michel Foucault’s playful diagnosis of ‘heterotopia’ and ‘heterotopic’

spaces.⁵² Foucault outlines a heterotopia as a space of relational specificity, of difference and otherness, using a set of six principles to perform his prognosis; that they are an *other* place, are adaptable to different eras, can juxtapose incompatible spaces, have a disparate timeliness, presuppose a system of opening and closing, and have a function in relation to their remainder or excess. The third principle, the capacity of a heterotopia to juxtapose several incompatible sites into one space and ‘time’, relates to this project’s focus on the conflation of spaces—self-described as the drawing together of spaces into propinquity—occurring in the event-space of the art encounter.

As this is a project obsessed with scale, it is somewhat inevitable that its creative codex might be contaminated by this obsession, synthesised as a structural framework that expresses itself through a series of rescaled sites and spaces, like a series of flickering scopes (from *tele* to *micro*). At first a designating gesture, the drawing of boundaries, purposefully general and blurred (a remoteness that lets us apprehend context). Then cascading downwards, a sharpening, a rescaling towards the richness of miniature detail, and perhaps further, through an aperture that once again lends an expansive view (but one contaminated by the sticky accumulations of our temporal passage).

Following this structural rescaling, **Section 1** of this exegesis discusses the ideological space of art, an articulation of its operation as a more-or-less unified field whose unfolding structures the art encounter. The objective of this section is twofold: an elucidation of the event-space of art encounter and as a method to locate the project within the discourse of contemporary art. Lacan’s concept of ‘*le point-de-caption*’,⁵³ drawn from the

⁵² See Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces.”. Foucault’s concepts of heterotopia were only outlined on a handful of occasions. The Diacritics editors note accompanying the article stresses as such, reading “This text, entitled “Des Espaces Autres,” and published by the French journal Architecture-Mouvement-Continuite in October, 1984, was the basis of a lecture given by Michel Foucault in March 1967. Although not reviewed for publication by the author and thus not part of the official corpus of his work, the manuscript was released into the public domain for an exhibition in Berlin shortly before Michel Foucault’s death. Attentive readers will note that the text retains the quality of lecture notes. Diacritics wishes to thank Jay Miskowiec for securing permission to translate the text and for furnishing his translation to us. [Ed.]”. p. 1

⁵³ Lacan, J. (1997). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*. London: Routledge.

imagery of the quilting point that holds the stuffing of a chair in place, is adapted through Žižek's theories on ideology.⁵⁴ This approach theorises how manifestations of the unified field of contemporary art—of which each art encounter is an instance—are structured and maintain consistency and the capability to disseminate discourse, given that they occupy a contingent realm characterised by the free-flow of signifiers and 'proto-ideological elements'.⁵⁵ Employing an extrapolation on the 'quilting point', embracing the potential of this conception to be deployed in cluster or assemblage, the *point-de-caption* is rather arbitrarily reimaged as a 'pylon' supporting a manifold visualisation of imbedded weighting, supporting structure, and *field* generation. Additionally, the pylon also invokes the archaic form, the monumental gate or threshold, as these pylons that plot the unified field are as much their own cascades as they are foundations of ideology. With the added possibility of this kind of assembly, the extended discussion of the pylon allows for the activation of a number of key areas, as pylons in the ideological field of contemporary art, and also as a means for indicating where the project locates discussion, such as installation and sculptural practice, scale, and spectatorship operations. Inhabiting these areas are a number of ideas that foreground theoretical understandings such as the boundary condition of antagonism, and the conflation of the space of the artwork to installative space.

Section 2 hones in on what was traditionally understood as the site of the art encounter—the physical space that the artwork inhabits. In this section issues of installative space are discussed in addition to examining the questionability surrounding the act of delineating site versus the site designation as a necessary act of expediency. Alongside focusing on a series of artworks from the project and their methods for occupying site, this section also engages with the artistic strategy of site-specificity, a key mode that has been influential in the production of great deal of the sculptural practice occurring over the last 50 years. Charting *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/*

⁵⁴ Žižek, Slavoj. (1989). *The Sublime Object of Ideology*.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 95.

XXXX's employment of site-specific strategies, the discussion moves to the approaches of Robert Smithson, and the trembling of site and site-specificity conducted by practices that seek to evade and resist delimitation to a singular site of contact. In addition, site specificity is approached as a both a method for practical making and as a *pylon*, presenting site-specificity as method of positioning art-making as auto-donating, presupposing the artwork's relation to the space it inhabits. Finally, the operations of the gallery site as frame or vitrine, as presentative anamorphosis, will be scrutinised as a precursor discussion to those located in the third section of this exegesis, that focus upon the project's key employment of the miniature diorama.

Section 3 discusses the project's employment of the *miniature*, a key device that has provoked a great deal of the projects theoretical considerations, and a significant amount of art-making across the duration of the project. Here the miniature will be approached at first in terms of an analysis of above and below: the division of the dioramic content and the system that supports that content. Drawing out a number of key methods and concerns of the project, discussion will then move to the way in which the miniature articulates a set of spatial relations and engages with delimitation, delineation, and demarcation in relation to interiority and exteriority, and how the miniature may problematise conceptions of installative space. Susan Stewart's treatise on the miniature *On Longing*⁵⁶ is positioned as a significant element in this discussion for backgrounding considerations of the miniature diorama. In addition, this section undertakes a deviation that will visit the wider dialogue of the miniature by re-reading a set of *other* practices that may be reconsidered as invoking an operative miniaturisation or rescaling. What this section builds towards is an articulation of a set of art-making methods that make *more-available* states of reverie. This state is put forward as being a site of significant potential, often dismissed due to the hypostatizing of assumptions, presupposing critical thought as an exertion of control.

⁵⁶ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. [Kindle version]. Retrieved from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Section 4 draws together a diverse list of ideas in a speculative modelling of the conflation of these spaces, and focuses on a number of issues brought to the fore by reverie. Here, reverie is approached in terms of an unpredictable structural position, accessed through an operative loss of ‘the sensible’ that is attributed to affective reverie. Significant in reverie is not just the space traversed, which is in often irreducible and resists articulation, but the threshold states or boundary conditions of loss and return, the accretions that form at these portals, and upon return the potential for a volatile re-plotting of fields such as those that structure meaning and inform interpretation and translation. Reverie is argued as a way of radically extending conceptions of encounter, the return from reverie might provoke new or modified arrangements as a kind of flickering vestibular ‘reset’ of the field of encounter. An affective reverie as a transmissive and uncontainable gesture may have a potential for a kind of ‘spectral’ interpolation or bridging, and through this bridging, the possibility of recuperation or experiential retrieval of whatever is found *in* reverie.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #1:

The Unified Field of
Contemporary Art as an
Ideological Space Deployed
in the Unfolding of Art
Encounter

—*The Unified Field of Contemporary Art:*

In articulating an ideological space for art, the thinking of Slavoj Žižek becomes relevant. Žižek suggests a structure of ideology that operates like a distorting lens⁵⁷ mediating the perception and experience of reality. It is the adoption of ideology, in organising the free flow of what Žižek calls ‘proto-ideological’ elements⁵⁸ that allows for discourse to function as discourse, as a more-or-less unified field. It is this very same field that is instantiated as a part-space of the art encounter: an event-space through which the artwork is viewed, experienced, and understood, the configuration of the field providing the differential or displacing distortion⁵⁹ that is required for art to ‘recode reality’ and be made distinct from the other.

However, it seems not enough to just simply accept the distorting operations of this ideological field, as this does little to explain how the structuring of such a field persists and maintains enough consistency to allow the discourse of contemporary art to operate. Here, a state of excessive volatility in a field would imply an unintelligibility and an inability for a discourse to be interpreted, whereas a state of intractability would be indicative of a stasis, inhibiting the flexibility required for the transmission and translation, thus dissemination of a discourse. The kind of viral reproduction and adaptability (to different hosts) that a discourse requires, needs to strike a balance between the two poles of volatility and stability, or more accurately, operate with some kind of margin for error, an allowance for deviation. This lays out a kind of rough criteria that a successful ideological field must meet if it is to remain unified. To operate as discourse i.e. intelligible, transmittable, and translatable, (so modifiable) ideology must allow for a certain degree of discursive plasticity. It is here that a development of Lacan’s thinking by Žižek becomes significant. Lacan posits

⁵⁷ Žižek, S. *Sublime Object of Ideology*. p. 24.

⁵⁸ Žižek, S. *Sublime Object of Ideology*. p. 87.

⁵⁹ Other thinkers like Hal Foster might approach this displacement as ‘parallax’. See Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real: The Avant-garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge: MIT Press. p. xii–xiii.

an operation of the quilting point in *The Psychoses*, that balances pliancy and consistency. He writes:

Whether it be a sacred text, a novel, a play, a monologue, or any conversation whatsoever, allow me to represent the function of the signifier by a spatializing device, which we have no reason to deprive ourselves of [...] this point around which all concrete analysis of discourse must operate I shall call a quilting point [...] this is the point at which the signified and the signifier are knotted together, between the still floating mass of meanings that are actually circulating [...] Everything radiates out from and is organized around this signifier, similar to these little lines of force that an upholstery button forms on the surface of a material. It's the point of convergence that enables everything that happens in this discourse to be situated retroactively and prospectively.⁶⁰

Lacan uses the quilting point that restricts the filling floating around in the cushion of a chair as a way to relay a model for how the free flow of meanings are organised. Žižek takes the terminology of *le point-de-caption* from Lacan, and employs it as a means for articulating how an ideological field is arranged, thus structuring a way in which particular meanings are disseminated. For example, the term art can slide around, meaning different things in different areas, but other signifiers like that of 'contemporary', 'critical', 'modern' or 'advanced' can pin this term down. Although contemporary art is still largely heterogeneous, it is located in a presentism⁶¹ from which we can draw out *other* clusters of key signifiers,⁶² creating a pervasive sort of consistency. Presented here is key aspect of ideology: to become pervasive an ideology must employ the most efficient and most effective key signifiers or key *point-de-captions* to command the field of meaning.

Žižek's conception of the *point-de-caption* might also be applied to studio methods, gestures and objects. Cinder/Breeze blocks or ubiquitous

⁶⁰ Lacan, J. (1997). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*. p.267–268.

⁶¹ Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*.

⁶² The *point-de-caption* is the 'contemporary' in contemporary art, and in the quilting of the ideological field by this *point-de-caption*, simultaneously drawn forth are clusters of other contiguous signifiers or *points* that accompany the conceptions of contemporary art; white-cube, academic, novelty, critical, multiplicity, self-expression, installation, and participation, to name but a few.

plywood platforms act as low-level signals to insiders in similar ways to signifiers inscribed in language. Additionally, *Point-de-captions* may become inscribed across space—*spatialized*—demonstrated in the ‘white cube’ that holds much contemporary art, an ideological marking in the larger field. So in a folding, the ‘points’ themselves become sites of some contingency and contestation within a nested⁶³ cascade of signification. Such a relationship is intimated by collaborators Simon O’Sullivan and David Burrows who employ Guattari’s ‘z-points’ in a similar manner.⁶⁴ Diverging from the *point-de-caption*, the *z-point* is suggested as a point of collapse around which accumulations/accretions and consistencies may form. It is in this way that Burrows & O’Sullivan’s articulation of the *z-point* provides nuance to conceptions and operations of the *point-de-caption*, particularly in regard to how the void point or point of collapse might account for contested designations like contemporary,⁶⁵ where terms become recessionary sites for antagonisms.

The artwork, may at least locally (and temporarily) restructure or rearrange the unified field. The immediate and *sometimes* visual unfolding of the art encounter holds the potential to rupture discourse—interpretable as a volatile re-plotting of an ideological field. It is in the action of ‘re-plotting’ that the artwork might have the capacity to draw into proximity nomadic (or reclusive) points, that previously inhabited the fringes of discourse.⁶⁶ However, outside the immediacy of direct art encounter, points that are not pervasive, that do not imbed themselves in discourse, retreat

⁶³ Terms like nesting become important to this project due to the focus upon the miniature. This focus foregrounds conceptions of containment, of *nesting*, of one thing sitting inside another in a recessionary sprawl.

⁶⁴ Burrows, D., & O’Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*. (253-279). in I. Buchanan & L. Collins (Eds.) *Deleuze And the Schizoanalysis of Visual Art*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

⁶⁵ Bryan-Wilson, J., & Kester, G., & Elkins, J., et al. (2009) “Questionnaire on ‘the Contemporary’.” October 130 (Fall): 3–124.

⁶⁶ It is in this context that field structures and *point-de-captions* might be used to read the differences between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ interpretations of a ‘unified’ field. Here, the insider, by identifying an additional density of plotting (of more points temporarily drawn into proximity), realises a richer geometry where hinged points allow for further articulation, further hyperextension and flex. Whereas for the hypothetical outsider, a field pinioned by not nearly as many points of flex, presents as a far more rigid geometry, translated as an analogous implacability.

into the wild—the field springing back into a resemblance of its preceding form—re-plotted again in the status quo.⁶⁷ If a *point-de-caption* is to become pervasive in structuring an ideological field, it must be repeated or reiterated, adoption must reach critical-mass. Here, a point, cementing its place in the proximate by dint of occupation, might hang around long enough to become part of the woodwork. However, reaching the scale of adoption required to have enough impact to remain wedged in the proximate is easier said than done. In the current age of the mass communication allowed by the internet, there exists a rare possibility for zeitgeist-like memetic adoption on mass. However, cluttered by a multitude of other memes, zeitgeist occurrences are far too unpredictable, too volatile. For an ideology to be responsive and thus resilient, there must be a means for fast-tracking the introduction of sympathetic *point-de-captions*.

—*The Apparatus:*

Žižek proposes the ‘ideological state apparatus’, borrowing the term coined by the French marxist Louis Althusser,⁶⁸ as an institution of ideology that works to buttress, reproduce, and generate the ideological field, by stifling dissent, supporting assent, and producing actors willing to play their part. Although largely focused on the ideology of capitalism, Žižek posits that the efficacy of an apparatus to propagate ideology is reliant on pre-emptively instilling belief through unwitting performative action: by doing something, the subject is believing something by performing the actions of that belief. By the time *actual* belief emerges the subject is already primed and habituated to the belief. This is not completely new ground as the contingency of social structures, and particularly behaviour structures, are often posited to be stabilised by correct performance and re-performance. In this regard we might look to the work of performance theorist Richard Schechner, who

⁶⁷ See Derrida, J. (2005). *Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences*. Here we might think of the play of the structure, Derrida writing “By orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure permits the play of its elements inside the total form.” p. 352.

⁶⁸ Žižek, S. (1989). *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. p. 34.

approaches performative structures in terms of ‘restored behaviour’, communicative by dint of repetition and transmission.⁶⁹ However Žižek, by reversing how we would intuitively hope the construction of belief occurs; theoretical understanding that grows over time into conviction, lends an additional level of subtlety to understandings of social construction. This unwitting aspect of belief may work to explain how structures (like ideological fields) can demonstrate astounding resilience in the face of contingency. Belief acquired in the manner suggested by Žižek may be insidiously authoritative, namely because ideological conviction would appear to emerge of its own accord. This would provide any conviction with a ‘naturalness’ or fundamental rightness, accessing the regularly employed dyadic hierarchy of nature over culture. A localised example of this production of belief in an ideological system might be found in art education where, particularly in the expanded field of sculpture, students are encouraged to adopt studio methods that may seem foreign at first, often by simulating the studio methods of practitioners well placed in the hierarchy of the ideological field. Operating with limited knowledge of how these methods operate, students find that they are already doing what they are trying to learn—they knew it all along. Thus knowledge (and belief) is seemingly repositioned in an quasi-originary space, seeming to not originate from an ‘agent of ideology’ (using this term loosely), but from the initiate themselves.

In the context of the *point-de-caption*, apparatuses (like the institution) can be understood to parse and authorise *point-de-captions* that wish to inhabit the immediacy of the proximate. The example of ‘participation’ and its widespread institutional adoption, demonstrates how certain apparatuses provide a fast-track for aspiring points. To reach an authoritative structural position a point might first traverse the apparatus becoming ratified in the process. The newly ratified *point-de-caption* would then locate itself in the spontaneous proximity inhabited by key *point-de-captions*, allowing for a near instinctual unfolding of the ideological field and a preliminary arrangement determined by the plotting of these points. From

⁶⁹ Schechner, R. (1985). *Between Theatre and Anthropology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 36.

this perspective, it is of no surprise that many key *point-de-captions* that might work to plot the unified ideological field of contemporary art are also apparatuses for the reproduction of its ideology.

—*Pylons:*

Following Žižek and Lacan, and also Guattari (via O’Sullivan and Burrows), key *point-de-captions* have accrued to create consistency across the ideological field of contemporary art. In this exegesis, a discussion of a few of these ‘key points’ locates this project.

As noted, O’Sullivan and Burrows employ their conception of Guattari’s *z-point*, a point of collapse within signifying regimes around which subjectivity is spun.⁷⁰ The *z-point*, like this project’s modification of the *point-de-caption*, is approached in broad terms, able to be any point whatsoever. As O’Sullivan and Burrows write:

What is a Z-point? Any point whatsoever. Indeed, anything (or, apparently, ‘nothing’) might operate as this point. An object (from a different regime perhaps?) or a subject (what else could love be?). It could be a shoe, sunlight on strands of hair, the opening notes or chorus of Beyonce’s ‘Crazy in Love’. Such an intensive point pins, ties or holds something (attention, desire, a gesture, the feel of leather, the gaze, lips mouthing the words of a song).⁷¹

From this perspective, and as a way of attempting to simultaneously articulate and ‘brute force’ a *point-de-caption*, it will be re-visualised as a *pylon*—an often utilised sculptural device as related in the introduction of this exegesis.

—*a Presentation:*

In the context of Žižek’s thinking on the embedding of ideological belief, we might begin to consider the ‘performance of presentation’ (as a performance

⁷⁰ Burrows, D., & O’Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*. p. 254.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 267.

of art) in relation to operations that manufacture ideological conviction (as outlined in the remodelling of Althusser's apparatus).⁷² Here, the performance of a structure (such as presentation) constitutes a performance that precedes considerations of representation, form, or content. It is the repeated act that prefigures the grounds of engagement, becoming the interface, or initial point of mediation. It is the performance of art as a kind reciprocating gesture. Such a concept might be likened to the radical passivity of Thomas Carl Wall where the image (as the lost object) and its reception precedes any separation into categories such as activity or passivity.⁷³ In this way, presentation is apprehended as a structure of something *given* or *drawn out* that presupposes a separation of the presented *thing* from its context. Here, the dimensional status of the image is unimportant. What is significant is the positing of thing as substitute for the *other* thing—the additional scission or separation of the image. If presentation may operate as a beat removed, then representation is the double movement, the double-beat, an example of the example, a specular movement that becomes an engine for driving all subsequent reciprocation. In this context, the critique of the 'Decision' by non-philosopher François Laruelle might be used to theorise the specularity and hyper-reflexivity that has characterised the trajectory of art—the turn of presentation to the turn of representation.

In articulating a theory of non-philosophy, Laruelle makes the controversial claim of a single "transhistorical invariant operative in every attempt to philosophize".⁷⁴ It is this invariant that Laruelle characterises as the 'Decision', to which philosophy is structurally blind (due to the structure of that Decision). The decisional structure is also postulated by Laruelle as propagating all further decisions as an inevitable result of its reciprocal framework. In our consideration of art, such an invariant may present as a

⁷² Žižek, S. (1989). *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. pp. 34–35.

⁷³ See Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*.

⁷⁴ Brassier, R. (2003). "Axiomatic Heresy: The Non-Philosophy of Francois Laruelle." *Radical Philosophy* 121: 24–35.

panopticon⁷⁵ whose structure mediates the arrangement and operation of every subsequent *point-de-caption*. Reformulating the density of Laruelle via the conduit of scholar Ray Brassier, *presentation* may be approached as the performance of a decisional structure that conditions all further structures. If the presentation is an invariant, the decisional structure of presentation or *presentational structure* becomes a ‘formal syntax’⁷⁶ that governs the possibilities of art-making, particularly its reception. Such a structure is posited by non-philosophy as constitutive to the hyper-reflexivity and specularity of philosophy. Therefore, if we are to understand the ‘artistic presentation’ in much the same way as the Laruellese ‘philosophical decision’, we are ostensibly left with the root of artistic reflexivity but also what it is constitutive of. To paraphrase Brassier’s elucidation of Laruelle,⁷⁷ the presentation (as a performance of a structure) begins with the (synthetic) separation of two things, the conditioned presented *thing* and the conditions of that presentation—the conditions from which it is drawn-out. They are then bound together as given through a synthetic unity where they are conjoined. So the ‘artist’ puts forward a structure that conjoins these two things but at the same time also disjoins them by distinguishing the *presented* from the conditions of its presentation. So the structure is independent but inseparable from the two terms it has conjoined and disjoins.

Because the disjoining of the ‘contextualised presented’ and context is simultaneously extrinsic and intrinsic to their joining, all moments of the artistic presentation are self-positing and self-presupposing. The presented *thing* is specified by being posited *a priori* via some context which is in turn only articulated as contextualising, so far as it has already been presupposed

⁷⁵ See Foucault, Michel (1995). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. pp.214–216. Another analogous structure might be found in the context of Foucault and the concept of the ‘panopticon’, a subordinating point in hierarchal structures that regulates or normalises behaviour—in this, the regulatory function can easily be related to the discussed functions of the state apparatus related by either Žižek or by Rancière.

⁷⁶ Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy”. p. 25.

⁷⁷ Brassier’s work in interpreting Laruelle appears to be amongst the more ‘penetrable’ interpretations available, alongside that of Nick Srnicek who is referenced later in this section.

through the presented.⁷⁸ In reading Laruelle, what Brassier puts forward, is that the Decisional loop is not necessarily circular, but operates more like a Möbius strip where the smooth flow belies the twist in the loop (which is also a fracture). As Brassier writes, the Möbius strip belies a loop “whose dimensionality is simultaneously more and less than, both in excess of and subtracted from, the immanent dimensions of the strip’s opposing surfaces.”⁷⁹ What such a twist implies is a specular or reflexive turn that conditions all subsequent turns—they are posited as an inevitability of that structure. In terms of art practice, specularly performed in such a manner ensures that anything and everything can be engaged by art, and that (like philosophy) the engagement of presenting everything becomes a pretext for art’s own self-interpretation.

An example of the application of decisional structure to an extra-philosophical⁸⁰ entity can be found in an examination of capitalist structure in relation to the non-philosophical Decision by Nick Srnicek.⁸¹ Providing one of the more useful and penetrable introductions to non-philosophical method, Srnicek employs non-philosophical Decision in concert with Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the ‘capitalist socius’,⁸² describing the operations of the socius as follows:

it is easy to see that it is Deleuze and Guattari who have provided us with the most explicit model of how capitalism installs itself as a self-sufficient structure—specifically, through their concept of the capitalist socius. In their analysis, capital (as with all the modes of social-production) has the property of appearing as its own cause: ‘It falls back on all production constituting a surface over which the forces and

⁷⁸ To read the original formulation of this passage, see Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy”. p. 26.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ This designation is used as to not cause confusion, as non-philosophical would be the ‘go to term’ to refer to entities ‘outside’ philosophy but within its specular gaze.

⁸¹ Srnicek, N. (2011) *Capitalism and the Non-Philosophical Subject* (164-181). In L. Bryant & G. Harman & N. Srnicek (Eds.) *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*. [re.press. ebook]. Available from re.press.org.

⁸² Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1983). *Anti-Oedipus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. p. 10.

agents of production are distributed, thereby appropriating for itself all surplus production and arrogating to itself both the whole and the parts of the process, which now seem to emanate from it as a quasi cause'. This socius (whether capitalist or not) acts as an effect produced by society and its multiplicity of relations and forces of production; yet once produced it functions to unify the disparate social practices into a coherent whole.⁸³

Srnicek interprets the socius as a kind of parasitic and subsuming effect that is produced by society. Relating the socius to the Decisional loop, once produced by a function of society (like the Decision), the socius shifts to substitute itself in the place of the function that produced it, becoming both cause and effect, and recodes preceding functions and relations in its own terms, becoming not just totalising, but retroactively totalising as well.

For Srnicek, the significance in parsing capitalism through the Decision, is that the decisional structure—namely its self-positing and self-presupposing qualities—makes an effective model for understanding the totalising nature of capitalism: its apparent capability to subsume and auto-encompass. A common critique, this method of subsumption and capitalist valorisation has been noted in the context of contemporary art by theorists such as Claire Bishop⁸⁴ and Miwon Kwon.⁸⁵ The common thread that these theorists note, is that many 'evasive' artistic strategies were initially conceived in the hopes of outmanoeuvring the reach of capitalism by resisting commodification. However, these modes, apparent in a number of dematerialised practices (like performance), were eventually recoded and ostensibly subsumed by moves towards knowledge or service based economies.⁸⁶ Within the orthodoxies of the capitalist economy, the existence of corresponding roles, methods, and practices to those enacted in evasive

⁸³ Srnicek, N. (2011) *Capitalism and the Non-Philosophical Subject*. p. 174.

⁸⁴ Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells*.

⁸⁵ Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place after Another*. p. 31.

⁸⁶ Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells*. p. 24. Here Bishop recounts sociologist Andrew Ross: "the artist has become the role model for what he calls the 'No Collar' workforce: artists provide a useful model for precarious labour since they have a work mentality based on flexibility (working project by project, rather than nine to five) and honed by the idea of sacrificial labour (i.e. being predisposed to accept less money in return for relative freedom)."

art-making strategies operated as a form contamination, sanitising the radical potential of these actions and practices. So post-object practice was mapped as relative to the increasing expansion of industries that no longer rely on the production of objects, relying instead on the trade of professional labour (like accountants, consultants etc).⁸⁷ As such, valorisation of evasive practice and art-making methods are now viewed as something of an inevitability, as after the conclusion of the cold-war, capitalism forms the dominant hegemonic power, forming the horizon for 21st century society.⁸⁸

The totalising operations of the Decision, in addition to the purported futility of seeking to change a decisional structure with methods rooted in the decisional structure are noted by Srnicek as he comments:

In the same way that philosophy makes everything material for philosophy, so too does capitalism make everything material for productive valorization. Moreover, as our earlier discussion of philosophical intervention pointed out, practice based within the world opened by a Decision is necessarily incapable of affecting the horizon of that world; at best, it can reconfigure aspects given in the world without being able to transform the mode of givenness of the world.⁸⁹

In a similar manner to the employment in art of the '*hyper-point-de-caption*' of presentation, capitalism (at its most minimal) can be argued to employ a kind of *hyper-point-de-caption of exchange*, a structural model that elucidates the self-sufficient, auto-positioning, auto-donating, and auto-encompassing function of capitalism.⁹⁰

Srnicek's analysis of capitalism in relation to non-philosophical Decision is significant to this project for a few reasons: Firstly, the cross application of Decisional method works to legitimise my project's corresponding usage of Decisional structure to diagnose the totalising

⁸⁷ Ibid. In a similar vein, Bishop stresses via the trope of the 'creative industries', that the role of the artist has become subsumed as a model for what many consider as one of the most negative movements in globalised, late-capitalist orthodoxy, the rise of the 'no-collar worker'—a creative and entrepreneurial dressing for casual and precarious labour practices.

⁸⁸ Srnicek, N. (2011) *Capitalism and the Non-Philosophical Subject*.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 175.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 174.

tendency of art. As Srnicek notes on this matter “Decision is not intrinsically philosophical at all—just as Brassier argues that philosophy is not intrinsically Decisional. Rather, Decision constitutes an important mechanism which subsumes everything within its purview; one which is operative in a variety of domains.”⁹¹ Furthermore, in addition to providing some veneer of academic sanctification, Srnicek poses a number of key questions that are pertinent to this project, and identifies a number of challenges that the project faces, such as considerations of how to proceed *after* the diagnosis of decisional structure.

Returning to the main skein of our discussion, the Decision (that *Presentation* is substituted for), establishes a position for non-philosophy to play off. By suspending the Decision and thus the decisional structure, the non-philosopher can attempt to shake off the delimitation of a decisional syntax.⁹² The subsequent movements of non-philosophy are auxiliary to this section, but what is significant for this project is the non-philosophical diagnosis of the Decision and the potential application of this syntactical structure to a presentational structure of art. If this structure functions like a *hyper-point-de-caption* or subordinating *pylon* that simultaneously arranges discourse, propagates further discourse, and is structurally the performance of that discourse, suggested is a method of *point-de-caption* (re)production and ideological self-inscription.

Considering what is provoked in the decisional analysis of art, it is not difficult to see the potential modelling of art as a performative, auto-positing, auto-donating, and auto-encompassing gesture: that ‘Presentational’ structure, flowing back through Žižek, is a kind of ideological-state-apparatus-in-itself, emplacing not just a habituating performance, but a performance that presupposes itself: auto-positioning, operating in-spite of any inscription of belief because it operates through a certain inevitability. So at its most minimal, the ideological field of art inscribes its own possibility. What this would indicate is that the efficacy of a *point-de-caption*, as a

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 175

⁹² Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy.” p.33

totalising and unifying entity, is also based on its compatibility with performance. Or in other words, its capacity to co-opt activities amiable to the Decisional structure, retroactively re-encoding these activities, so the Möbius twist of decisional structure is also operative as a temporal auto-encompassing.

—*Sculpture via Installation:*

From the *hyper-point-de-caption* of *presentation* we might now plot the *point-de-caption*/discipline of sculpture (and the closely related artistic installation). A point on the trajectory of contemporary art, the mid-twentieth-century expansion in the field of sculpture, historicised by Rosalind Krauss in her seminal and aptly titled 1979 essay ‘*Sculpture in the Expanded Field*’,⁹³ signalled a broadening in the possibilities of what could be considered sculpture.⁹⁴ The boundaries of *what is* ‘sculpture’ or *what constitutes* ‘sculptural practice’ now not only include forms drawn from the historical narrative of sculpture (which *were* once considered discrete, autonomous, singular objects) but also, new semi-autonomous or interdependent forms of art: new modes of making that seek to engage with relationships between things like people, forms, actions, objects, and signs.⁹⁵

Following in the wake of potentiality expressed in the expanded field, the expansion of the field of sculpture might be viewed as something of an inevitability. When considered in the light of Laruelle’s Decision, the specular *presentational* structure models many of the twists and turns that would align art’s gaze on the container of ‘life’, and ultimately upon art itself—inscribing the possibility of the expanded field. In the context of that expansion in possibility, the artworks of this project (*XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX*) are not dogmatically melded to any specific discipline or set of methods. Although mostly taking the form of object making (which may

⁹³ Krauss, R. (1979). “Sculpture in the Expanded Field.” October 8 (Spring): 31–44.

⁹⁴ This expansion was not just confined to sculptural practice but occurred across the breadth of visual art.

⁹⁵ A useful definition that is used by Nicolas Bourriaud in Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Les Presses du Réel. p. 107.



Cribb, A. (2013). *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)*. [installation]. Hamilton: Ramp.

include performance document), the project makes use of a variety of modes, from moving image, to digital photography, to internet based works.

BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX), sited in RAMP Gallery, Hamilton, can be cited as an example of this practice in the expanded field. As a discursive tracing of propositional uses for space such as the housing development and showroom, *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)* played off a variety of different modes, containing a rambling subtitled video work, brochures, a series of models as surrogates for the propositional developments, and specially constructed seating. Although this specific artwork will be engaged with greater depth later in this exegesis, it is worth noting now as an example of the freedom and variability afforded in contemporary sculptural practice operating in what is contended to be a post-medium age. What this variability entails is art making that can simultaneously engage a range of registers, temporalities, and spaces; the unfolding of time-based narrative structures, the volatile quasi-immediacy of visual unfolding, and the procedural nature of the written text, all as instances of making methods that are largely unbound by restrictions of form or content—an expression of the auto-encompassing function that can re-encode any *thing* as art—moving

anywhere, being anything. These open limits on variability might result in a research project that is problematically erratic. However, the project's acknowledgement and active engagement with the expanded field of sculpture is supported by the caching of *things* effectuated by the project's accumulative methodologies. In this respect, methodology becomes a significant element in providing for consistency between works, operating as a kind of buffer that ensures *just enough* repetition for the formation of narrative threads and lines of enquiry that operate across and between works. This might again be understood in terms of Schechner's restored behaviour—as a type of mnemonic transmission. Conversely, the *cache* could be approached in terms of the *z-point*: the *cached* like the accretions and consistencies that ring a point of collapse, accruing around even the most fleeting of gestures.⁹⁶

An example of a 'sculptural' line of enquiry that has developed in this research project is the exploration of 'participation' and the 'social' in art, particularly in how participatory practices work to problematise wider sculptural practice by relocating what is ostensibly the point of art away from objects and into purportedly intangible, indeterminate exchanges between "multiple interlocutors".⁹⁷ Interest in *the social*, as kind of a carryall term, has been a popular point of enquiry for many artists over art's contemporary trajectory. However, over the past 20 years or so, provoked by the spate of relational artists,⁹⁸ 'the social' or the 'social turn' as an area of engagement and '*way of doing things*' has gained popularity to become of near ubiquitous employment within contemporary art institutions.⁹⁹ Accompanying an increase in visibility, and indicative of the specularity of contemporary art, the social turn came under increasingly widespread focus

⁹⁶ Burrows, D., & O'Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*. p. 226.

⁹⁷ Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*. p. 9.

⁹⁸ For an mapping of this shift see the introduction to Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational Aesthetics*.

⁹⁹ One only has to look at the public programmes of most contemporary spaces to see how these programmes have embraced participatory or social elements.

from art researchers, theorists, and critics. Prominent in the work of Claire Bishop is an analysis of participatory modes of encounter that can engage audiences in the authorship and production of works, a renewal of focus upon how art can exchange with social frameworks, communities, and so forth. What might be drawn from the reengagement with the author/audience distinction, ‘community art’, or art *in* the community, is an expansion of art’s remit—not content to remain a mere mirror to society, the ambition of many ‘social practices’¹⁰⁰ is a reinvigoration of art-making as something that can actively pursue some sort of social and societal change.¹⁰¹ Potentially modelled by the ‘Decision’, and related by Srnicek in the context of capitalism, such a trajectory might be contextualised as the movements and interactions of one totalising structure against another—the collision of ‘specular’ art with the horizon of capitalism.

In this context, A.D. Schierning’s *Freedom Fruit Gardens*¹⁰² may be viewed as attempting to recuperate a perceived distance between art and its surrounding context. The recuperative gesture of *Freedom Fruit Gardens* is achieved by siting art in the community and engaging these (external) communities¹⁰³ in shared, often minimally ‘aestheticised’ activities, that

¹⁰⁰ See Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells*. On the interchangeability of terms Bishop writes: “These projects are just a sample of the surge of artistic interest in participation and collaboration that has taken place since the early 1990s, and in a multitude of global locations. This expanded field of post-studio practices currently goes under a variety of names: socially engaged art, community-based art, experimental communities, dialogic art, littoral art, interventionist art, participatory art, collaborative art, contextual art and (most recently) social practice.” p. 7.

¹⁰¹ See Paton, K. (2010) *Free Store*. [installation]. Auckland/Wellington: Letting Space. An example of this may be Kim Paton’s *Free Store* an store in which surplus domestic goods were given away for free. For a history of the concept visit <http://thefreestore.org.nz/about/history>

¹⁰² See Schierning, A. D. (2010). *Freedom Fruit Gardens*. [installation] Auckland: Te Tuhi. *Freedom Fruit Gardens* is a project that looks to plant edible gardens around New Zealand. An aspect of this project was facilitated by Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts in 2010, planting an ‘orchard’ near Rongomai School in Ōtara, Auckland (a low socio-economic area of the city), the variety of trees selected by the students of that school. In addition, a grove of lemon trees was planted at Te Tuhi as a link between the two sites. For further information and a history of the project visit <http://www.freedomfruitgardens.com>

¹⁰³ Both the siting of *Freedom Fruit Gardens* and the types communities engaged by Schierning account for a number of criticisms directed towards social practices, namely, that a number of high-profile artworks that were popularised in ‘relational aesthetics’, such as *Untitled (Free/Still)* by Rirkrit Tiravanija, were overly focused upon quasi-micro-utopian communities that were populated almost completely by art insiders, arguably exaggerating the distinctions and social divisions that such a work might be thought of as attempting to contest.



Paton, K. (2010). *Free Store*. [installation]. Auckland/Wellington: Letting Space.



Schierning, A. D. (2010). *Freedom Fruit Gardens*. [installation] Auckland: Te Tuhi

operate in an ostensibly non-differentiated manner to their performance in the praxis of 'real-life'. The distance between art and its context, more often referenced to as art and life, and its symbolic representatives of artist and spectator, are often maintained as overly alienating distinctions. It is often put forward that the circumvention of these distinctions would result in a increasingly, democratic, utopian form of art enmeshed in the praxis of life. So in this respect it makes a great deal of sense that artists like Schierner look to site their art both *in* life (as external to the gallery as the avowed site of art) and in the praxis of life, while taking a generative position in terms of contributing to a 'public good'—the provision of and cultivation of kai. By engendering an almost absolute likeness and proximity to the praxis of life, what such a siting makes possible, is not so much an erosion of distinctions, but the possibility of falling in and out of the art encounter within a reverie of action. This type of proximity might be understood to provoke the an interval of disambiguation, and to a certain extent, a slowing or retarding of this process. This is not to say that distinctions cease to exist, indicative of a final sublation of art into life, instead, suspended in a state of closeness or proximity, the rapid oscillation or flickering between the states of the praxis of art and the praxis of life might work an interpolation *and* a subsequent conflation—a method of retrieval where 'external' experience is recuperated back into the art encounter and vice versa. Such a system of opening and closing resonates with Foucault's 5th symptom of heterotopia: that heterotopias presuppose a simultaneous system of penetrability and isolation.¹⁰⁴

If we revisit Decisional structure, and continue to apply this structural analysis to art, the same hyper-reflexivity and specularity that allows for the auto-encompassing of these activities (like Schierner's planting of fruit trees *as* art), may also account for art's structural resistance to sublation into *life*.

¹⁰⁴ Foucault, M. (1986). "Of Other Spaces.". Here Foucault writes "Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place. Either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have a certain permission and make certain gestures. Moreover, there are even heterotopias that are entirely consecrated to these activities of purification- purification that is partly religious and partly hygienic, such as the hamman of the Moslems, or else purification that appears to be purely hygienic, as in Scandinavian saunas." p. 26.

As Nick Srnicek who was referenced earlier in regard to his thinking on Capitalism and non-philosophy states: “through Decision, philosophy has continually objectified the Real within its own self-justified terms.”¹⁰⁵ Although we have a variety of models that enforce the demarcation of art from the praxis of life, we might follow Srnicek and use the track of non-philosophical Decision to perform an analysis on the space between art and *other*. Parsed through the initial separation and re-complication inherent to the Decisional process (and its mapping to the performance of Presentation), the structure of art ‘technically’ renders sublation impossible—as at a fundamental level it is structural divisive and separative. To employ an analogy, the use of a Decisional structure to recuperate preceding Decisional structure can be likened to using scissors to join two pieces of paper together, resulting in far more incisions (although if you are really clever you might weave together some sort of structure). As Laruelle, Brassier, and Srnicek all contend, the employment of processes derived from Decisional structure *in* a Decisional structure results in more scissions, like a Möbius Strip twisted and twisted again, until it resembles the mass-folding of an undulating manifold. In considering the progression from the Möbius Strip to something resembling a manifold, the procession of Decisional structure upon Decisional structure may provoke conceptions of irreversible change in a system such as those mapped out in the entropy of Robert Smithson.¹⁰⁶ To briefly deviate into a series of propositions relating to entropy (as a measure of change), Smithson in *Entropy Made Visible*¹⁰⁷ relates the

¹⁰⁵ Srnicek, N. (2011) *Capitalism and the Non-Philosophical Subject*. p. 166.

¹⁰⁶ To reiterate, entropy is approached by this project not necessarily in its canonical scientific sense, but via artistic employments such as those of Smithson. In this entropy functions as much a cultural concept as it does a scientific concept. Such a conception is supported by scholar Felicity Colman writing “As an information-energy notion produced in the 1960s climate of political-social change, entropy is a conceptual trope for the perception of temporal modalities in art forms. In Smithson, and in Deleuze and Guattari’s usage, entropy becomes a term that describes teleological histories (Art History for Smithson, Royal Science for Deleuze and Guattari), drawn through the formal stabilisation of the physical organisation of differences, to their commonly accepted material point of non- differentiation.”. See Colman, F. (2006). “Affective Entropy.” *Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities* 11 (1): 169–78. p. 176.

¹⁰⁷ Smithson, R. (1996) *Entropy Made Visible*.



Duchamp, M. (1915-23). *The Large Glass*. [sculpture]. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art

example of Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass*¹⁰⁸ where a glass sheet in the work was accidentally broken and put back together by Duchamp. Smithson sees the attempt to reconstruct all the pieces as an attempt to overcome entropy. Although the glass sheet in this work is reconstructed the damage is irreversible and no amount of repair will return the glass to its prior, unblemished state.

In the context of Smithson we might reactivate discussion of heterotopic space. Foucault contends that some spaces, although appearing simple and uncomplicated, conceal "curious exclusions".¹⁰⁹ Examining the works of Schierning's, or even of an avatar of 'relational art' like Rirkrit Tiravanija, the promise of immanence or of micro-utopia offered by work's proximity and likeness to the praxis of life, may be closed off by dint of the art encounter. Rather, what may be called to attention by the specular nature of art's Decisional structure, is the impenetrable and distancing operations of

¹⁰⁸ Duchamp, M. (1915-23). *The Large Glass* [sculpture]. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

¹⁰⁹ Foucault, M. (1986). "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias." p. 26.

art.¹¹⁰ On this basis, the art encounter might be related to Foucault's perception of the mirror as an inscribing and repositioning heterotopic site. As Foucault writes:

It is, after all, a utopia, in that it is a place without a place. In it, I see myself where I am not, in an unreal space that opens up potentially beyond its surface; there I am down there where I am not, a sort of shadow that makes my appearance visible to myself, allowing me to look at myself where I do not exist: utopia of the mirror. At the same time, we are dealing with a heterotopia. The mirror really exists and has a kind of comeback effect on the place that I occupy: starting from it, in fact, I find myself absent from the place where I am, in that I see myself in there.¹¹¹

In using the example of the mirror, Foucault provides an example of how one might be *taken* by the heterotopic space and within that duration relocated or repositioned within the objectifying terms of that space.

Hal Foster's¹¹² contention of the avant-garde becomes pertinent when revisiting the Decisional Structure and the concept of displacement (which Foster approaches in terms of the parallax). Foster proposes avant-garde (and neo-avant-garde) practices as an extension that has been retroactively reeled back and re-encoded by contemporary art in an act of deferred action—an event whose significance is only recognised in the future. According to Foster, each cycle more or less fills in the gaps (or perhaps interpolates) or fixes the failures of the last cycle in a process of complementation and re-complementing. The trajectory of Presentational [Decisional] structure resonates with Foster's contention, both in his employment of parallax that may applied to the displacing gesture of the *presentation*, and subsequently, in the reflexivity that Foster posits is inscribed in the parallax.¹¹³

Returning to entropy and displacement, particularly in regard to works that hug the proximity and likeness of the praxis of life, the Decisional

¹¹⁰ Ibid. Foucault talks about the illusory nature of some heterotopic spaces writing on the matter: "Anyone can enter one of these heterotopian locations, but, in reality, they are nothing more than an illusion: one thinks one has entered and, by the sole fact of entering, one is excluded." p. 26.

¹¹¹ Ibid. p. 24.

¹¹² Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real*.

¹¹³ Ibid. pp. xii-xiii



Smithson, R (1970). *Spiral Jetty*. [environmental sculpture]. Utah.

structure may not only be approached as displacing, but as distancing via irreversibility: what is called to attention within this structure is not just the immediate asymptotic gulf between art and 'life', which may be collapsed or reduced, but the distance by way of trajectory—the unraveling and tracing of the scissions in the manifold. So in the quasi-asymptotic closeness to life, what may be attended is the originary and non recuperable distance, the mapping from presentation to representation to the limits of alterity and back again. This is like a dragged skein that unravels likeness and proximity, calling to attention fundamental antagonisms, and fundamental separations. Like standing at the centre of Smithson's spiral,¹¹⁴ the distance to the shoreline is reduced, but the passage back is looped and drawn out. To bridge this gulf requires a portal or a transmission: a disavowal, a forgetting where hyperextension of retrieval *and* recuperation might occur.

¹¹⁴

See Smithson, R (1970) *Spiral Jetty* [environmental sculpture]. Utah.



Cribb, A. (2010). *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*. [installation].
Auckland: ST PAUL ST Gallery 1

—*Sculpture via Sculptural Genealogies*

In the context of discussions on the ‘expanded field’, to locate *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* in relation to these historical genealogies of sculptural practice may prove useful. A caveat to this exercise is that a key device for speculation in this project is a ‘freeing’ from the ground of sculpture; an eliding, actioned through the use of contiguous modes such as performative participation as an evasive detour. It is in this way that this current discussion of sculpture can be considered a kind of back-tracking —‘after-the-fact’—a retrieval or consideration made on reflection, made subsequent to the hyper-extending gesture of unburdened speculation.

Beginning the task of linking the outputs of this project to sculptural genealogies, *09/11/2010–15/11/2010* overtly demonstrates a scope of influences traceable to a developmental trajectory of minimalist and post-minimalist practices, directly visible in both material configurations and spatial deployments within this work. Temporarily putting to the side the axiomatic influence of Robert Smithson (whose thinking has anticipated many *things* of interest to this research), we might examine this project in light of the expansive practice of Smithson’s contemporary Robert Morris.

Here, Morris's practice can function as a type of locative device, positioning *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* in relation to important advances in mid to late 20th century sculpture—particularly noting the relevant intersections of sculptural practices, bodies, and performances that Morris sought to map. Returning to the work *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*, installed in ST PAUL ST Gallery, Tāmaki Makaurau, the spatial configurations of *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*, and the attendance to spectatorial perceptions of scale apparent in this work brings to mind several works by Morris: *Untitled (L Beams)*,¹¹⁵ a set of 2–3 'L-shaped' three-dimensional objects of the same scale that were deployed in different numbers and configurations over a series of exhibitions; *One Man Exhibition*,¹¹⁶ a series of geometric objects redolent of ramps, columns, and platforms; *Column*,¹¹⁷ a human scaled column that was choreographed by Morris to stand, fall, and lie for predetermined amounts of time; and *Continuous Project Altered Daily*,¹¹⁸ a suite of 'construction' materials that Morris experimentally manipulated, drawing from ideas of randomness and entropy.¹¹⁹ An early and influential moment in *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, and perhaps one of the earliest consolidations of methodological accumulations, *09/11/2010–15/11/2010* tested a broad series of concepts and concerns that have enjoyed continued employment throughout the project. The installation consisted of a series of platforms and stair cases surrounded by a distribution of tabular forms, ponds, frames, and tripods. Here, in addition to a shared penchant for plywood, we might relate the 'interactivity' of the staircases to further works of Morris such as *Bodyspacemotionthings*, recently recreated at the Tate Modern in 2009.¹²⁰ Some of these objects functioned as support systems for a further series of

¹¹⁵ Morris, R (1966). *Untitled (L Beams)*. [installation]. New York: Jewish Museum.

¹¹⁶ Morris, R. (1966). *One Man Exhibition*. [installation]. New York: Dwan Gallery

¹¹⁷ Morris, R. (1960). *Column*. [performance]. New York: Living Theatre.

¹¹⁸ Morris, R. (1969). *Continuous Project Altered Daily*. [installation]. New York: Leo Castelli Warehouse.

¹¹⁹ Calnek, A. (1994). *Robert Morris: The Mind/Body Problem*. New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications. p. 235.

¹²⁰ See Morris, R. (1971). *Bodyspacemotionthings*. [installation]. London: Tate Gallery.



Morris, R (1966). *Untitled (L Beams)*. [installation]. New York: Jewish Museum.



Morris, R. (1969). *Continuous Project Altered Daily*. [installation]. New York: Leo Castelli Warehouse.

things ranging from sooty pigments to cast objects interpretable as miniature maunga. The artwork included designated areas within the installative space where changes over time would occur: a support structure leaning against a gallery display window, slowly building up muddy clays and earth against this transparent surface (in a Beuysian nod and a wink to the *Fat Chair*);¹²¹ pools that would diminish as the Gallery's moisture control performed its task; an 'out-of-action' 'work' area where cast objects were produced; and generally dispersed across the space, material changes like wood bending, buckling, and warping under weight and over time. The interplay of objects apparent in 09/11/2010–15/11/2010 and the activation of spectatorial scale relations brings to mind the distributive matrix visible in *One Man Exhibition*. This is signalled by the play between surface, form and scale—platform and ramp, the interstices manufactured by the objects as important as the things themselves: a pathway for bodies, by bodies, between *other* bodies. Traces of the inherited formalism with which Morris grappled might also be observed in 05/09/2012 – 16/09/2012*, an artistic installation revolving around 3 key elements: a set of cast hexagonal forms stacked on top of each other to create a quasi-plinth, a pine herringbone jointed platform sitting within a domestic garage, and the artistic 'activation' of environmental elements native to the site. Together, this coordinated series of objects responded to the *Sculptural Ensemble* of Constantine Brâncuși at Târgu Jiu:¹²² as a condensed synthesis of *Endless Column*, *Gate of Kiss* (threshold as open garage door), and *Table of Silence*. Within 05/09/2012 – 16/09/2012*, the synthetic unity of Brâncuși's opus became a display mechanism (and vessel) for igniting pools of Sambuca—a sculptural convention as a set piece for 'bogun' theatrics. This desecration of modernist form with suburban frivolity, might also be understood in terms of surrogacy: the porous white of the plinth stained indigo, operating in the shared language of bodily substitution (and sanitisation). This was an operation informed by a procession of feminine hygiene advertisements, the

¹²¹ Beuys, J. (1964). *Fat Chair*. [sculpture]. London: Tate Modern.

¹²² Brâncuși, C. *Sculptural Ensemble at Târgu Jiu*. [sculpture]. Târgu Jiu



Brâncuși, C. *Sculptural Ensemble at Târgu Jiu*. [sculpture]. Târgu Jiu



Cribb, A. (2012). *05/09/2012 – 16/09/2012**. [installation]. Auckland: Ferari.



Cribb, A. (2012). *05/09/2012 – 16/09/2012**. [installation].
Auckland: Ferari. Photo courtesy of Ferari.

red of the body replaced by the remote blue tones of the scientific. Shuttling back to *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*, the outstretched tripod forms dotting the gallery space might be reread (or *fabulated*) in a similar way, as a synthesis of Morris's concerns manifest as a generally pervasive influence: the scale relations of the *L Beam*, and also its surrogacy—a vitruvian form outstretched towards the heavens. The *matter* of these tripods, slender and bowing at times, and a pinioning device set at the intersection of the beams, allowed for the articulated movement of these forms (or the suggestion of movement). In this regard the tripods of *09/11/2010–15/11/2010* might be apprehended as channeling the dual aspected performativity of *Column*, its imminence—the potential for collapse to occur at any time—and also its surrogacy, as vessel for the absent presence of the artist's body. Furthermore, building upon foundations laid by sculptural avatars like Morris, the works *09/11/2010–15/11/2010* and *05/03/2011 – 01/05/2011* (although not as dramatic in their modification), owe much to the openings created by *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, a work that opened the ground for gallery projects that might modify over the course of their presentation. In the movements and modifications of *Continuous Project Altered Daily*,

09/11/2010–15/11/2010, and 05/03/2011–01/05/2011, (in addition to shared material languages) can be observed a continued dialogue, at once working to question and reaffirm concepts of presence: of the artist's body, and the impossibility of *truly* spectating such a work.

In examining the works of ~~XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX~~ in the context of related works by practitioners like Morris, this project's attendance to participatory and performative practices might be contextualised. Demonstrated in these works are a lineage or dialogue—a continued complication of the relationships between, artist, object and spectator in the production of visual art that includes conflicts experienced sequentially in 'lived' time.

—Installation via Installation:

Installation is broadly regarded as a sculptural sub-genre, although it is often described as a post-media art form. But, as Boris Groys¹²³ notes, although an installation may not be defined by traditional material supports (like wood, film, digital light, or canvas and paint), it might be defined by its use of space as a material support that Groys describes as “material par excellence, since it is spatial – and being in the space is the most general definition of being material.”¹²⁴ Claire Bishop contends that the material of installation is the ‘presence’ of the spectator¹²⁵ set against an assertion attributed to Rosalind Krauss¹²⁶—that since installation is divorced from a medium specific tradition “it therefore has no inherent conventions against which it may self-reflexively operate, nor criteria against which we may evaluate its success.”¹²⁷ This returns us to a focus on ‘installative’ space as a conflated space where

¹²³ Groys, B. (2009). Politics of Installation. E-Flux Journal, 2(January), 1–8.

¹²⁴ Ibid. p. 3.

¹²⁵ Bishop, C. (2004). “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.” *October*, 110 (Autumn):, 51–79.

¹²⁶ Krauss, R. (1999). *A Voyage on the North Sea*. New York: Thames and Hudson

¹²⁷ Bishop, C. (2004). “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.”. p. 64.

the artwork may be occupied by a community of spectators¹²⁸ as an irreversible and unavoidable implication in contemporary art. To revisit Žižek's performative conviction,¹²⁹ the status of occupying the art encounter could be understood to precede knowledge of that encounter. What this may suggest is the possibility of being habituated and unwittingly taken by encounter. From this perspective *09/11/2010–15/11/2010* deploys material traces that are evidence of human contact, such as the hand-shaped, sand-cast mounds distributed throughout the installation—replete with the imprints of hands and fingers. Also, signs of 'absent presence', or *spoor*, might be divined from objects such as platforms with their integrated staircases—objects of direct use and function that call to attention the human body through their interactivity—an interpellation¹³⁰ of their missing dyadic partner. In regard to the occupation of bodies, Groys further theorises the artistic installation as privatised space and thus the sovereign domain ruled over by the artist, the space of the exhibition as a symbolic 'public space' whereas the installation is the private property of the artist, thus "By entering this space, the visitor leaves the public territory of democratic legitimacy and enters the space of sovereign, authoritarian control."¹³¹ According to Groys, the installation may make visible the police order. He writes:

The installation space is where we are immediately confronted with the ambiguous character of the contemporary notion of freedom that functions in our democracies as a tension between sovereign and institutional freedom. The artistic installation is thus

¹²⁸ Groys, B. (2009). "Politics of Installation." p. 5.

¹²⁹ As discussed at the beginning of this section. For further reading on this model See Eagleton, T. (1994) *Ideology and its Vicissitudes in Western Marxism*. in S. Žižek. (Ed.), *Mapping Ideology* (pp 179–226). London: Verso. p. 219

¹³⁰ Here interpellation (or hailing) is borrowed from Žižek, who in turn borrows the term from Althusser. Hailing according to Althusser is a signalling that calls to an individual. Althusser writes: "I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!'" See Althusser, L. (1994). *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)*. in S. Žižek. (Ed.), *Mapping Ideology* (pp. 101–140). London: Verso. pp. 130–131.

¹³¹ Groys, B. (2009). "Politics of Installation." p. 4.

a space of unconcealment (in the Heideggerian sense) of the heterotopic, sovereign power that is concealed behind the obscure transparency of the democratic order.¹³²

So in understanding the artistic installation we have both a spatial (thus material) and, like Rancière (by intervening in the sensible), political (so necessarily social and critical) complication of the audience with the collections of materials that we would culturally hold as the work-proper. The ground has already been set by the ideological plotting and by agents of ideology. By exiting the public space of the exhibition (which is not always a willing act as the perimeter of an installation may be ambiguous and unwittingly transgressed) and entering the sovereign space of the artistic installation, the viewer/spectator/audience is complicated in the artwork and into aspects of the production of the art through a relocation or drawing out of art's locus.

In this way the installation could be understood as a temporal deferral of 'presentation', and following this, a deferral of its own 'production', where it is presented (and produced) over and over, again and again, in the face of, and for the public—activating not just a complication of the spectator's relationship to the work, but of the ability to accurately locate a work in time.

—Spectatorship (Participation, Author, Collaborator, and Counterfeiter):

14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) privileges the act of viewing as one of its key methods of encounter. One notable (and jarring) instance of engagement with the work resulted in blood and faeces smeared handprints on the glass frontage. This could certainly be considered to set a certain 'participatory' *mise-en-scène* for the work, but are probably not signs of a participatory engagement (although that encounter may have been intensely affective, and 'encountering the encounter' was intensely affective for myself).

¹³²

Ibid. p. 8.

List of thing spectators may have done when viewing 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*):

Bent over to look under the platform
Stood motionless
Sat on the floor (there was no seating)
Modified their posture to look over something
Lent over the miniature for a closer look at a certain feature
Orbited
Stood in a corner
Not looked at all
Looked from outside
Briefly glanced while strolling past
Looked at people doing all of the above

There were a variety of activities performed by the community of spectators that encountered 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*). These activities were mostly driven by viewing (or not viewing). The framing mechanism of the shopfront might locate contained spectators in a ‘viewer viewed’ situation, problematising the spectator/artwork delimitations by calling to attention the act of viewing as a key moment of the artwork. Here the spectator might be held in similar consideration to the rest of the installation, held in diorama, or in the throws of spectating as ‘tableau vivant’. Thus to characterise (and generalise) how 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) is encountered, it is largely people looking and people thinking and sometimes people discussing. However, by explicitly privileging a certain mode of encounter within a contemporary context where the status of the spectator is under scrutiny, through an operative lack, 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) unavoidably and intentionally enters into wider contextual discussions on the nature of spectatorship.

With this project’s focus upon the space of art encounter it is no surprise that modes of spectatorship are significant. As has been outlined, *pylons* placed in the field of contemporary visual art are bodies of consistency and organisation. Conversely, they are also void bodies of collapse and sites of significant and ongoing antagonism and contestation, perhaps none more so than the *pylon* of spectatorship. XX/XX/XXXX–XX/

XX/XXXX seeks to evade approaching these entities in terms of discrete structural positions and instead considers spectatorship and participation as occurring in an alternate structural formation: in terms of an axis of encounter for which oscillation between states is possible. It is worth noting that like *installation*, various attempts have been made to definitively scope spectatorship and participation—to pin down these terms—such as those of Grant Kester¹³³ and Claire Bishop,¹³⁴ but these terms are slippery and prone to shifting and modification, so too are their attached actions and gestures, their apparent orthopraxy constantly revised.

Developing over the past half-century, and coinciding with the rapid expansion in the field of visual art that was outlined earlier, artists contended with the expanding role of the spectator of *and* in art, working to tease out this relationship and test assumptions about the viewer and what it is to view art. Now, the scope of the spectator is not just one whose visible engagement is through unilateralised ‘viewing’, but is one who may ‘participate’ in artworks, or in the (expanded) production of works in a wide variety of ways; by interacting with objects, interacting with other people, or performing certain physical actions, by transmitting and translating. Historically, the Fluxus movement, the loose and porous multidisciplinary historical network of artists, composers, and designers, are often cited as a key contributors to expansion of art—not just in terms of what art could now be, but also what the spectator could now do.¹³⁵ Notably, over the two decades or so, there has been a visible resurgent focus in art and its surrounding dialogue upon the mode of participation and the role of people in art under the auspices of ‘participation theory’ and the freshly minted (or appropriated) field of ‘social practice’ in art. However, like *installation*, the container of ‘participatory art’ is both broad, vague, and porous, an often necessary indeterminacy in visual art—a discursive flex like that afforded by Lacan’s model of the ‘quilting point’—to reflect and allow for a breadth and

¹³³ Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*.

¹³⁴ Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*.

¹³⁵ Bishop, C. (2005). *Installation Art*. London: Tate Publishing.

variety of artistic practice, an auto-encompassing field where two things can 'look' completely different but investigate similar concerns and vice-versa. In spite of that porousness, a mode of participation is often located in artworks that use people as both a material, and in the presentation and production of work. People, often audience members (no longer just the singular artist), do *things*, generally through visible actions tied to their labouring.

The social dimension of spectatorship in art is discussed by Claire Bishop in *Participation*.¹³⁶ Bishop discusses the idea of passivity and activity in participatory modes of art-making, interrogating cultural assumptions that a spectator is one who is passive and disengaged, whilst the participant is active and engaged. She posits the key concerns of 'participatory art' as relating to activation where authorship and community are common concerns in the tradition of participatory art.¹³⁷ Bishop's discussion is expanded through Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator*.¹³⁸ Rancière argues that the active/passive binary is divisive, relating this dyad to unfounded assumptions of states of capacity/incapacity in the spectator. He makes a call for an emancipated spectator that is treated with equality (or as all being equally capable), seeing the activity of interpretation as a potential method for achieving this equality due to the capability of all people to translate.

Delineating modes of encounter, a number of motivations¹³⁹ have been suggested for provoking the current resurgence (or resurgence in visibility) of art-making in this area such as "the atomisation of social relations under consumer spectacle",¹⁴⁰ the analysis of these motivations as a means to locate works within discrete grouping and regroupings.¹⁴¹ The

¹³⁶ Bishop, C. (Ed.) (2006). *Participation*. London: Whitechapel and The MIT Press.

¹³⁷ Ibid. p. 12

¹³⁸ Rancière, J. (2009) *The Emancipated Spectator*.

¹³⁹ Aside from institutional motivators (like the ideological apparatus discussed previously).

¹⁴⁰ Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*. p. 219.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. In this text Bishop reimagines many of these participatory works in terms of 'delegated performance'. p. 11.

containment drive *or* confinement action (like Bishop's) might more-so indicate a cultural tendency (or occupational necessity) in art criticism and curatorial circles to package and promote art-making into easily consumable or understandable 'movements' as were the pre-postmodern precursors to our current presentism. Rosalind Krauss touches upon the tendency to historicise and create a fluid lineage within the narrative or art's history,¹⁴² as does Grant Kester who puts forward a tension in formalised art history where this discipline must now deal with 'present' art, 'present' artists, and 'present' audiences, Kester stating:

contemporary art history poses something of a threat to traditional art historical discourse: the threat of unregulated and multiple claims of interpretive authority. Moreover, both of these factors tend to undermine the perception that the discipline of art history is defined by a capacity for critical detachment or a more objective, less interested, relationship to its object of study.¹⁴³

What Kester puts forward as a response to this is a focus on the mode of experience that occurs at the "site of reception",¹⁴⁴ although it is challenging to differentiate this focus as anything distinct from the approaches of thinkers such as O'Sullivan, Julia Kristeva, or even Rancière, who focus upon 'reception' through the vehicle of the art encounter.¹⁴⁵ This tendency towards classification and re-ordering might repress or ignore the plurality of motivations or dissensus that support art-making, the aforementioned atomisation of social relations if existent should be a strong indicator of a similar atomisation in the social motivations to make art.

¹⁴² Krauss, R. (1979). "Sculpture in the Expanded Field."

¹⁴³ Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*. p. 8

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ See O'Sullivan S. (2006). *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari.*, and again referencing Kristeva on installation O'Sullivan, S. (2001). "The Aesthetics of Affect: Thinking Art Beyond Representation." *Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities* 6 (3): 125–35. Also see Rancière, J. (2004). *The Politics of Aesthetics*.

Bishop, in *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*,¹⁴⁶ using the idea of inherent antagonisms between subjectivities (which could be understood as the tension that occurs in irreconcilable and inextinguishable difference), critiqued the position of Nicholas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* and artists like Rirkrit Tiravanija and his works such as *Untitled (free)*.¹⁴⁷ A key criticism of relational aesthetics by Bishop was that the premise of many relational works—the immanent coming together or micro-utopian community—were reliant upon a unified subject and absence of antagonisms. So micro-utopian 'coming together', failed to account for antagonisms, and differences between subjectivities were repressed or forgotten. Bishop proposes a model of relational antagonisms that can adequately account for "a divided subject of partial identifications open to constant flux".¹⁴⁸ In the acknowledgement of 'relational antagonisms', much like Groys in regard to installation,¹⁴⁹ Bishop sees an avenue for unveiling what is repressed in the formation and sustaining of social order. For this project, the interest in the notion of 'antagonisms' is much like the asymptotic gulf set out by *Presentational* (Decisional) structure, as an indication of an upper limit, or limit on possibility, for how we can participate—a limit of the social. As such, antagonisms become a useful way of articulating or understanding the tensions that sustain and influence social relations.

Post-Marxist theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantelle Mouffe, informed in part by Jacques Derrida's theories of 'deconstruction' and Jacques Lacan's notions of subjectivity, highlight the apparent impossibility in extinguishing all antagonisms between subjectivities. A fundamental and deeply set state of antagonism as described by Laclau & Mouffe, would suggest the limit of the political to completely overcome division (or difference) in society and achieve absolute consensus. If a state of finality (or

¹⁴⁶ Bishop, C. (2004). "Antagonism and relational aesthetics."

¹⁴⁷ Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)*.

¹⁴⁸ Bishop, C. (2004). "Antagonism and relational aesthetics." p. 79

¹⁴⁹ Groys, Boris. (2009). "Politics of Installation."

conclusion) implied by absolute consensus were to be achieved, not only would dissent need to be extinguished but also the possibility of future dissent. In the face of this impossibility, if we are to proceed in achieving a semblance of structural order or conclusion in this system, certain things must be repressed, ignored or dominated in one way or another. This is where antagonism occurs. In the context of ‘participatory art’ Bishop unpacks the occurrence of antagonisms according to Laclau, she writes:

Following Lacan, he argues that we have a failed structural identity, and are therefore dependent on identification to proceed. Because subjectivity is the process of identification we are necessarily incomplete entities. Antagonism therefore, is the relationship that emerges between such incomplete identities.¹⁵⁰

According to Laclau’s logic gleaned via Lacan, to define ourselves we must identify and exclude (classify), this exclusion (or that which we define ourselves against) denies our ambition to be fully constituted (or undivided) subjects. Antagonisms are argued to be what occurs at the boundary of our ability to fully constitute ourselves in the presence of the other. The operations of antagonisms are integral to theories of participation in art such as those proposed by Bishop, as well as informing Laclau and Mouffe’s theories of hegemony which are approached as a method for expanding political potential of deconstruction.¹⁵¹

Accordingly, this study is engaged with an investigation of the role of people in their encounter of artworks, and the perceived assumptions of a spectator’s encounter as passive whereas participation is an active and engaged method of encounter: a binary hierarchy instantiated where passive spectating is seen in a negative light, as less democratic and therefore of less ‘value’ in an art context. Works in this project look to erode boundaries between these axial poles by employing (hypo)critical schema: contradictory and complimentary modes of encounter—when a subject participates they might be orientated to display the appearance of being passive and

¹⁵⁰ Bishop, C. (2004). “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.”. p. 66

¹⁵¹ See Laclau, E. (1996). *Deconstruction, Pragmatism, Hegemony*. And also Laclau, E., & Chantal, M. (2001). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.

disengaged. This study looks to question the antagonisms between the structural positions of participant and spectator, proposing a temporal model in which a person encountering an artwork is party to constantly shifting states of engagement, in this way how can one be considered to not participate in art encounter?

Although often required in texts to delimit discussions, many definitions particularly in regard to spectatorship and participation, seemingly rely on a far too accurate locating or delimiting of where art occurs (like LeWitt's early claim of execution as perfunctory to conceptual art).¹⁵² Also common are problematic assertions of collaboration that fail to account for hegemony, and of mass quantification of internal states of *others*. For this project, beyond a certain point art becomes uncontainable, capable of unpredictable turns in the dialogue it might provoke or communities it might bring together or activate in different ways. Groys notes this capability stating:

An artistic installation, on the contrary, builds a community of spectators precisely because of the holistic, unifying character of the installation space. The true visitor to the art installation is not an isolated individual, but a collective of visitors. The art space as such can only be perceived by a mass of visitors – a multitude, if you like – with this multitude becoming part of the exhibition for each individual visitor, and vice versa.¹⁵³

Like Groys contention on collective visitation, so too does Rancière ascribe a possibility for artworks relating how they: “take hold of unspecified groups of people, they widen gaps, open up space for deviations, modify the speeds, the trajectories, and the ways in which groups of people adhere to a condition, react to situations, recognize their images.”¹⁵⁴ So is set forth a capability of art to function in excess of any set expectation on spectatorship or participation, as even if a subject is ostensibly participating, is performing actions, the inability to divine internal states, *the partial subject*, thwarts

¹⁵² LeWitt, S. (1967). “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art.”.

¹⁵³ See Groys, Boris. (2009). “Politics of Installation.”. p. 5.

¹⁵⁴ See Rancière, J. (2004). *The Politics of Aesthetics*. p. 40.

quantification, just as adherence to ‘collaborative’ action might well disguise deviancy and espionage. Here Smithson’s Spiral Jetty¹⁵⁵ might present a telling final example as to the murkiness of ‘spectatorship’ demarcations: in the absence of the author, the location of groups and foundations that seek to recuperate and protect this work becomes fuzzy,¹⁵⁶ sitting somewhere between insider, interlocutor, and interloper—muddling the terms of spectator, participant, author, collaborator, and counterfeiter.

—*Scale via Installation:*

At a basic level the terrain of the artistic installation can be understood as an experience of space and the forest of things¹⁵⁷ that are contained within that space. This is the territory that 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) and a great deal of this project is located in. A triad of works by contemporary visual artists whose recent works can be read against the porous field of installation practice are: Daniel von Sturmer’s *The Field Equation*,¹⁵⁸ Mark Manders’ *Room with Chairs and Factory*,¹⁵⁹ and Carsten Höller’s *Test Site*;¹⁶⁰ von Sturmer’s work; a field of plinths topped with screens and model-like objects; Manders’ a stacked conglomeration of largely figurative yet in someway skewed domestic and industrial forms; Höller’s a set of slides winding around and into the architectural and structural features of the Tate Turbine Hall.

¹⁵⁵ Smithson, R. (1970). *Spiral Jetty*.

¹⁵⁶ See The Dia Art Foundation <http://www.diaart.org/sites/main/spiraljetty>

¹⁵⁷ See Rancière, J. (2009) *The Emancipated Spectator*. pp. 9–11. Here Rancière, echoing Groys in his speculation upon the constitution of the community of spectators writes: “Human animals are distant animals who communicate through the forest of signs.”. Rancière goes on to state “in a theatre, in front of a performance, just as in a museum, school or street, there are only ever individuals plotting their own paths in the forest of things, acts and signs that confront or surround them.”. Following the material of this project, the imagery of the ‘forest of things’ seems a poignant metaphor for relating the space of encounter.

¹⁵⁸ von Sturmer, D. (2006). *The Field Equation* [installation]. Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

¹⁵⁹ Manders, M. (2003–2008). *Room with Chairs and Factory* [installation]. New York: MOMA.

¹⁶⁰ Höller, C. (2006) *Test Site* [installation]. London: Tate Modern.



Manders, M. (2003–2008). *Room with Chairs and Factory*. [installation]. New York: MOMA.



von Sturmer, D. (2006). *The Field Equation*. [installation]. Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.



Höller, C. (2006) *Test Site*. [installation]. London: Tate Modern.

The relationships between the artwork and that which is directly perceptible in the surrounding space is reasonably clear, von Sturmer's work stresses the navigation of space in the pursuit of looking, sitting in contrast to Manders', whose work is sited in a largely singular and strident manner. The third work by Höller, although ubiquitous within his wider practice, enters into a fairly direct, site specific, mode of installation practice where the work is literally integrated into, or makes direct reference to the architectural space that houses it. These three responses to installation, the multiple, the 'singular', and the 'site specific', already, from a superficial perspective, demonstrate the potential for complexity in installation, making apparent the variety of the terrain to be negotiated in the production and the encounter of installation. For both makers and spectators, to navigate in the terrain of installation means to explore and consequently map interrelations and markers within that topography: the objects that occupy the space and mediate movement as is the case in *The Field Equation*, and the gestures, signs and relations that inhabit or have been introduced to the space as in *Room with Chairs and Factory*. In most cases, and regardless of visual appearances of austerity, the artistic installation is a complex mix of physical

and social relations plotted by ideological *pylons*, operating in a porous conflated tableau.

Often initialising a spectator's attempt to tease out understandings in that topography is the relation of their own body to that presented terrain and the landmarks (or pylons) presented by that tableau. These relationships originate from the spectators's body (as multitude and as hypothetical), a body that in contemporary theorisations of installation practice is understood in the act of spectating, of *encountering* (or entering, or being enveloped, or consumed by space) to be made complicit (and implicit) in the installation, a hypostatising of their spectatorship. In the act of viewing they might become the object of other viewers, which might be thought of as an the initial transaction or exchange between installation and spectator. Now the spectator's body is not only complicit as *thing* of consideration (amongst many other things) within the porous fields of the installation, but that same body exists as a sort of baseline or structural position, forming its own scale (grounded in the experience of the everyday or the distributed sensible) from which all other readings of scale originate and subsequently reference. To foreground a series of discussions that will take place in the next section of this text, the body as the 'anthropocentre' that defines surroundings is held in tension with the artwork as anamorphosis that inscribes the body within those surroundings.¹⁶¹

From this relationship it might be demonstrated that scale relations are semi-autonomous due to the reliance and continuous need to reference back to an ostensibly external structural baseline, a normative state of being from which they draw their significance. Looking again at the Mark Manders work *Room with Chairs and Factory*, a device often employed by Manders is the rescaling of certain objects such as tables or chairs to sit in an indeterminate interval between the child and that of the adult, an interval evocative of similar transitional states like puberty, or liminality. A fairly accurate assumption is that the majority of people who would encounter the

¹⁶¹ Take this as a signal of a forthcoming discussion on operations at the site of art, in the context of the device of tableau, and also Žižek's concept of the anamorphosis (based upon the Lacanian 'phallic spot'). This discussion is held within the second section of this exegesis.

work would be full-sized adults where the deviation from the normative scale of the object's everyday referee stands as an epicentre for rupture within the work. In that rupture (of the established system of proportions), a deviation and failure to conform to the proportions of the sensible becomes of near immediate notice to the spectator. An epicentre, like that presented in rescaled objects of Manders, violates or collapses the field of consistency and continuity generated by accretions and informed by the bell-curve distribution of human form—these accretions shored up by unbroken repetition and reiteration of utility through a 'restored behaviour' of form.¹⁶²

As outlined in *06/10/2011–21/10/2011*, 'twice behaved'¹⁶³ interactions with (often domestic) items located in the praxis of life, can 'draw out' incessant and largely unwitting employment of the accumulated and tacit knowledge of how one's own body is expected to fit, how it is expected to interact. In Manders's work, via methods of judgement on the capacity (or incapacity) for habitation and tacit considerations of how things might be 'made of use' (perhaps provoked by some hindbrain quirk that privileges an impulse to identify and utilise the tool), the baseline of bodily capability for experience is called into account and exaggerated, thereupon becoming a significant aspect in any encounter of the artwork.

Following on from these aspects of the encounter of scale, the operations and consequent interpretations of scale at this level might be viewed as necessarily anthropocentric. In this context the human body becomes an epicentre and measure of scale relations: the origin of the hand that grasps, the bum that sits, the legs and toes that extend in an effort to enhance vision, and the waist that fits and twists and navigates—like this point—the body that labours. Reiterating this position, Susan Stewart, researching the employment of deviant rescaling in literature (like the miniature and gigantic), provides a useful starting point for many discussions on scale in the exegesis. Writing on the centrality of the human body in the perception of scale, Stewart states:

¹⁶² Schechner, R. (2013). What is Performance?. in *Performance Studies: an Introduction* (pp 28–51). Oxon: Routledge. p. 22.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

The body is our mode of perceiving scale and, as the body of the other, becomes our antithetical mode of stating conventions of symmetry and balance on the one hand, and the grotesque and the disproportionate on the other. We can see the body as taking the place of origin for exaggeration and, more significantly, as taking the place of origin for our understanding of metonymy (the incorporated bodies of self and lover) and metaphor (the body of the other). It is this very desire of part for whole which both animates narrative and, in fact, creates the illusion of the real.¹⁶⁴

A view of the centrality of the body in experiencing the artwork is by no means novel, and is in fact reasonably obvious. The body's role in measurement is widespread, from the foot and hand as (in)formal measurements, to the use of fingers as informal units. Shuttling back to discuss the *The Field Equation*, we might see how concerns for the perception of the real become paramount. To approach the work of von Sturmer from an angle that primarily engages with 'content', the objects and the screen are mediated through understandings of the still life and the subsequent relation of the still life as study that seeks out mastery in regard to 'truth' and 'the real'. This is touched upon in regard to an earlier von Sturmer work that makes use of a set of studio methods and devices observable in *The Field Equation*. This progenitor work, *The Truth Effect*¹⁶⁵ (that will be discussed later in this exegesis), is accompanied by an essay by Andy Thomson and Tanya Eccleston accordingly titled *The Truth Effect*. In this significant excerpt they write:

Still life is the original arena of seeing and believing. The still life painter's language is that of fact, constructed through processes that create likeness, and ground 'truth' in the materiality of existence. Like the painter of still life, von Sturmer pitches his work at a level of material existence where nothing exceptional should occur, in a space outside of narrative but well within the pictorial frame. The work moves from the still, pictorial space of painting to conflate real time and space with the recorded time and space of video. The painterly values of scale, colour, weight, and composition are used within the video sequences to frame our expectations within the conventional freedoms of pictorial representation. The illusory space of the video is used as a test

¹⁶⁴ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p17.

¹⁶⁵ von Sturmer, D. (2003). *The Truth Effect*. [installation]. Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.



Morton, C. (2008). *Hotel*. [public sculpture]. Melbourne.

site; a space where the conceptual order and stability implied by materials and objects becomes a ground upon which to exercise our credulity, our understanding of the veracity of visual and physical experience. It is in this context that the camera makes the actions, objects and their configurations true to life. Verisimilitude is achieved through action's complicity in the logic of cause and effect; what goes up must come down. The sequenced action and measured play of materials are held as real, by the frame of the lens. Illusion is implied rather than actual. It is by gathering the gaze for movement that the videos escape the imperative of signification, and of narrative. Not because the way we view is controlled in any particular way but because this field of moving images prevents the fixing of sight.¹⁶⁶

What might be taken from this is the body set as structural position, as the conduit for truth or for the sensible, which in the work of von Sturmer is displaced and substituted. Here, the lens becomes surrogate for the body, and in this, as surrogate or as *other*, presents the surrogate body and its surrogate space as a site of suspicion. The spectator's body and that body's agency are initially presented as structural positions that might delegate certain aspects of the sensible and *truth*—as the means for testing or enforcing that truth. These assumed positions are displaced in a double beat

¹⁶⁶ Eccleston, T., & Thomson, A. (2014). *The Truth Effect*. Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

—an anthropocentric displacement, an ‘anthropodecentering’, from the uninhabitable space contained in the screen, and then again by the impenetrability of the screen itself.

A factor compounding and complicating the heteronomy of scale relations is that shifts and deviations from the baseline in scale are still partially of that scale—*nested*—differentiated but immeshed, they are part-everyday, part-something else, as transitional or part-objects. As an example, the miniature might be approached in this way as a mild sort of rupture, depending on the variety there may be strangeness or quirkiness in obeying some rules and disobeying others, but, like Callum Morton’s *Hotel*¹⁶⁷—a rescaled model hotel installed on the EastLink tollway linking suburbs in Melbourne—not enough deviation to shift this rescaling into the realm unintelligible, unknown, or alien. The opposite to this relationship can also be true, the scale of everyday becoming part contaminated...by the not everyday, and more-so, by the not *not* everyday, explaining to an extent the tendency to shut deviations of that variety away in things like vitrines, museums, galleries (this will be discussed in depth later).

Within 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*), the body of the spectator is located in an interval of displacement. The spectator located inside the gallery occupies a physical space external to the miniature world of the landscape that has deviated away or rescaled from the 1:1 scale of the everyday. But, when considered from the position framed by the glass frontage of the gallery, the same spectator might be demarcated within the same vitrine as the work, suspended in a kind of no-mans-land between scales and systems (the space of the miniature, the conflated space of installation, and the space of the gallery). The body of spectator is required to be there in some form because of art’s reliance on reception,¹⁶⁸ but there is also a sense of otherness in the occupation of that space, or a hyper-miniaturisation of the diorama, rendering what is ostensibly ‘live space’ as miniaturised in comparison: as a space that seems to resist habitation by the

¹⁶⁷ Morton, C. (2008). *Hotel*. [public sculpture]. Melbourne.

¹⁶⁸ See Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*. And also Bishop, C. (2005). *Installation Art*.

body of the spectator, or at the least posits this occupation as an interloping or trespassing. Deviations from everyday scale (while still being part-everyday scale by occupying the same container) invite various opportunities for theoretical opining, evoking creative and excessive uses of adverbs such as *supra*, *infra*, *intra*, *extra* to coin neologisms that express a modification of the ordinary everyday—extraordinary, *supra-ordinary*, *infra-ordinary*. However, what the desire to neologise might signal or make more visible is the sense of sedimentation, accumulation, supplementarity, or excess in scale deviation, it adds to and builds upon, exceeding the baseline status. Such an excess or surplus seems counterintuitive when considered in relation to the reduction or lack in dimensions presented by rescaling operations. This discussion will be continued in the section on the miniature.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #2:

Site as an Apprehended
Gesture, or Structural
Position Once Intended to
Contain the Artwork, Now
Functioning More Like a
Leaky Container Spilling
Things Everywhere While
We Largely Pretend Nothing
Untoward is Happening.

—*Designation:*

14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON) was sited in a narrow ex-retail shopfront that functioned as a semi-commercial exhibition space named Ozlyn. The site of Ozlyn is divided into 3 definable and adjoining areas: a primary area that functions as a shopfront, a partitioned area that often functions as an office and storage, and a semi-outdoor courtyard. Things of note in the vicinity of Ozlyn that outline the complexity, richness, and seemingly contradictory environment where *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* was sited are: used hypodermic needles, empty ready-to-drink alcohol (RTD) cans/bottles, good coffee, human excrement, other shit, affluence, high end commercial art galleries, homelessness, empty meth bags, blood, rundown buildings, art, artist-run-spaces, (formerly) legal highs, illegal highs, beggars and begging, gentrified buildings, used condoms, poverty, the smell of urine, street prostitution, brothels, retail, ethnic food, sports stores, bars, night clubs and strip clubs. The fragment of the installation work that occupies the shop area of Ozlyn visible from Karangahape Road is a sculptural work built above and below a 1.4 metre by 6 metre platform. Above was a miniature diorama of a ruined/primordial landscape. Below was a domestic garden system.¹⁶⁹

The site of the art encounter, operating as a further conflation of spaces (physical, social, and ideological etc.) is a significant point of inquiry for this project for a number of reasons:

1. The relational nature of contemporary art poses an art-site relationship as party to a state of mutual mediation. Therefore, site is an unavoidable consideration regarding the encounter of the artwork.
2. This art research project employs site-specific strategies: understood as a purposive engagement with certain fragments of a site, where these

¹⁶⁹ The Installation of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* might roughly be broken into 4 or 5 main areas; the external view of the Ozlyn 'vitrine' as frontage; the internal miniature diorama; a holding area for a number of provisional propping devices to shore up the miniature diorama (hand cast concrete); a semi-outdoor area holding a series of small barricades based on the design of the props; and an outdoor area holding an 3x3m earthwork—a pile of clean fill with inset objects.

fragments become significant in the production, presentation, and subsequent reception of the artwork.

3. The site of the artwork is the primary location for an expenditure of labour and time constituting a significant aspect of the artwork. Therefore, as an artist whose presence ‘on site’ and personal labour produces the artwork, the site as occupied (or as inhabited), becomes charged over durations as attachments form and investments are made.

Miwon Kwon’s text on site and site-specificity, *One Place After Another*,¹⁷⁰ provides a valuable body of research in charting the historical trajectory of ‘site-specific’ or site-orientated’ modes of practice, while collecting and analysing many of the key critical standpoints on the contested nature of site. For example, the development of community art observed by Kwon¹⁷¹ contributed to the complicating of what was formerly a benign ‘physical’ container. All that was in the purview of life can now be art. Similarly, art’s site has become interpretable as a malleable field of signification, the delimitation of which can only be accomplished by contingent designations or gestures. Kwon identifies a series of antagonisms occurring between models of mobilisation and specificity in regard to site-specific art-making: the fixed singular event (in one place at one time), set against a more discursive, multiply located conceptions of site(s).¹⁷²

In this context, *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* can be considered as holding a tripartite position in light of expanding conceptions on the site of art: as a response to site as physical reality of a location; as a response to contextual conditions of the social environment; and as an engagement with wider conceptions of the site—the contemporary critical discussion on art’s relationship to the environment in which the artwork it is located. A key art making device apparent in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* (and visible across

¹⁷⁰ Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place After Another*.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 2–4.

¹⁷² Ibid. p. 4.

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX), is a facilitation of a convergence: the drawing together and juxtaposition/overlaying of systems, and an unveiling of operations at play in that convergence (often modelled by unstable operations like undecidability). This device becomes a key method for exploring a variety of conditions that the project proposes are made ‘more accessible’ within that play, a potential example being an exaggerated availability to states of reverie.

Even though 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) may employ multiple, purportedly ‘competing’, conceptions of site either inadvertently or as an operational gambit, and although at times responses to the social environment in XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX may be appear to be applied ubiquitously across the board, this project seeks ‘earnest’ exchanges between artwork and the site where the work is conceived and subsequently located in.

Kwon argues that widespread and uncritical adoption of site-specificity has contributed to a state where the political potential of site-specific practice has seemingly become exhausted.¹⁷³ In saying that, there also exists the possibility that the exhausted ‘political potential’ voiced by Kwon can be sited in a more generalised perception on site-specificity: Through wide spread employment, the novelty has worn off, these kind of practices are now just considered “a bit boring” or “lacking the potential for advancement”, occurring within a contemporary art culture seemingly obsessed with novelty and notability. How this situation might be related in terms of previously outlined thinking on the sensible by Rancière, is that the potential for intervening in the distribution of the sensible has worn off. However, it is arguable whether this exhaustion might be attributed to site-specificity at large, as within that span exists the capability for vast variation. Rather, what seems likely is the capability of the site-specific moniker, as *abbreviation*, operates with a reduced capability to disrupt by shorthand within the field of contemporary art (at least for insiders such as Kwon). Within the field, works may no longer solely anticipate a radicality (or

¹⁷³

Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place After Another*. p.1.

criticality) imparted by dint of being tagged as ‘site-specific’, instead, these works must now rely upon their own specific movements to assert and intervene in the distribution of the sensible. Perhaps caught on the wrong side of novelty, the ratification of site-specificity as a *pylon* imbedded in the sensible, is indicative of a process of production where a localised or fringe outsider within the ideological field of art is ‘brought-into-the-fold’. Through authorising and sanctifying processes, the concept of site-specificity (or any of its other analogues: site-responsive *et al.*) now functions as a significant *point-de-caption* within this ideology, aiding in the ordering and dissemination of contemporary art as a discourse.

—*Conflations and Quantification:*

14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) attempted to reflexively respond to the site it occupied by playing off the context of the containing space as a convergence of relations: the physical site as a ex-shop, physical features around the site, Ozlyn’s context as an exhibition space that follows the format of the contemporary art gallery/project space, and the state and social contexts of the surrounding neighbourhood. The ‘feel’ of being in the Karangahape Road environment was an influential factor in the work’s development, specifically the block where Ozlyn was located (which is still partly resistant to the gentrification that is sweeping the rest of the road). The enveloping site seems to exaggerate its own dualities, its own multiplicities, which are held in proximity, suspended together in the social environment. Oppositions and combinations of rich/poor, derelict/gentrified, affluent/effluent play out and operate in flux, resolved and unresolved. In contrast, and external to vestiges like Karangahape Road, socio-economic/social stratification tends to become more and more pronounced. On borrowed time, the site occupies the cusp of a deferred social apocalypse, in thrall to the economics of land-banking and bureaucratic deceleration.

As such, the site of the gallery space was a limitation or demarcation that the work responded to. Like money and time forming a scope of

limitation for material expenditure in a work, the limitation of a space (and what can be accomplished in that space) are influential points of mediation that shape the overall ideas of the project. In this regard, expediency is often engineered as a material or practical response to site in the form of modularity or portability in design and implementation—a response to how a site might be occupied. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*'s six metre platform was 'slot together', other works like *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)* utilised trestles and handles and containers and bags to perform as a kind of 'plug-and-play' artwork, not only working as a practical function for transportation, but also operating in a manner that was open to conceptual reading and expansion in light of that portability. These types of 'mobility elements' shift works towards a sense of the itinerant or peripatetic in comparison to those that might be rooted in exaggerated foundations like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*. In contrast, a work like *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)* is perhaps better characterised by an ability to disappear, or move along willingly, rather than a strident occupation.

Other outdoor works of *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* such as *24/01/2013–17/02/2013* or *17/03/2012–10/06/2012* occurred in sprawling environments making the process of conception, to site-selection, to conception, to site-response more fluid, more of a call and response, in comparison to an established location such as a gallery. Despite that fluidity, a number of practical responses to site coalesced in these works to act in fashioning whatever final form they took. In the case of *24/01/2013–17/02/2013*, this was manifest as a hinged articulation system for ramps and platforms that made the objects float on the landscape as opposed to inseting into the ground. In this work, due to its public siting, concessions were made (both legally mandated and self-regulated) in terms of safety for the spectators and the participants (including non-human actors such as dogs). These concessions were evinced in the material selections of the work, its scale, and the construction methods used, evident in the final form of many of the elements of the work such as gradients of the ramps. In *17/03/2012–10/06/2012*, scale and form were modified in equal measure by an effectual response to the site as selected and to a feeling or sensibility the

site enkindled. Additionally, this response was limited by a set practical considerations pertaining to the transportation of the work and its elements. First the works had to travel by car to the site, and once there, had to be carried on foot around the sprawling environment so many needed to be portable in a backpack, able to expand and be deployed once reaching their designated part of the greater site.

14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON) engages with broader understandings of site (like site-specificity) in a number of ways. The duration of making in the gallery space was roughly around 3 months of intermittent and restricted access punctuated by intensive bouts of making. A slowness punctuated by moments of frenzied activity. As a solo artist with limited resources, the build and development of the work was hugely labour intensive. The negotiation and circumvention of restrictions imposed by the physical nature of the site (such as limits to access; locked gates, small doors, no keys, and narrow driveways) required increased levels of physical exertion and labouring. At their largest, each individual component had to conform to a set of dimensions that would allow the negotiation of the standard door as access to the space. This resulted in a degree of modularity appearing in approaches to both construction and assembly. The labour intensive nature of making *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* is exemplified in shifting 6 cubic metres of clean-fill by hand. A remaining section of this fill became a sub-site earthwork that bookended other works occupying the courtyard area, cast objects, polished stones, spray-bags, and fernery were inset into its mass. Imminently looming over this excessive physical exertion was the fact that this labour would be repeated in reverse at the finalisation of the exhibition. The materials, that so significantly and memorably marked with their materialisation, had to just as fully dematerialise and disappear. In this regard, physical restrictions leading to increasing states of labouring were in part provoked by a social overlay apparent at the site. The site, specifically the rear access point to the gallery, is infamously notable in local histories as a well known haunt for transactions between prostitutes and their clients, drug dealing, occurrences of vandalism, petty crime such as theft, and more



Cribb, A. (2012). *17/03/2012–10/06/2012*. [outdoor installation].
Waitakaruru.

serious crime such as robbery or assault. So, even though security has been improved over the years, restrictions were created that restrained working hours and access for certain parts of the site, methods of storage for materials. These restrictions also dictated what could be stored and exhibited in the gallery space.

Labour intensive practice of this nature is not uncommon to the project. The previously noted work, *17/03/2012–10/06/2012*, can be accounted as consisting of a number of spatially orientated, sculptural deviations, emanating from anchored viewing point. Sculptural emissions from the anchor site took forms like fluorescent rock cairns, reflective beacons, marks and inscriptions, and markers in the style of ‘trig’ stations. These elements were installed across adjacent farmland, extending to installation upon the summit of a neighbouring mountain. A great deal of the work’s ‘work’ became the traversal and negotiation of this landscape; the bearing of sculptural components over those distances, and the back-and-forth ‘pulse’ between anchor site (as loading point) and whatever corresponding point in the landscape the next deviation arrived at. *17/03/2012–10/06/2012* operated as a test, an attempt at a localised

stretching of the capability of installative space to the horizon of dissolution—a test of the capabilities of a site to maintain singularity before a wave of forced multiplicity.

As was the case in progenitor works like *17/03/2012–10/06/2012*, in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* the negotiation of site became a significant aspect of the work. The influence of site, manifest in certain ways such as sets of restrictions whose circumvention would require increasing levels of laborious negotiation, although immediately apparent to the maker, are not always directly communicable to the spectator. Can the spectator know of the exertion required to shift clean-fill? Or of the back-and-forth loading of the tableau? Likewise, as maker, the influences or understandings generated by labouring in a site aren't always directly quantifiable, or able to be easily and clearly articulated when one is located in the throws of making. Much like the loss of reverie, a reverie of action can operate that occludes consciousness of actions taken in the moment—an operation that can lend a degree of volatility to the most prescriptively framed engagements. Later, on deeper examination and reflection upon the acts of labour producing the work, whether it is earth moving, or climbing fences and mountains, what presents as significant beyond the physical labour as investment (or a transactional exchange of expenditure for significance), is this investiture occurs over duration. In this regard, the laborious working methods undertaken by the project become both a system for inhabiting site and a sign of that habitation. Engagement is assumed through rights of occupation. Through habitation co-occurs the investment of time and of labour, but more importantly creates a *duration* of expenditure.

The ostensible reason for 'being there' provokes the formation of relations, and then goes about unveiling these relations via kinaesthetic exploration as labour. As this occurs over time, duration facilitates a further broadening of how a site may be conceived and perceived, as many relations or intricacies of a site only become unveiled over time. Likewise, certain developments and formations require expanded durations to play out. The question might still remain of how this relates to the spectator, how is this communicated or related? The answer would be that the *mise-en-scène*

presented by the exhibited artwork to the spectator, is undoubtedly contaminated (or formulated) by a durational development, thus arguably retaining a residue of this this labour. This is particularly the case in materials used in works that exaggerate traces of their production. In the case of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, a number of contributing factors make the laborious aspects of the work more visible. Firstly, during the development period the exhibition space was occluded from view with newspaper covering the windows. The masking was driven by a conceptually backgrounded decision that the development and construction of the exhibition would not be open to spectatorship, it would be open to speculation and contemplation—the material of the newspaper itself (as a container for temporally locatable event) setting a initial structural position for the work. This masking would be a key aspect of the work, a period marked by the foreclosure of making ‘closing off’ the outside. In this regard, and specific to *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*’s production and exhibition, there was less interest in an open performance of art-making practice to an audience, and more interest in the relations that an ‘already apparent’ work might have with its audience: the capabilities of that work to attend to its own story, to recite its own tale of emergence, a tale that is translated, interpreted, and transmitted by a spectator. This type of emergence would not be considered a dissociation of the presence of the artist, as this is largely suggested. Also, as an operating assumption, I propose that the majority of people are capable of divining the processes that lead to the formation of a ‘thing’, I have faith that the spectator, at the most minimal level, from their own experiences of life, can interpret and translate labour and material processes that contribute to the production of a work.

The second key marker contributing to a sense of habitation behind the masked exhibition space, was an adjacent ‘window box’ cum micro-gallery that exhibited artworks throughout the course of the development and exhibition of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*. This signalling of a business-as-usual operation also worked to assuage concerns that the gallery had closed down and was no longer in operation. In

addition, behind the masking the gallery lights were on, action was happening, things were going in and out of the space—the site was inhabited.

Thirdly, once unveiled, the discernible scale of the work in relation to the space could also be interpretable as a residue of extended development. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* is a large, heavy work, visually analysed it looks to have taken a fair amount of labour to make, internally it consists of many components, spatially it almost completely fills the gallery. These relations, when held in comparison to the dimensions of the exhibition space, can be understood to exaggerate a kind of implied spatial impossibility in the work. Much like the mythology of pranks involving the disassembly and subsequent reassembly of automobiles in improbable places, a dimensionality that challenges the capabilities of a container not only creates a rupture or displacement, but can provoke speculation on behalf of the spectator on the expenditure of labour and time that is required to bring such a spatial violation to actuality. Thus gestures of this variety often bear the weight of assumptions of some permanence or longevity; after all, why go to all that trouble for such a limited payoff? But, as highlighted in the case of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, a gesture of expenditure or investment may not be indicative of permanence or of longevity, but instead, of a laborious ephemerality.

Although the duration of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* as indicated by the placeholder device in title [*14/09/2013 – XX/XX/2013*] was by no means absolute—determined in uncertainty, and functioning as a porous temporal container for the work—there was little to no chance of the work existing permanently at the site, or of the work mobilising to live out a second existence at another site. The initialising expectations that gave rise to the work, inscribed that same work with an undoubted impermanence. This expectation did not modify and remained throughout the course of the work's durational trajectory. The scale and method of spatial response to the gallery site made the sculpture essentially unmovable. It was permanently ephemeral. The base dimensions of the work were larger than any entry and egress points in the space, and the foundations of the work were assembled in a modular but nonetheless

permanent form once affixed together, to disassemble the work would be to destroy it. Without a feat of engineering, such as knocking out a wall, the work was not going anywhere. On top of the architectural reality of the site, the internal engineering of the work would resist transport to such a degree that the costs involved in shifting *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* (through building a support structure for the support structure) would be far beyond the modestly budgeted scope of this project. The work was constructed for the vertical support of accumulated elements. The floor of the space was an additional major support mechanism. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* was not built for lateral or self-supporting movement. In this regard the work was anchored to the space although that anchoring was only to be for a discrete temporal duration. What is keyed in by these relations (that have been elucidated over the last few paragraphs), is a indication of a relationship to site framed through markers of occupation and habitation, and of site relations inferred through assertions of this occupation. Aside from just ‘being in the space’, further markers of permanence that might operate more in the realm of sensibility (weight, foundation, expenditure *et al.*), are played off against expectations (particularly in the context produced by contemporary gallery sites such as Ozlyn) of ‘art by project’, an expectation of the site-specific artwork (and the gallery itself) as a transient engagement. After the expiration of temporal duration, the work’s link to the Ozlyn space (that is now a cake shop) would be [hopefully] located in the minds of spectators as the works witnesses. Additionally, at some later date, recollections might be provoked through encountering photographic documentation of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, or in the access of the web-based component that formed an intertextual element of the work.¹⁷⁴

In this context, the inter-textual relations of many artworks have become exaggerated by the development the internet. Devices like social media (and its accompanying flow of archival imagery) are entrenched in the everyday life of many art spectators. Works that would previously be

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See www.LOIC.org.nz

consumed via in-situ art encounter can now be largely consumed through images. Here, a general expectation has developed of instant gratification in regard to electronic documentation, becoming a default position for the contemporary art spectator. Thus for many encounters of art, the image becomes anterior, preceding encounter of the physical work. In this regard, and more pronounced with valorised works—no longer operating as a record or document of ‘what is missed’—the image (and accompanying mythologies), the ‘spoiler’, often pre-empts and mediates the ‘physical’ manifestation of the artwork, consumed prior to visceral ‘in-the-flesh’ art encounter. Here, it might be argued that a majority of art encounter (or at the most minimal, some low-level reception of art) occurs via the endless procession of images facilitated by the internet. As such, in today’s age of digital reproduction and ease of publication, dissemination, and consumption of information facilitated by the internet, documentation (of nearly everything) is far more normalised than in preceding times, as a validated (and expected) method of encountering and analysing an artwork.¹⁷⁵ A point of significance in these intertextual operations for works like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* and to conceptions of site, lie in the close ties to the construction and communication of narrative, and the workings of construction and transmission of the mythology of the [artwork as] originary event. In oral or *other* traditions the audience as *witness*¹⁷⁶ become a producer of narrative, interposed as transmitters from one ‘originary’ site to new or unplanned sites that may occupy disparate temporal or spatial locales. This method of transmission is often referred to as ‘viral’ (which retains implications of unsolicited or unwitting transference). And yet, in a democratic twist, there always exists the implicit possibility of non-participation in this method of transmission (or re-siting through reciting), there is always the choice to speak or to not speak, to transmit or not transmit, to recite and re-site.

¹⁷⁵ Of course art history largely relied on slides and books for academic research but the frequency, and recent complication of documentation (such as those by Schneider) have moved to complicate the assumed simplicity of these documents.

¹⁷⁶ Schneider, R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*. In G. Butt (Ed.), *After Criticism: New Responses to Art and Performance* (pp 23–47). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

—Non/Un/Um.../Not-Sites:

In the context of art's site, an intriguing notion for this project is the capability for heterodox sites to be instantiated within the event-space of the art encounter. While operating within the scope of a 'traditionally contemporary' site, the dioramic landscape of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*—as point of density nested within this site—seemed to gesture away (or inward) from what *would* or *should* be the ostensible locus of the work. This landscape, through a degree of interiority presented by the device of the miniature, seemingly held the ambition to be a site in itself, as a kind of recessionary void nestled within the 'site-proper'. To signal a forthcoming series of discussions that are interlinked to the present discussion of site (and to reiterate concepts related in the first section on a the key 'pylon' of scale), the miniature (through its unliveable scale), is technically resistant to the body of the spectator. But through 'mixed messages' transmitted by the representation of landscape, and in following the 'image' occupied as space, it is lent a sense of proximity where spaces of this variety just *might* be habitable. This provides just enough fodder for a (witting or unwitting) disavowal to occur that presents as an occupation of the uninhabitable space. Counterbalancing these operations is a relationship where, although the body can technically move through the space presented 'like an image', it does not 'belong' in such spaces. Its traversal of this space is a potentially transgressive action. Likewise, to this spectatorial body, the trespassing activities of the *other* (other spectators) become potentially destructive or ruinous actions. In this manner, the miniature both invites a designation as site because it is seemingly contained and discrete and thus easy to designate in that way. But in the same breath makes suspect the operations that we largely assume to accompany conceptions of site, relating to questions of habitability and the potential to experience (or conceive) a site through the body. Informing this is Robert Smithson's theorisations of site and non-site:

The Non-Site (an indoor earthwork)* is a three dimensional logical picture that is abstract, yet it represents an actual site in N.J. (The Pine Barrens Plains). It is by this dimensional metaphor that one site can represent another site which does not

resemble it - this The Non-Site. To understand this language of sites is to appreciate the metaphor between the syntactical construct and the complex of ideas, letting the former function as a three dimensional picture which doesn't look like a picture. "Expressive art" avoids the problem of logic; therefore it is not truly abstract. A logical intuition can develop in an entirely "new sense of metaphor" free of natural or realistic expressive content. Between the actual site in the Pine Barrens and The Non-Site itself exists a space of metaphoric significance. It could be that "travel" in this space is a vast metaphor. Everything between the two sites could become physical metaphorical material devoid of natural meanings and realistic assumptions. Let us say that one goes on a fictitious trip if one decides to go to the site of the Non-Site. The "trip" becomes invented, devised, artificial; therefore, one might call it a non-trip to a site from a Non-site.¹⁷⁷

In response to Smithson's conception of the site and the non-site, *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* becomes more a case of a play between site and something else. Not non-site as elaborated by Smithson, but more a kind of un-site (or perhaps in a disambiguating interval an um...site). The operations that occur in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, although referential like the non-site, are more general, more vaguely couched, like bad directions or a poorly drawn map. In this way, the construction that aspires or is desirous to be site, does so by an internal referencing system: a bizarre kind of general referencing of an abstract and archetypal idea of a non-specific site operating with a great deal of detailed specificity—particularities in improper (or auxiliary) locations that interpolate absences in the places where detail is generally required. This leads to a reference point that is geographically and temporally unclear or un-locatable (this will be covered in more depth in a forthcoming fragment focusing upon the miniature landscape of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*). As Susan Kandel wrote on Smithson's sites in a nineteen-ninety-five Frieze article on "the non-site of theory"; dealing with criticisms of a perceived preponderance of theory informing 1980s art practice:

¹⁷⁷ Smithson, R. (1996) *A Provisional Theory of Non-Sites*. In J. Flam (Ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (pp. 364). Berkeley: The University of California Press. p. 364.

Smithson made his first non-sites in 1968, transporting rocks, slate fragments or mica from geological sites into the gallery or the museum. Arranging these substances in the sort of rigid, geometric containers made familiar by minimalism, Smithson found a way to muddy up the 'white cube' while playing at accommodation. Like scale-models, these receptacles mimicked the gallery's desire for containment; yet Smithson continually transgressed their borders with photographs and maps which pointed the way out, toward the site from which the rocks or fragments were taken.¹⁷⁸

The model of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* offers a similar way out but without the maps of photographs of Smithson (although the landscape might be interpretable as a mapping of something), but retaining the sensibility of the non-site as three dimensional map. In this way *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* is a map, and like Kandel goes on to state "it offers a synthesis between representation and abstraction. It depicts something beyond, intertwining the here with that which is there - or at least elsewhere".¹⁷⁹ Like the muddying of the cube by Smithson, the apparent unsuitability of the materials apparent in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* within the gallery as receptacle, from exterior to interior to exterior again are undeniably referential in aligning with the authority of some external site, either in nature or *in* something like it. But, the offer of an internal, recessionary point from the receptacle, through the miniature world of the landscape, through the um...site or *non* non-site, leads to new avenues of inquiry, outside the initially expected closed limits of siting within the gallery space.

Facilitated via the likeness and proximity of verisimilitude, the diorama of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* presents to the spectator as a space charged with the potential for action, and with the potential for occupation. Here the 'effectual affect' or 'after-affect' of the absent yet nonetheless charged *mise-en-scènes* provides enough potentiality—the requisite numbers of markers and *pylons*—to put forward a persuasive case to be considered as site—rhetorical appeals to ethos, pathos,

¹⁷⁸ Kandel, S. (1995). "The Non-Site of Theory." *Frieze Magazine* 22 (May). Retrieved from <http://www.frieze.com>

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

and logos technically all present, but ill-arranged, misplaced and misused. In this way the miniature system in art becomes a useful tool for interrogating notions of art encounter and spectatorship and the relationship of these systems to the site of the art encounter, particularly in terms of an operative or *functional* disfunction that can create new apertures or openings through which art encounter might be extended.

—*The Site and the Frame and Tableau:*

The 1533 painting *The Ambassadors*¹⁸⁰ by Hans Holbein the Younger depicts two men (possibly a scholar and a cleric), and objects representative of both scientific and spiritual enlightenment. A surprisingly rendered anamorphic skull occupies foreground of the painting, a feature of much intrigue that has contributed a great deal to the notability and historical visibility of the work. The occupation of the foreground might be considered as operating across two fields: first the foreground field in relation to traditional understandings of composition, and second, a dimensional foreground field in relation to ‘lived space’, as the skull although rooted in the matter of painting, is anterior to the painting, floating isolated and superimposed, *interposed* between the spectator and the ‘painting-proper’. On this point we might begin to speculate upon a play of converse relationships—how matter occupying ‘lived space’ might recede to non-differentiate as image. To view the anamorphosis from a culturally traditional viewing/structural position (directly in front of the painting), which is still pervasive in our present day context, the element presents as stretched and odd when held in comparison to the expertly rendered representational elements that accompany the skull. However, created by the rendered anamorphosis is an optimally ‘jaunty’ position that spectators are presumed to occupy, positioning themselves in order to ‘correctly’ appreciate this aspect of painting. This position might be apprehended by happenstance: an unwitting spectator may obliquely approach the painting and see the odd visual effect. But, for a spectator with both the understanding and intention to view the anamorphic skull it

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Holbein, H. (1533). *The Ambassadors*. [painting]. London: National Gallery.



Holbein, H. (1533). *The Ambassadors*. [painting]. London: National Gallery.

requires work (labour) to position one's self in the pursuit of finding the required optical effect.

The Ambassadors is useful in drawing forth discussion on the mediation of the spectator through anamorphosis and how this might operate in our relationship to sites of art. In this context, the anamorphosis might be considered a visual modelling of mediation by means of interposing itself between the gaze of the spectator and the object(s) of that gaze, modulating the reception of what is spectated, providing an undeniable allegorical stain upon the work. Žižek proposes as much by putting forward a reading of Lacan's 'phallic signifier' to posit anamorphosis as indicative of a fantasy frame: the unveiled anamorphosis as a 'denaturing' that opens up the ground of the sensible for supplementary meaning and the production of further "hidden meanings".¹⁸¹ Žižek writes:

The oscillation between lack and surplus meaning constitutes the proper dimension of subjectivity. In other words, it is by means of the "phallic" spot that the observed picture is subjectivized: this paradoxical point undermines our position as "neutral," "objective" observer, pinning us to the observed object itself. This is the point at which

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Žižek, S. (1992). *Looking Awry*. Cambridge: MIT Press. pp. 90–91.

the observer is already included, inscribed in the observed scene—in a way, it is the point from which the picture itself looks back at us.¹⁸²

This elucidation of anamorphosis directly corresponds to Guattari's elaboration of rupture. Lacan's 'part that sticks out' mapping to Guattari's detached part object that might generate "new fields of reference".¹⁸³ Here, the anamorphosis as a point for the production of subjectivity, becomes increasingly significant, particularly in a reading of the contribution of installation practice to understandings of spectatorship and art making. The auto-positioning of *presentational* structure etches the observer into installative space—as a primordial inscription of a hypothetical spectator writ large. This inscribing simultaneously positions the same observer as excluded and isolated through the presupposed structural position as spectator.

In this regard, owing much to the method of composition and arrangement of the work's 'content', *The Ambassadors* creates an aperture for discussion of tableau in relation to wider concerns of installation practice. Similar to methods used in Hieronymus Bosch's *The Last Judgement*¹⁸⁴ and *The Garden of Earthly Delights*¹⁸⁵ (that will be presented in a forthcoming discussion of the miniature), the use of tableau in *The Ambassadors* becomes discernible over a series of registers; its exaggerated delineation; the allegorical operations of the anamorphosis; the interrelationships between two of the 'actors'—the two figures in the painting (whose identities are still being debated)—and the *other* actors; the *things* that are all brought together within the compressed spatial proximity of the picture plane, suggestive of a finitude or its possibility.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Guattari, F. (1996). *Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse*. In G. Genosko (Ed.), *The Guattari Reader* (pp. 193-203). Oxford: Basil Blackwell. p. 198.

¹⁸⁴ Bosch, Hieronymus. (c.1492). *The Last Judgement*. [painting]. Vienna: Academy of Fine Arts. As a note Bosch will be discussed in the forthcoming section of this exegesis in relation to Dinos and Jake Chapman.

¹⁸⁵ Bosch, Hieronymus. (c.1490 -1510). *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. [painting]. Madrid: Museo del Prado.

Originating as the diminutive of table, and defined as a “figuratively picturesque description often as a presented scene or representation”,¹⁸⁶ the term ‘tableau’ is also suggestive of both a presentative display mechanism (the table) and a mode of representation (the image). In this way, tableau can be taken as an example of the dualisms often accumulated by this project, ‘twice speaking’ terms creating a point of play anchored in simultaneity. Tableau, beyond the direct definition, is a prominent device in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, and has enjoyed frequent and widespread employment across a number of different art forms (painting, theatre, literature). Subsequently, distributed threads traceable to tableau have emerged as a focus for research in a variety of diverse, yet related contexts. In Schneider’s *Performing Remains* the ‘Tableau Vivant’, a living human diorama often enjoyed by the 19th century aristocracy, is used as a vehicle to discuss re-performance and reenactment in contemporary art and theatre.¹⁸⁷ Likewise, literary theorist Susan Stewart investigates the mechanism of the tableau in relation to the miniature and their usage as literary devices in her 1984 text *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*.¹⁸⁸ As mechanism, the usage of both the tableau and the miniature in literature can be viewed as operating in an analogous manner to their counterparts in visual arts. In the following, the territory covered by Stewart creates openings for a number of intriguing possibilities in approaching both tableau and miniature in contemporary visual art. Unpacking the operations of the tableau Stewart writes:

Thus there are two major features of the tableau: first, the drawing together of significant, even if contradictory, elements, and thereby the complete filling out of “point of view”; and second, the simultaneous particularization and generalization of the moment. The tableau offers a type of contextual closure which would be inappropriate to genres rooted in the context of their utterance; the tableau effectively speaks to the distance between the context at hand and the narrated context; it is possible only through representation, since it offers a complete closure of a text

¹⁸⁶ Apple. Dictionary. [software application]. Cupertino: Apple.

¹⁸⁷ See Schneider, S. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

¹⁸⁸ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

framed off from the ongoing reality that surrounds it. Here we might think not only of sculpture but also of the photograph, which has made possible the dramatization and classicization of the individual life history.¹⁸⁹

Identified by Stewart are a series of features for the tableau, namely, the way in which the tableau ostensibly puts forward a type of spatial closure, often contained within a space of defined representation.¹⁹⁰ Also, offered up by the tableau is a ‘filling out’, the telling of contextual information and detail that might be considered expansionary (and recessionary) as an accumulative weighting creating a localised intensity. This project uses tableau in an expanded context: as an expression of a structural position relating to art encounter. Here tableau, like the encounter (and like *heterotopia*), is penetrable due to an opening and closing off. Firstly, the aperture of encounter and its foreclosure, as a kind of enveloping state. Secondly, the duration or timeliness of the tableau operating in apparent displacement and/or isolation to the ‘current’ context, like the inscription of anamorphosis; where an inscribing ‘in’ can simultaneously function as an inscribing ‘out’. In this, the tableau (perhaps more observable in miniaturised variants like the miniature diorama) becomes characterised by a series of apparent demarcations: spatial, temporal, contextual and so on. Particularly significant is the purported ‘filling-out’ of the tableau, interpreted as a drawing together and conflation of spaces. And through this there is a corresponding drawing together (and conflation) of the accoutrements of space. This filling out or *populating*, and the suggested interpolation between parts, might be affective of a ‘quasi-totality’ (or a potential or ambition for totality), persuasively set out by the logics of tableau. Redolent of Žižek’s elucidation of the Lacanian ‘phallic spot’, the oscillation between states of lack and surplus described in this anamorphosis, correspond to the operative particularity and generality of tableau.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 111

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 113

¹⁹¹ See Žižek, S. *Looking Awry*. pp. 90-91.

This is manifest in the compression of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* into a *mostly* singular site, and in the main model, the compression, or delineation, of elements into an ‘overloaded’ singularity, centrally sited in the main exhibition space of Ozlyn. The table/tableau of the miniature landscape platform is internally demonstrative of this device. By nature and design the miniaturised scale of this landscape is compressed and the boundaries formed by the table operate as spatial island (like the frame of the painting). It is in this way, the miniature, as also related by Stewart, inherently gravitates towards tableau.¹⁹² Subsequently, the tableau can be read as presenting a compressed temporality, simultaneous to the spatial compression inherent in movements of rescaling. In the case of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, and conveyed by the nature of the materials and the subject of representation as inert and lacking life or energy, the work could be considered (at least at the moment of initial encounter) to offer up a kind of immediate temporal unfolding that is part-attributable to the operation of tableau as a ‘filling out’ or full delineation—an ostensible sense that all that *could* happen *has* happened. As touched upon in forthcoming discussions on archetypal structures often abbreviated by narrative, the frozen moment of action or ‘time stood still’ appearance of the miniature and the device of the tableau are at first suggestive of a possibility for a discretely contained or isolated moment.

Evocative examples of this mechanism, particularly coupled with the use of miniature, are the models of the Chapman Brother’s such as *Hell* or *Fucking Hell*,¹⁹³ Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller’s *The Dark Pool*¹⁹⁴ as a mixed scale diorama, and the geological modelling of Mariele Neudecker’s *There is Always Something More Important*.¹⁹⁵ A key point of contrast between the encounter of *The Ambassadors* and work like *Fucking Hell*, or *The Dark Pool*, is the availability of the spectator to enact an almost

¹⁹² See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

¹⁹³ Chapman, D., & Chapman, J. (2008). *Fucking Hell* [Installation]. London: White Cube.

¹⁹⁴ Cardiff, J., & Bures Miller, G. (1995). *The Dark Pool* [installation]. Vancouver: Western Front.

¹⁹⁵ Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*. [installation]. Brighton.

omnipresent method of experience. Here the inscription of the spectator, the structural position occupied by the spectator's body, is not just located exterior to the work, but inhabits an exterior world or reality to that of the work—the same inside/outside/open/closed operation as anamorphosis and heterotopias. However, the 'reality' that the spectator occupies is ostensibly evocative of a 'totality' and in experience—manifest in the spectator's orientation and capability to orbit the temporally suspended 3 dimensional world—models understandings of how a god-like power of the *outsider* would operate. Works like *Fucking Hell* or *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* function as diorama, the third dimension of 'habitable' space and the implication of the forth dimension of time, making the diorama pictorially aspected, but, in that dimensionality in excess of the pictorial. In this manner, devices and studio methods may also be employed to mediate or delimit that 'totality' in encounter. Such devices may encourage specific types of spectating either through the inducement or physical inhibition of viewing, and subsequently problematise the status of the diorama by presenting as an oscillation between lack and surplus back towards the space of the pictorial consumption, of space as panorama.

As such *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* calls attention to a method of pictorial framing as a modelling of anamorphosis employed throughout the *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* project (*Arcades* and *Courtyard*). Already orientated towards the pictorial as dioramic tableau, and also through the employment of tableau across the installation, the framing mechanism of the shopfront, like the display window of *Arcades* and french doors of *Courtyard*—like anamorphosis—moves to enable a relationship where the physical space of the installation is framed, recoded and consumed as image in much the same way as a picture. The existence of the architectural framing methods in the space becomes part of a site-response that influences the art work. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*'s geographical features were orientated towards the window, its face looked towards the outside. The development of this device within the project can be traced to its first formal use in *Courtyard/Te Tuhi*, more formally titled as *05/03/2011–01/05/2011*. This installation was



Morton, C. (2005). *Stonewash*. [installation]. Istanbul.

constructed to be encountered as both an installation space and as an image, encountered within the physical space of the aforementioned courtyard, but consumed as image through a screening or framing mechanism encouraged by a set of french doors and a glass frontage to a community classroom.

Likewise, *Stonewash* by Callum Morton uses a constructed facade of a shopfront as a scopic framing device. In *Stonewash* a pristine white, Levis store facade, is built on to the front of a derelict building in Istanbul.¹⁹⁶ Behind the window of this concept store, instead of clothing is a collection of rubble—the interior space becoming a kind of receptacle for ruin—a suggested reading being that the detritus was either sourced from the location of the screened building, or was directly existent in that spot before the facade was constructed (although this may not be the case). The shopfront is well established as an entrenched method of display in presenting towards the passing flâneur, and as a consequence (and in much the same way as the plinth) benefits from a widespread behavioural habituation of the spectator. Thus the shopfront fits snugly into the presentation of the artwork and is a frequently used mode of display in the

¹⁹⁶

Morton, C. (2005). *Stonewash*. [installation]. Istanbul.



Smithson, R. (1967). *The Great Pipes Monument*. [photograph]. Oslo: National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design.

visual arts, as many exhibition spaces make use of ex-retail shops. In addition to this, projects like Morton's also use the frame of the shop/shopfront to play off a dialogue with economic, social, and commercial systems apparent in the social environment which the work takes place. Other works such as *Free Store*¹⁹⁷ also use the entrenched concept of shop as a marketplace, enacting the function of trade for which the shop is associated (of course *Free Store* violates this tenet of trade and commerce by giving away its stock for free). In contrast to *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, Morton's *Stonewash* takes a more explicit approach to the framing of the shop as a method of display, though the use of branding that perhaps attends more fully to an inescapable commercial context generated by the facade of the shopfront, and the social context of the shop as a signifier of commerce, thus a marked signifier of life and habitation. In the context of *Stonewash* this signifier is set against a reality of the site as a (commercially) lifeless and abandoned ruin, redolent of Smithson's

¹⁹⁷ Paton, K. (2010). *Free Store*.

Passaic.¹⁹⁸ In the re/enactment of a fragment of western consumerism tenuously holding on to life in a ruined world (through the use of facade), Morton's *Stonewash* might be considered to joke at the expense of gentrification, poking fun at the capabilities of art as a gentrifying influence, or art as a commodity. Or perhaps on the other pole, as a kind of quasi-futurism, the facade of *Stonewash* functions as a latent suggestion of things to come. The facade promises an imminent revitalisation of site by an influx of consumers. But, like the interior of the building that is screened by the facade, the promise of revitalisation via gentrification collapses for the would-be consumers that would inject life and vitality *as* currency (in exchange for material possessions) as they would encounter only repackaged and slightly dressed-up ruin. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*'s engagement with the shop site when placed in direct comparison to *Stonewash* is more limited to the architectural features, although as discussed it is influenced by the site as a general location. In contrast, *Stonewash* heavily invests in the surrounding context, drawing its title from a type of denim—creating a sort of visual pun to play off (a space that is 'stonewashed')—and forging a contrast or rupture between commercial systems of fashion that focus on desire and beauty and the ruin that the Levis shop acts as facade for.

Like *Stonewash*, the Ozlyn shopfront is exploited as a pictorial mechanism for framing viewer experience. Due to the dimensions of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, the spectator was forced 'outside' the designated space of the gallery. This locates the spectatorial structural position at an extreme exteriority to the work. But, like *The Ambassadors*, relations are problematised. Like the exhibition space as vitrine, the status of the canvas as a discrete container is called into question. In the case of Holbein's work, intertextual and extratextual relationships operate as a looming weight, undermining the totality of the painting. In addition, the spectator is repositioned as a body (and a site) that is 'external' yet bound to the picture plane. Although for much of its exhibition the Ozlyn

¹⁹⁸ Smithson, R. (1967) *A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic*. in J. Flam (Ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (68–74). Berkley: University of California Press.



Morton, C. (2009). *Monument #25: Grotto*. [public sculpture]. Tilburg.

space was inaccessible to viewers, and the external ‘through-the-glass’ experience was the most likely mode of encounter, the potentiality for occupying 1 to 1 space surpasses the construction of the illusionary perspectival space of the painting.

A separate work by Morton touches on similar territory to the movement suggested in *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*. *Monument #25: Grotto*¹⁹⁹ is a mirror-glass monolithic building during the day, but at night is internally lit to reveal what could be interpreted as a modelled rock-face or some kind of slightly abbreviated boulder with the bottom and the top knocked off. This ‘geological formation’ occupies the interior space of the former building, that with the lights flicked on is now something else entirely. With the tinted-mirror effect dispelled, the structure pulses between a gigantic model vitrine or a 1:1 exhibition space. Although far larger in scale than the body of the spectator, the content of the vitrine—the rock/boulder/mountain—is strangely indeterminate, as there is a lack of clarity about whether the work occupies the space of the rescaled miniature like many of Morton’s other models, or the 1:1 scale of the

¹⁹⁹

Morton, C. (2009). *Monument #25: Grotto*. [public sculpture]. Tilburg.

everyday, or the upscaled gigantic. *Monument #25: Grotto* complicates habitability/inhabitability paradigms by employing a design where the interior of the model can be occupied by spectators—the model semi-functions as a pavilion. In this regard, *Monument #25: Grotto* operates in contrast to Morton's other models, *Hotel* being a prime example.²⁰⁰ *Hotel*, by title and by virtue of what it depicts, signifies the ability to occupy, yet due to rescaling away from 1:1 scale closes that vacancy, making physical habitation an impossibility (although operating at the point where it *just* may be a possibility). The grotto of *Monument #25: Grotto* is where the spectator is able to inhabit this model, signalled by benches and chairs (that mirror those located outside the structure) and a small bar-like area for the preparation and delivery of food. Although the furniture inside the grotto is slick and evocative of modern design trends, the inside of the grotto is redolent of a cheesiness often attributed to theme parks or tourist destination gift shops.²⁰¹ If read against the significance of the monument as marker in time, this gift-shop is devoid of memorabilia, and the cheesiness stands in the face of *Monument #25: Grotto*'s status as a high-end commissioned artwork, a symbol of gentrified space, whose utility as a pavilion (beyond that as a work of art) would be largely occupied with bourgeois activity. There are probably no cheeseburgers on the menu at this attraction, and if there are they are probably 'sliders'.²⁰²

Within a framework made apparent in *Monument #25: Grotto*, *Stonewash*, and *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, the ability to inhabit is forever played off against a pictorial sensibility that in some ways resists habitation. When a spectator's body inhabits this space, and when viewed by an 'external' spectator, the pictorial is destroyed, the live body has no place in the pictorial. In viewing *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013*

²⁰⁰ Morton, C. (2008). *Hotel*. [public sculpture]. Melbourne.

²⁰¹ A high-end version of the slightly weird or eccentric guy who built something equally weird or eccentric and it's now a slightly kitsch tourist attraction. An example might be the gift-shop at the amusement park Rainbow's End, located in Manukau. The gift shop is inset into a fake mountain rock face, holding theme with the nearby fake mine shafts of the 'Gold Rush' amusement ride.

²⁰² The slider is a rescaled burger.

(LOW ORBIT ION CANNON) from the street, a question is posed as to whether a spectator might imagine themselves within the gallery space viewing the miniature, or past that, into the interior of miniature landscape itself.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #3:

Miniature Diorama

—*Miniature:*

The miniature diorama and its support structure conflates encounter. In this context, the device of the miniature articulates a ‘miniaturised’ space that foregrounds a series of spatio-temporal relations that will be discussed in this section. As noted a number of times, the deployment of the miniature was initially arbitrary and utilitarian. While fitting quite clearly into a long and established lineage of the marquette in visual arts, an initial intention was for the miniature diorama to operate solely as a diagrammatic tool for planning that audiences might never see. But plans and intentions change over time. Illustrated by many works of *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, the miniature diorama is an important studio method that is deployed at regular intervals in the project. However, the miniature diorama is only part of the story. Accompanying its trajectory through this project, the conjoined support structures that suspend and support the miniature dioramas have become significant, in many ways working to further facilitate, exaggerate, and mirror miniaturising operations.

This section will cover a variety of points relating to the project’s deployment of the miniature and the relevance of these methods to the discourse of contemporary art practice. Discussion will begin with the project’s employment of the miniature in regard to scale and key theorisations in regard to the writing on miniature scale by Susan Stewart. This will be approached in the way that the miniature commands space, so relates to previously elucidated discussions on the manner in which site is articulated; like the framing mechanism of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, or the multiplicity of *Shopfront*; general conceptions of space (such as installative space implicating the body of the spectator *in* the work); and processes of disambiguation—locative processes of divining meaning (or context) in the art encounter. Also examined is spectatorship in light of the miniature’s command of space, and particularly spectatorial responses relating to displacement, the notion of excess, (with mention of littoral zones), the ‘spectral’ presence of the maker’s body in the ‘after-

affects’²⁰³ of the miniature, and the notion of ‘island’ as a rupturing encounter. Discussion will also cover specific details relating to the content of the miniatures used in this project, particularly how these trouble traditional understandings of scale, space, and temporality.

An issue in approaching the miniature in visual arts is a general dearth of theory in this area. Scale is often approached as a given and most focus is placed upon large-scale works—the gigantic with the possibility of dwarfing envelopment.²⁰⁴ This is perhaps understandable because, as Susan Stewart writes: “We find the miniature at the origin of private, individual history, but we find the gigantic at the origin of public and natural history”.²⁰⁵ Stewart goes on to note the gigantic as holding a position as an interface between the natural and human.²⁰⁶ Deployments of the miniature, such as those by Chris Burden,²⁰⁷ the Chapman brothers,²⁰⁸ and Mariele Neudecker²⁰⁹ (and a recent series of large-scale miniature works by Anselm Kiefer)²¹⁰ map some usages of the device. In terms of literature surrounding the miniature, as signalled, Stewart’s treatise, although primarily located in literary theory stands out.²¹¹ Bachelard’s chapter on the miniature is also of note, although the focus is primarily on the site of the miniature as a psychological or interiorised space.²¹² In many cases, the miniature as a

²⁰³ See Schneider, S. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 13

²⁰⁴ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 138.

²⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 138.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Although not a key focus of this exegesis, the work of Chris Burden, particularly visible in recent years, features extensive use of the miniature as a device. See Burden, C. (2011). *Metropolis II*. [installation]. Los Angeles: LACMA.

²⁰⁸ See Chapman, D. & Chapman, J. (2008). *Fucking Hell*.

²⁰⁹ See Neudecker, M. (1998) *I Don’t Know how I Resisted the Urge to Run*.

²¹⁰ See Kiefer, A (2011-2014). *Velimir Khlebnikov: Fates of Nations: The New Theory of War. Time, Dimension of the World, Battles at Sea Occur Every 317 Years or Multiples Thereof, Namely 317 x 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*, [installation]. London: Royal Academy of Arts.

²¹¹ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

²¹² See Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press.



Burden, C. (2011). *Metropolis II*. [installation]. Los Angeles: LACMA



Kiefer, A (2011-2014). *Velimir Khlebnikov: Fates of Nations: The New Theory of War. Time, Dimension of the World, Battles at Sea Occur Every 317 Years or Multiples Thereof, Namely 317 x 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*. [installation]. London: Royal Academy of Arts.

device is taken as a given, relegated to mechanical observations, or bypassed to focus on the assumed transcendent or interior states that the miniature might offer.²¹³ Thus the miniature becomes a transitional state to get on to something more interesting. Some of this is understandable from a critical perspective. The miniature is often employed in a gimmicky fashion, such as the ‘shock’ value contained in the Chapman’s *Fucking Hell* where the device of rescaling works to partially recuperate the obscenities contained within. In addition, the operations of the miniature may also be occluded by a focus on laborious virtuosity or complexity.²¹⁴

—Above:

Occupying an outlying position on an axis of scale, the ‘miniature’ is a deviation away from the ‘lived’ 1 to 1 scale of the everyday reality. As stated by Stewart, the world of the miniature might be understood as an interface to interior states, whereas the gigantic—the larger than life—might be conversely considered the interface to the outside environment, particularly nature.²¹⁵ The status of miniature does not *just* mean a thing is small. ‘Small’ signifies a comparative differentiation in dimensions between things. The subtle difference in usage between ‘small’ and ‘miniature’ is that the miniature implies a rescaling, a more particularised operation in relation to something else. In this way the miniature presupposes the existence of something *bigger*. A miniature landscape presupposes a landscape just as a miniature house presupposes the *larger* house. So what is set up is a sort of double banger, not *just* representation, but a representation operating at an extra level of displacement.

²¹³ This is of note in many texts on the work of Mariele Neudecker. For an example see Daniel-McElroy, S., & Neudecker, M., & Young, D. (2004). *Mariele Neudecker*. St Ives: Tate St Ives.

²¹⁴ Here I refer to Stewart’s views on the reception of the miniature that will be part of a forthcoming discussion. In addition, informing this thinking are many articles on the miniature works of Chris Burden and the Chapmans’ where an extensive focus is on the miniature diorama as a work of labour. An example might be the foregrounding of complexity or labour; the number of figures in the Chapmans’ work (30,000), or the number of assistants; or in the case of Burden, the number of years to get the engineering just right, or the amount of miniature cars (100,000).

²¹⁵ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 138.

Beyond the displacement of rescaling, the miniature may also operate as an often flawed or partial version of a larger referent to which it is aligned. In the case of most miniatures, attributed statuses of partiality, or of spurious sufficiency are in many ways justified.²¹⁶ In this regard, the miniature as depiction is excessive in the sense that, as representation it does not have to work like its real counterpart, only look like it, judged on a capacity to counterfeit the referent. But, operating in some contrast to other forms (like the traditionally conceived painting) that assert an unequivocal difference as they are representations that do not seek to occupy the space of bodily habitation, the right type of miniature, retains a sort of excess persuasiveness as representation. The miniature might be considered to double down on the partiality of the representation in some ways, while retaining some covert proximity to its referent—the miniature seeming to operate in excess when accounting for what should be definitive assertions of insufficiency. In the miniature, reductions in size are often accompanied by corresponding reductions in function with regards to the ‘real’ referent. So not only is the miniature dimensionally partial in terms of representation, but is also partial in terms of function. To be miniature is to not only contend with utilitarian disdain, the reduction in scale is also seen as indicative of a tendency in the miniature for whimsy, ornamentation, or even worse, reverie—anathema to utilitarian assumptions that code these qualities inferior. This kind of approach to the miniature can be read in the context of historic cultural understandings that have coded entities such as theatre *and* reverie as feminine due to their perceived ‘second-order’ partialness²¹⁷ (held against the complete ‘authentic’ and active (or present) as masculine). In this respect the miniature can also be considered to be gendered for many of the same reasons, particularly when we consider language that often accompanies the miniature: twee, quaint, whimsical, dainty, fragile.

²¹⁶ Here I am thinking of how the miniature is often approached and understood through the frame of the toy—an object of play, or of whimsy, not of serious lived life. An example might be the usage of miniatures in comedy. Putting to the side phallic innuendo, think of movies where a very small gun becomes a subject of ridicule.

²¹⁷ See Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 61.

However, for all the apparent partiality inherent in the miniature as an often poorly executed and poorly performing reproduction in a mechanical sense (it can't work like the real thing but tries to act like it), in the act rescaling from 1 to 1 to whatever smaller ratio the miniature might take, a compensatory and perhaps counterintuitive increase in significance often occurs. This is an expansion that accompanies the miniature's turn away from the everyday. A reduction in scale is always of note in some way. It is different and this rupture in normality draws attention. But, in the significance that the miniature often interiorises, deeper or more complex operations seem to be occurring. To briefly look at a number of precedents, and to draw anecdotally from reactions to artworks produced by this project, it becomes clear that often, an excess of significance is drawn from the miniature by spectators. This excess can be linked to commonly held assumptions and expectations of a level of additional craftsmanship, technical skill, or labour required to produce something in miniature. In many examples of the miniature, taken broadly from visual art, the attention is almost entirely upon the labour and skill required to achieve a miniaturisation.²¹⁸ In the case of the 'micro-sculpture' of Willard Wigan, a mythology surrounds his working method, where the artist in a meditative state slows his heart rate enough to construct the work between heartbeats.²¹⁹ In this context, Susan Stewart recounts the miniaturised books, worn as ornamentation, with script rendered in minute detail. The books are technically functional, but generally require an enlarging lens to read.²²⁰ The execution of these books (although often mechanised), was carried out by an expert craftsman who could render that tiny script accurately. In a similar way, New Zealand artist John Ward-Knox is noted for producing detailed renderings and portraiture on substrates that might

²¹⁸ Here I am thinking of the wealth virally distributed images, particularly those dealing with a convergence of everyday material contrasted with a miniaturised figure, many operating outside the critical focus of contemporary art, but nonetheless influential in the broader interpretation of the miniature. A brief google search of "miniature art" will provide a wealth of examples to illustrate this trend.

²¹⁹ See Wigan, W. (n.d). *About Willard Wigan MBE*. Retrieved from <http://www.willard-wigan.com>

²²⁰ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.



Ward-Knox, J. (n.d) *Ballpoint pen drawings on paper*. [drawing]. Auckland.

be the size of a small stamp.²²¹ Highlighted in these examples is the mark of gesture miniaturised and the perceived additional labour required to perform these renderings. What might be possible, following this tradition (illustrated by Stewart and perpetuated by virtuosity demonstrated by works like those of Wigan and Ward-Knox) is a cultural contamination of the miniature. Here, just as site-specificity may have been shorthand for a 'good project',²²² the miniature, particularly those that rely on hand production, can transmit as shorthand for some type of virtuosity, or at the very least a type of laborious commitment that *should* be commendable. To make miniature is to enact an extra-ordinary method for the production of an extra-ordinary object. Also, as the miniature might be considered whimsical, demonstrations of complexity or virtuosity might work towards ameliorating a cultural void left by a disavowal of utility or function, even when that virtuosity (although subjective) might not be present. To miniaturise is to

²²¹ For an example see the 'Biro' drawings of John Ward Knox. See Ward-Knox, J. (n.d) *Ballpoint pen drawings on paper*. Retrieved from <http://www.johnwardknox.com/drawing/byro/>

²²² Kwon, M. (2004). *One Place After Another*. This idea has been previously discussed in the section of this exegesis dealing with 'site'. The compression of shorthand is significant to the miniature, as the miniature itself might be considered a form of shorthand.

often render useless, to remove utility is excessive, but, a perceived display of virtuosity or skill (as a demonstrative act) could authorise what might be previously considered an act of wasteful expenditure or whimsy: a recuperation through a shifting of focus from the object to the act of production. This relationship shares much with broader considerations of visual arts, particularly in internal dialogues that contest what role art should have, and in what terms it should justify itself.²²³ In a work like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, there is not so much a traditional display of skill or virtuosity, as there is persistence (and some precision) in performing a repetitive action a large number of times. A degree of ‘hokeyness’ is embraced in the miniature diorama of this project, from the use of basic materials, to the strands of adhesive that stretch between surrogate trees. Additionally, there is an exaggerated sense of the handmade—an excessive ‘spectral’ presence of the maker’s body that is reiterated over and over in the miniature diorama of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*.

Problematically, the term miniature intersects with a number of other terms, contributing to a contamination of the perceptions and understandings of the miniature. As elucidated in the operational play of the *pylon/point-de-caption*, these assemblages become methods of structuring the ideological field emitted in the art encounter, working to distribute ‘meaning’ and understandings in a manner consistent across the field—providing some semblance of ‘unity’. Following the initial plotting of this field by these proximate entities (that until then) were hovering in proximate immediacy, *other* contiguous, and accompanying key signifiers are also deployed to plot the ideological field that disseminates meaning and

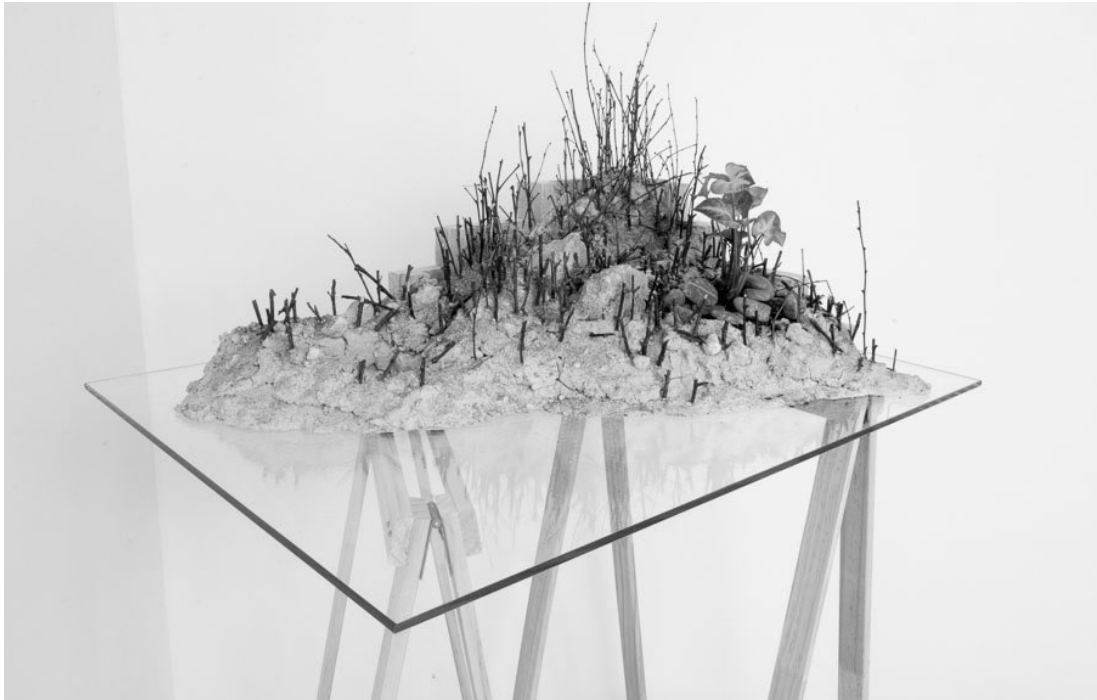
²²³ See Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*. p. 34. As discussed, in a section titled *Creativity and Cultural Policy*, Bishop outlines the development of an influential political logic where a question was asked of “what the arts could do for society?”. Bishop considers artistic production influenced by this agenda as more focused upon social goals, and less so upon artistic experimentation.

Also in a wider sense, there remains pervasive belief among the general population relating to visual art, where art should be a display of virtuosity. Vitriolic responses to the finalists of many major art prizes highlight the divergent attitudes held by the wider public, operating in contrast to what might be considered ‘critical’ approaches to contemporary art. A local example might be the public response to Dane Mitchell’s *Collateral*—a work that consolidated the packaging of art competition entrants into a work that was in turn entered into, and won the Waikato Trust Contemporary Art Award. See Holloway, B (2009, September 8). *Waikato art award winner just rubbish - artists*. Also See Mitchell, D. (2009). *Collateral* [sculpture]. Hamilton: Waikato Museum.

understanding—in the case of the miniature and its accompanying terms these operations are no different. As has been touched on a number of times, the initial usage of the miniature in this project was as preparatory model. Over a course of development, these models slid into becoming a *thing-in-themselves*. This is not exceptional as the miniature enjoys extensive usage as scale model, study, or as maquette. When operating as ‘presented’ artwork, the maquette *as model as miniature* occupies a status as both originary and preliminary. This lack attributes the model with a degree of inauthenticity, setting up a hypocritical schema that counterintuitively chafes against a sense of *authenticity*. In this context, to employ the word ‘model’ is to engage an exceptionally loaded term, particularly within the context of contemporary art; the model as a propositional diagram, or an idealised example, reinforced by verb usages such as *to model*; as appearing 3 dimensional; or as malleable fashioning. In relation to the miniature, perhaps more so than any other contiguous term, this ‘lineage’ or ‘baggage’ of the model works to contaminate the miniature with many of the (mostly temporal) qualities that are ascribed to the model. Due to their proximity, and frequent co-deployment—the two terms (model and miniature) are often employed interchangeably with little thought for accuracy, leading to an inevitable entanglement.²²⁴ This entanglement inadvertently charges the miniature with certain temporal and functional characteristics normally attributed to the model (and perhaps its idealism). In this, the miniature does not only continuously reference a referent that may (or may not) exist in space, but a propositional entity. Like Auslander’s ‘precluding supplement’,²²⁵ it speculatively sets out a continuous and persuasive referencing of an entity that may or may not exist in time. This is touched on by Stewart who notes that even if the miniature is fantastic, it must align in

²²⁴ This contiguity openly accesses semiotic theorisations, particularly Derridean ideas of trace. See translators preface to Derrida, J. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. p. xiv

²²⁵ Precluding supplement is an elaboration of Auslander’s concept of a form of performance documentation “perceiving the document itself as a performance that directly reflects an artist’s aesthetic project or sensibility and for which we are the present audience.” See Auslander, P. (2006). “The Performativity of Performance Documentation.”. Also see discussion in this section of the exegesis in relation to Schneider’s elucidation of excess.



Cribb, A. (2013). *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)*. [installation]. Hamilton: Ramp. (Documentation taken by RAMP Gallery)

some way to an everyday referent.²²⁶ Accordingly, concepts of the miniature are influenced by habituated understandings and interpretations of a temporal gesture that points away from itself.

LIST OF FUNCTIONAL MINIATURES

- Miniature railway - tourism potential, entertainment, pleasure
- Callum Morton's pavilion
- Architectural model - planning, material visualisation for clients
- Scale engineering model - fluid dynamics stress test, Richard Branson space ship
- Model etc
- War model - planning a battle
- Warhammer landscape - having a battle
- Artwork - Creative industry, intellectual titillation

When the model is deployed in or as artwork, a tension plays out where the artwork might be considered both present and absent, perhaps entering into the territory of a discussion often located in performance studies on the

²²⁶ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. On alignment Stewart writes: "The field of representation in the depiction of the miniature is set up by means of a method of using either implicit or explicit simile. Each fictive sign is aligned to a sign from the physical world in a gesture which makes the fictive sign both remarkable and realistic." p. 60.

ontological relationship between the live performance and its documentation.²²⁷ The model could be understood to internalise that tension: the model and the ‘finished’ artwork as a kind of documentation in reverse.

A sculptural fragment of *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)* was a domestically sized miniature diorama placed in the corner of the gallery space. The diorama sat on a glass table, suspended by 2 slender wooden trestles. A single knotted length of rope interwove both trestles, finishing with a knot that sealed a provisional terrarium constructed from a plastic bag, with plants, rocks, and an unscrewed PUMP™ still water bottle as a provisional type of hydration device/reservoir for the slowly failing ecosystem. When held in direct comparison with the diorama that rested above, the poor-man’s-terrarium functioned as a sort of lush subterranean miniature. The ‘main’ miniature diorama, unequivocal in this primacy due to emplacement on the glass table, was a barren scape, constructed of clay, rocks, and concrete, festooned with broken sticks and twigs that masqueraded as trees and tree stumps. Abridging this diorama was a retaining wall constructed from small lengths of pine, the dimensions of this structural feature evoked a fairly identifiable sense of rescaling, in that the spectator may not have a exact indication of the dioramic scale, but had enough information to approximate scale relations. In this context, reinforcing previously discussed points on the cultural assumptions about the ‘labour’ of the miniature, Stewart writes:

the miniature object represents an antithetical mode of production: production by the hand, a production that is unique and authentic. Today we find the miniature located at a place of origin (the childhood of the self, or even the advertising scheme whereby a miniature of a company’s first plant or a miniature of a company’s earliest product is put on display in a window or lobby).²²⁸

²²⁷ For a general outline and historicisation of the relationship between the live event and its documentation, see Auslander, P. (2006). “The Performativity of Performance Documentation.”.

²²⁸ Stewart, Susan. (1984) *On Longing*. pp. 81–82.

Following Stewart, *BLOCKS (XX/XX/XXXX)* provokes a conflicting temporal gesture exaggerated by the model. Occurring in these relations is a complicating of conventionally assumed, but still contingent hierarchies, that assign primacy to the first or ‘that which comes before’ as authentic, set against the status of model as preparatory. Here the assignation of primacy often operates by shorthand, or, as reflex informed by repetition, perhaps also attributable to the ‘restored behaviours’ posited by Richard Schechner.²²⁹ Specifically, and put in the context of the model/miniature, the ‘spontaneous’ primary is set against the ‘originary’, with the mode of production (by hand) heightening this perception. In this context the ‘handmade’ holds a proximity to *something* originary or an originary *presence*—a kind of originary gesture in making—referencing the established tropes set out by nature/culture binaries and their analogues. This is a significant part of my project as I explore the ‘spectral’ presence of the artist’s body through iterative installation practices that use the miniature as a key studio method.

In a work like Mariele Neudecker’s *I Don’t Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*,²³⁰ (a vitrine containing a miniature submerged forest that will be approached with greater focus later in this section), the status of the miniature as asserting an ‘origin’ (that narrative structures within the miniature then occupy), operates in concert with methods of representation that also seek to temporally locate the miniature by other means. In the case of Neudecker, and arguably like the landscape of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, this occurs by tapping into a series of culturally transmitted and interpreted qualities that are attributed to ‘the forest’ or ‘the woods’.²³¹ Suggested as primordial or *base*, a conspicuous absence in markers of civilisation reinforce this landscape as closer to nature (also accessing culturally established nature/culture paradigms). In a similar vein to Neudecker’s vitrine, Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller’s *The Dark*

²²⁹ Schechner, R. (2013). *What is Performance?*.

²³⁰ Neudecker, M. (1998). *I Don’t Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*.

²³¹ Such a observation is echoed in Daniel-McElroy, S., et al. (2004). *Mariele Neudecker*. and also by Gaston Bachelard in Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*.



Duchamp, M. (1935-41). *Boîte-en-valise (de ou par Marcel Duchamp ou Rose Splaney)*. [sculpture]. New York: MOMA.

Pool,²³² a rambling collection of nostalgic bric-o-brac arranged into an installation, features a miniature landscape (with the aforementioned dark pool) contained within a old forlorn suitcase functioning as a vitrine analogue. Within an art-making context, the case as vitrine for the artwork employed by Miller and Cardiff somewhat unavoidably draws out the peripatetic lineage set out by Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise*: each of which contained a practice laid out in easily deployable miniature.²³³ Within the field of Cardiff's and Miller's vitrine, miniature figures of the variety used in model train set or architectural scale model, look outwards on to the dark pool, with a representation of parked cars and a small cabin in close proximity. Although not 'primordially' aspected in the same way as *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, or *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*, a kind of anticipatory quasi-primordial urge, or perhaps more accurately, *archetypal* threat occupies the work, encapsulated in occluding depth of the dark pool. Here, the archetype plays

²³² Cardiff, J., & Bures Miller, G. (1995). *The Dark Pool*.

²³³ See Duchamp, M. (1935-41). *Boîte-en-valise (de ou par Marcel Duchamp ou Rose Splaney)* [sculpture]. New York: MOMA.



Cardiff, J., & Bures Miller, G. (1995). *The Dark Pool*. [installation].
Vancouver: Western Front.



Neudecker, M. (1998). *I Don't Know how I Resisted the Urge to Run*.
[sculpture]. London: Tate Britain.

off the temporally ‘suspended’ and historically locative feel that the forlorn materials employed in the installation provoke. In contrast, a narrative dimension in the miniature *mise-en-scène* lends the work a sense of some *thing* or some *act* ‘playing out’, running counter to any ‘suspension’ or ‘stasis’ provoked by the remainder of the installation. In miniature dioramas of this variety, apparent stasis is counterbalanced by an affective loading. This holds a latent potential similar to how we might perceive the imminence of a coiled spring. This imminence grants the miniature (like *The Dark Pool*, like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, and like *I Don’t Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*), a kind of charged action belying the fixed and static forms held within the tableau. In this way, the miniature diorama might be understood to become charged with a liveness in a similar manner to the suspended bodies of the tableaux vivant: the notability of this tableau drawn from an appreciation of a well represented scene, but also, the potentiality of a body’s action held in check. Here bodily capacity is temporarily suspended, and charged all the more for its restraint, which Schneider, relating the tableaux vivant to a 1987 performance by Claudia Bruce, notes as a “performed negotiation between living stills (tableaux vivants) in a tangled articulation of what it means to be still living, living after (re)construction.”²³⁴ Although the latent potentiality of the miniature diorama is arguably indulged to a great extent by a spectator, what becomes interesting in terms of the miniature, and as identified by Stewart in the previously quoted passage (and made use of extensively within *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*), is the means (within the miniature) for a series of syncopated temporal movements to occur (often simultaneously), relating to how a miniature *mise-en-scène* is perceived (anticipatory, primordial, archetypal, originary, imminent, before, after, preliminary et al). Also significant, is the temporality or *tempo* at which artworks are encountered, and how the miniature might move to affect the

²³⁴ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 125.

experience of tempo, or the tempo at which art is received.²³⁵ This syncopation might be observed in either *The Dark Pool*, 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*), or *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*. In these works the apparent 'frozen moment' of the miniature as tableau might play out against a volatile unfolding of that stasis, and of any further narrative dimensions: the immediacy attributed to a scene drawn together in tableau, and the unpredictable temporal peripateticism of spectator driven reveries. In this, the miniature might perform in excess of traditionally held assumptions and expectations regarding its ability to modulate spectatorial encounter beyond mere optics.

—(Content):

The 'content' of the miniature might be considered to 'draw out' non-normative temporal states. 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) tends toward the mountainous or alpine, interspersed with broken ground, gullies, and inky dark ponds. Clean fill, clays and soils of differing textures, concrete, rocks, river stones, asphalt, metal, and sands were used in the construction of the terrain. Twigs, sticks, and branches provided detail: depicting trees, tree stumps, and forests. Cast concrete monoliths dotted throughout the landscape chart an ambiguity between man-made and naturally occurring geological formations. As stated, pools of glassy black liquid punctuated the landscape, simultaneously functioning as recessionary void and reflective surface that at once looks inwards and outwards. 14/09/2013 – XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) was described by spectators as like 'Mordor', like *Stalker*, like *The Road*: primordial, post-apocalyptic, geologically ravaged, entropic. In this way 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) is mediated by nonspecific generalities produced by instantaneous archetypal invocation, particularly in relation to depictions of 'the end' in fictive media like cinema.

²³⁵ For the close reader, It is worth signalling here that a conception of spectator reception is drawn in part from Katie Mondloch's elucidation of 'window shopping' in relation to the artistic employment of the screen. See Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.



Tarkovsky, A. (1979). *Stalker*. [film]. Moscow: Mosfilm.

An application of what might be seen as cinematic trope assists a timeliness temporality in the miniature diorama. These primordial and eschatological frameworks create littoral zones²³⁶ between beginnings and ends.

Speculatively, working in concert with end-time tropes, are non-specific 'primordial' anxieties as previously related in the contexts of *Dark Pool*, and *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*. Arguably encapsulated in these depictions are culturally ensconced myths exaggerated by isolation and absence (the forest, the cabin in the woods, the urban legend, fear of the unseen). Here, 'absent' or uninhabited space allows for a 'playing-out', or projection, of this drama into the ostensibly 'empty' site. As sites, these miniature dioramas are recoded as spaces for action—thus bodily sites—spaces for a specifically unspecific event to occur: the drawing out of a temporal no-man's-land set between the event as imminent and the event as

²³⁶ See Barber, B.(2013). *Littoral Art and Communicative Action*. Champagne: Common Ground Publishing. p. x. The littoral zone is a name for the intertidal zone between sea and land. This term 'littoral' in an art context largely stems from artist and theorist Bruce Barber, who uses the term littoral art to "characterise works that are undertaken predominantly outside of the conventional contexts of the institutionalized art world.". This project uses an expanded notion of the littoral as a method for modelling zones of exchange that might occur in a variety of contexts, both within and outside the art work. The term littoral is also referenced by Bishop as one of the variety of names that has been bestowed upon participatory and collaborative art. See Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*. p. 7.

just missed.²³⁷ In addition, this type of drama is exemplified in historical portrayals in art (the mountain as a suitably picturesque background),²³⁸ and in as place of intrigue and adventure in literature.²³⁹ Also in ‘actuality’, as anyone who tramps knows, the wilderness is often an inhospitable and potentially dangerous environment. Following this thread, mountainous regions often operate in contrast to areas of large-scale human habitation, commonly taking place on plains due to the requirements of agriculture. Or otherwise, habitation might take place near coastlines or waterways due to the requirements of trade and transport. Within this context mountainous terrain is often located on the fringes of civilisation or at its border, as a space for hermits, hunters, outcasts, or adventurers, so much so that it becomes a trope of absence or of isolation. It is in this way, that heterotopias (like the maunga) reproduced in the image of the tableau, are pinioned with a series of assemblages that look to snare the spectator, exploiting an accumulated and habituated expectation of action and events that accompany signs.²⁴⁰

As indicated in the Introduction, *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* deploys natural debris like soils, sands, sticks, twigs and rocks. Like the genealogy of the miniature in this project, the selection of materials was initially informed by utilitarian considerations. Miniatures constructed were intended to be provisional diagrams that would not emerge as artworks. In that preparatory and provisional spirit, natural materials were sourced due to their economy: they were cheap or free, common, readily available, always close by. In their selection, any deficiencies as to their ability in accurately representing a referent were counterbalanced by the provisionality of the

²³⁷ Such a status accesses Schneider’s elaboration of excess. See discussion of excess later in this exegesis, or otherwise: Schneider, R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*.

²³⁸ See the romantic landscapes of artists such as J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851).

²³⁹ Here anything from Tolkien to pulpy adventure novels might suffice as a pertinent example of this phenomena.

²⁴⁰ See Stewart. S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 84. It is interesting to note a point raised by Stewart on the gigantic as a interface for a relationship between body and the environment, Stewart noting how many understandings of the landscape are anthropocentric in nature: the mouth of a river, foot-hills, heartlands etc.

miniature diorama, and constantly reinforced by their rock-bottom material cost. Initially unforeseen, was the efficacy of these materials in evoking a sense of their full-scale counterparts. In this context ‘being true to the materials’ worked to lend these depictions a certain persuasiveness, that although studied and riddled with inconsistencies, might in some ways be perceived as informed by nature thus authorised as *more* natural.

In the initial scenes represented in diorama the ‘real site’ was undetermined as it had not been scouted, so the ‘site represented’ was necessarily archetypal in many respects, existing as a fabrication of a site as desired. In this way, the site might be considered mythic or even ahistoric, in occupying a timelessness, an unclear temporal location normally defined in terms of ‘in the beginning’, ‘a long time ago’, ‘never never’, or ‘once upon a time’. Like Foucault’s examples of *heterotopias* (brothels, prisons, colonies, graveyards), and like the maunga, the spaces where the initial ‘mock-rituals’ occur are framed as *other* in a repositioning displacement provoked by their potential usage—by the activation of that space in a reasonably specific manner—as places where actions that are outside, yet compensatory to societal norms might occur.

—*Spoor and Ostensible Absence:*

As the depiction of ruined, entropic, or ‘playing-dead’ landscape developed as a device, a kind of latent potentiality in ‘the ruin’ was observed (a ruin as a trace of something that happened). In this sense the ruin presented as a place of action, a charged space with a sense of imminent ‘liveness’. In an effort to enhance this perceived sense of liveness, methods of depiction receded back to more ambiguous markers of site: spoor; the subtle indications of a track (the type that trappers often find themselves lost by following); broken branches and trees as representations of stumps, or on mass as cleared tracks of trees; rock cairns as subtle deviations of the natural order; ambiguously presented ‘unnatural’ clearings as points of focus in comparison to strewn ‘boulders’ or other forested areas. This conflation of relations load these scenes with an additional liveness, potentially operating

in excess of how a ‘static’ miniature should behave.²⁴¹ These narratives can be ambiguous and transient, allowing increased speculation on behalf of a spectator, or a formlessness that runs counter to our lived reality that we might perceive as more of a gradual progression—the arrow of time, or the sequential line of narrative (or of history). However, as outlined, such absence is only ostensible. Although dioramic spaces like the landscape of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, (and their non-specific referents that exist in actuality) are seemingly uninhabited in a strictly visual sense, these spaces are nonetheless loaded with the accumulated relics of civilisation in thrall with the quilting methodology of the *point-de-caption* as a regulating structure. Thus experience of the dioramic depiction *and* its referent are unavoidably mediated by a spectral habitation.²⁴²

—*Sticks and Stones:*

Conflated with a liveness that responds to a ‘narrative’ incarnated by a spectator, the metonymic qualities of dirt, twigs and stones, as ‘parts’, present a persuasiveness belying their apparent lack of accuracy. Observed in the earlier models, and informing continued usage of key materials beyond the initial lure of economic attraction, was a capacity that these naturally sourced part-objects had in effectively evoking their ‘whole’ counterparts. Like macro characteristics of the miniature diorama, this occurred to an extent that appeared to be in excess of their quantifiable success as representations—in a very literal analysis they are poorly executed copies. When held in comparison to more expertly modelled trees that may be found

²⁴¹ See prior employments in this exegesis of Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. Here, a key aspect of the miniature is related to be static and frozen, Stewart writing: “The miniature offers a world clearly limited in space but frozen and thereby both particularized and generalized in time—particularized in that the miniature concentrates upon the single instance and not upon the abstract rule, but generalized in that that instance comes to transcend, to stand for, a spectrum of other instances. The miniature offers the closure of the tableau, a spatial closure which opens up the vocalicity of the signs it displays.” p. 62.

²⁴² The usage of ‘spectral’ draws from Žižek’s use of spectral supplement, the aspect of the real that cannot be covered by symbolisation. In this project the spectral apparition is used in relation to the excess of the miniature and of course the excess of encounter. See Žižek, S. (Ed.) (1994). *Mapping Ideology*. p. 21.

in artworks like the Chapman Brother's *Fucking Hell* or sunken forest of Neudecker's *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*, the trees of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* are found wanting in details in accuracy, they seem like crude copies. They are broken twigs and sticks driven into dirt that do not possess the detail of the Chapmans' sculpture nor the technical artistry of Neudecker's, in contrast to these exemplars, the sticks in the stick forest of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* do not look like trees. However, in spite that lack of precision they *act* like trees, they *feel* like trees, and they *were* trees. In short, a conflation occurs where an accumulation of information in certain points ameliorates a lack in others. The overall *affect* is a *potential* persuasiveness that operates in excess to what might be expected. As will be discussed, Schneider's elaboration on Brennan's transmission of affect couches such a potential as an 'accessing' of inaccessible states.²⁴³

—A Fragmentary Note on Excess:

As a means of discussing the 'access' of inaccessible states, Rebecca Schneider makes use of Nam Jun Paik's performance *Zen for Head*²⁴⁴ as a vehicle for articulating operations of excess in regard to the performance document and the spectating of this document. From Schneider's perspective, the performance document draws out a state of a 'performance as missed', where the spectator becomes witness to their own missing of the event.²⁴⁵ *Zen for Head* (as a performance event and a relic) consisted of Paik's head and hands, partially submerged in ink, pushed along a sheet of paper creating a mark corresponding to the prone passage of the body. The relic produced in the performance was framed for subsequent spectating by those *not* present to the live performance. Here the relic operates as both

²⁴³ See Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. pp. 69–70. Also see Brennan, T. (2004). *The Transmission of Affect*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

²⁴⁴ Paik, N, J. (1961). *Zen for head*. [Performance]. Cologne.

²⁴⁵ Schneider, R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*. p. 42.



Paik, N, J. (1961). *Zen for head*. [Performance]. Cologne.



Klein, Y. (1960). *Leap Into The Void*. [Performance Document]. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

evidence that the performance happened²⁴⁶ and as access point (or portal) to the performance as missed.

In *Solo Solo Solo* Schneider notes that the document functions as a method for the ephemeral performance to be transmitted, as proof of its existence, but, conversely, as potential substitute or surrogate for the performance: an ‘enfeebling’, or a consumption of ‘liveness’ exchanged for endurance. Performance scholar Phillip Auslander goes as far as to suggest a radical contingency of an event subsumed by documentation: not the event as missed, but the event that occurs *only* in documentation. What Auslander posits is a ‘precluding’ supplement:

[The document] may not even depend on whether the event actually happened. It may well be that our sense of the presence, power, and authenticity of these pieces derives not from treating the document as an indexical access point to a past event but from perceiving the document itself as a performance that directly reflects an artist’s aesthetic project or sensibility and for which we are the present audience.²⁴⁷

The potential for ‘radical documentation’ as set up by Auslander becomes significant with regard to this project’s engagement of reverie and the charged event-space of the miniature diorama. The ‘fictive’ revelry that Auslander describes in accessing works like Yves Klein’s *Leap Into The Void*²⁴⁸ may not only operate as “indexical access point” to the *past* “event”, but as portals or thresholds for a propinquity of performance via art encounter.

Returning to more traditional conceptions of the supplement, notable in operations such as those apparent in *Zen for Head* are the contradictory exchanges where the performance authorises its documentation but the

²⁴⁶ Auslander, P. (2006). “The Performativity of Performance Documentation.” *PAJ: a Journal of Performance and Art* 28 (3). 1–10. Here Auslander provides a useful history of performance document, in addition to highlighting many of the issues at play in the performance document particularly in regard to the supplementarity of the document.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 85

²⁴⁸ Klein, Y. (1960). *Leap Into The Void*. [Performance Document]. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

documentation erodes the absolute authority of the originary event.

Schneider writes:

As an act, work such as *Zen for Head* seems to resist delimitation to frame and canvas, even though it produces a document in a frame that then gestures toward its own excess (ironically, it is the framed object that stands to testify that the act was “more” than the object). Such work also seems to require audience (it was seen that “that” is what the artist did). And yet, even as it necessitates an audience, the work results in a denial of audience by producing a document that will be exhibited as an indication that “you” (the viewer) were not present at the event – you missed the action contained by the frame but more than the frame. The paper, frame, and photo of the action all represent to the viewer that which the viewer missed – that which, standing before the document, you witness yourself missing again. And yet, in missing you are somehow more available to this “excess” of the object than you would be in a situation of “presence.” Missing it, you are available to hear it otherwise, through the retelling, the recitation of the document, and thus are “present” to it otherwise, in a mode of transmission – a re-enactment.²⁴⁹

In this sense, excess is positioned as more than required, or more than directly containable within the realms of the object. As a gesture towards what precedes the event of spectating—the *other event* that created the object—excess draws out a sense of space between *things*, analogous in its operation to the process of disambiguation that probes that interval. Like Foucault’s repositioning mirror,²⁵⁰ or Foster’s parallax,²⁵¹ excess, according to Schneider, might be considered as a threshold equally capable of provoking a repositioning. In soliciting spectating (as witness), a temporal repositioning occurs where a spectator is located not in terms of their presence, but in terms of their failure to be present, their prior absences. Following this thinking, excess can be understood to complicate presupposed spectatorial positions in relation to the encounter of the relic. Here *excess* might give name to a *heterotopic* no-man’s land—that which might be part of the work but not part of the work. The spectator is located in the zonal exchange between an instantiation of a structural position and seemingly

²⁴⁹ Schneider, R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*. p.42.

²⁵⁰ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces.”.

²⁵¹ Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real*.

incapable hyperextension, positioning both as ‘part-’ or ‘transitional’ objects presented within that extension.²⁵² In practice, Schneider’s description of works such as Paik’s, might demonstrate a potential model (or device) for art-making—the production of works that might expediently, in their own ‘content’, highlight or gesture towards their own slippages. Slippage is arguably an unavoidable aspect of all artworks, but works (like Paik’s) might not only exaggerate their own inability to contain or delimit, but like rescaling, locate the spectator in a referential flow between the here nor there, the here *and* there, and the here and now.

Excess is therefore a site of potential. Thus states of *missing* and of witnessing, of *auto-missing*, as described by Schneider, focus upon the contingency of underlying systems located within a state of temporal undecidability—a state where the spectator’s ability to locate themselves in relation to the temporality of the artwork as event is problematised. I will argue, across most modes of making that privilege the hand or body of the artist that the absent presence of the artist is always suggested to differing degrees of intensity. The relationship of the art as event as missed, and simultaneously, the ‘event’ deferred is not just limited to specific modalities such as ‘body art’, but are indicative of a performativity that operates across multiple modes of art-making. What is significant in regard to works in this project like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* and its employment of the miniature, is that the event as missed might contribute to a localised excessive loading, the accumulation and coalescing of ‘weight’ in regard to structural models of undecidability as presented to the viewer. The spectator as witness to their own missing is additionally loaded by works that look to use tactical employments of absence as a key mechanisms within the work.

So, an image of *excess* is created that is undeniably spatial and temporal as it contains *things*, and these *things* occur over time and between spaces. The space of *excess* is a potential space of uncontainable slippage, a space of ambiguity where the demarcations between objects and events

²⁵² Guattari, F. (1995). *Chaosmosis: an ethico-aesthetic paradigm*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 94–95.

thought discrete are laid out as far more porous than might have previously been considered. From such a perspective, Schneider suggests a possibility of being ‘present’ to the event in its transmission or reenactment. In this operation she is indebted to Derrida and his notion of *différance*: the spacing and temporisation of the interval. Derrida writes:

The first consequence to be drawn from this is that the signified concept is never present in itself, in an adequate presence that would refer only to itself. Every concept is necessarily and essentially inscribed in a chain or a system, within which it refers to another and to other concepts, by the systematic play of differences. Such a play, then—*différance*—is no longer simply a concept, but the possibility of conceptuality, of the conceptual system and process in general. For the same reason, *différance*, which is not a concept, is not a mere word; that is, it is not what we represent to ourselves as the calm and present self-referential unity of a concept and sound **[phonie]**. We shall later discuss the consequences of this for the notion of a word.²⁵³

Excess, like the constant state of play between scale deviations (the referential flow (or ‘alignment’) occurring between the rescaled to the scale of ‘life’) might be considered in terms of the physical space & the space time of the interval: engaged as space of capacity for the generation of conceptuality and conceptual systems and process. The spectator’s physicality might be argued to be modelled and held and suspended in this space. While occupying this interval of space–time, body and mind are simultaneously resident within that physical and conceptual capacity. Mirrored in this relationship is the habitation by the viewer’s body enabled by installation, in a referential interval between the spaces of art and life. However, Schneider’s elaboration of the operations of excess and of the performance document takes a different beat than Derrida’s movements in the operation of deconstruction. In speculating upon a production occurring in this place of ‘originary’ formlessness and play between differences, Schneider writes:

Such objects, like the framed image of Paik’s head-dragging print, stand as witness to the event as seen and make the museum viewer witness to the event as missed. In

²⁵³ Derrida, J. (1982). *Différance*. in *Margins of Philosophy*. trans. A. Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 11.

such a scene, a viewer becomes, like the object, a witness. Thus the piece, producing witnesses *ad infinitum*, might be called a veritable witness machine. The site of the event is in the witnessing, the re-telling/re-seeing, not in the “event” itself; and yet the “event itself” becomes what is told in retelling. The mechanism of retelling is thus pitched toward eliciting a response which can stand as another generation of retelling, and function, in retelling, as yet another call. Thus the media undoes the media, resists the very mode of its manifestation, and pitches itself toward re-enactment in a variety of forms always alternative to the event itself.²⁵⁴

What is significant here is the spectator as witness and the soliciting of translation and transmission in relation to Rancière’s thoughts on capacity and the emancipation of the spectator made via a process of translation.²⁵⁵ Couched as disambiguation, excess might be positioned as a generative or affirmative space, the opening up of capability to become a participant, one who is activated in a transmission, as production unbound ‘*ad infinitum*’.²⁵⁶

In this sense, littoral zones between the surfaces of bodies (or of bodies) may be approached in terms of a hyperextension or hyper-abundant accumulation. A pertinent example might be drawn from the intersection of systems of scale like those occurring between the rescaled miniature and the scale of the everyday, which might be approached as a kind of coextensive and cohabiting unilateralisation. This approach to the concept of *excess* might trouble the relationship of dualisms, that even when challenged, apparently still follow a kind of cartesian linearity, a zero-sum system of competition. Here *excess* is used in two ways, firstly as unilateralised: a slippage or extension, or accretion, a boundary condition of a bodies. Secondly, as a generative slippage or extension between contiguous dyadic bodies: as a means circumventing overly oppositional formations that might presume zero-sum gain/loss/nullification scenarios. Here, interests lie in the potential for transmissions (or hyperextensions) functioning as a recuperative or restorative gesture—a drawing back, a recuperation of excessive states.

²⁵⁴ Schneider. R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*. p. 42-43.

²⁵⁵ Rancière, J. (2009) *The Emancipated Spectator*.

²⁵⁶ Schneider. R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*. p. 42-43.

—A Fragmentary Note on the Supplement:

The logic of the supplement is understood to refer to the secondary element of writing where the purportedly immediate and originary nature of speech was privileged over inscription. Derrida²⁵⁷ fleshes out the logic of the supplement, reflecting on the supplement as able to function simultaneously as both accretion and substitution, both aiding and hindering its primary counterpart. This relationship between supplement as secondary and its primary partner paints a picture of a semi-autonomous codependency where the secondary relies upon the primary for its ontological ‘reason for being’. That same *raison d’être* positions the secondary in aid or support of the primary, implying the existence in the primary of a fundamental flaw “for which we have to provide an account”,²⁵⁸ a lack which the secondary exists to address.

In applying the model set out by Derrida to the ontology of the miniature and the gigantic, the miniature (as supplement) might be considered an amelioration—accounting for a lack in the spectator’s capacity for perception or for apprehension. This might be likened to the frame as a compensatory measure for lacks in perception, a required fragmentation of the incomprehensible totality of the everyday. Likewise, rescaling might be considered in a similar light, as a response that seeks to apprehend a semblance of this fullness. However, in practical terms, considering the substitutionary element of supplementarity, since the scale of the miniature is unliveable and uninhabitable, the miniature cannot truly substitute itself for *lived in* reality. However, what might be offered up is a durational substitution, of life *lived in* the sensible for life *contemplated* in the ‘unreality’ of the miniature: a substitution by the operative loss offered by a life lived in reverie. Here, Derrida’s interpretation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s ‘dangerous supplement’ becomes significant. However, this supplementarity of scale, particularly in the case of the miniature, operates divergently to that of Rousseau’s simple substitution of coitus for

²⁵⁷ Derrida, J. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. trans. G. Spivak. Baltimore: JHU Press.

²⁵⁸ Derrida, J. (2000). *Et Cetera*. p. 300.

masturbation. This is due to the fact that a Gulliver like existence in the rescaled world of the miniature is generally not tenable, the substitution missing a vital combination in its likeness and proximity. Thus the rescaled might operate as a kind of double supplement—a double beat: a supplement of the representation. But, where scale deviations like the miniature may more so be located, is in a similar space to the target of Rousseau’s onanism: the conjured image accessed through the traces and absent presence of Madame de Warens, in which Rousseau is immersed—a substitution of the Madame de Warens of actuality for that of reverie. So, detached from action (the act of living), is substituted an image, that is in turn inhabited or *lived* in reverie. Derrida writes on this:

The dangerous supplement, which Rousseau also calls a “fatal advantage,” is properly *seductive*; it leads desire away from the good path, makes it err far from natural ways, guides it toward its loss or fall and therefore it is a sort of lapse or scandal (*scandalon*). It thus destroys Nature. But the scandal of Reason is that nothing seems more natural than this destruction of Nature.²⁵⁹

In regard to the rescaled, what moves to make such a habitation ‘dangerous’ or ‘fatal’ is the break or *turn* from the natural order (of presence): a break from the sensible, and substitution for what is perceived as auxiliary or insufficient. Here, such reveries as turns away from the ‘natural’ (with the goal of presence), might resonate with Žižek’s double supplement that is disruptive of dyadic structure: the flip side of presence and absence might be present absence, or a absent presence.²⁶⁰ Also significant is how the act of inhabiting the ‘presented image’ of rescaled space retains a sense of naturalness—relating to the naturalness of the body as the origin of scale relations. Exaggerating this relationship is the state of reverie, as there is near nothing seemingly as natural (or of reduced antagonism) as one’s own reverie. In this way, ostensible and unscrutinised naturalness makes such a state even more dangerous, more fatal. On the ‘dangerous supplement’, Derrida goes on to state:

²⁵⁹ Derrida, J. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. p. 152.

²⁶⁰ Žižek, S. (Ed.) (1994). *Mapping Ideology*. London: Verso. pp. 20–22.

There *must (should) have* been plenitude and not lack, presence without difference. From then on the dangerous supplement, scale or harmony, *adds itself from the outside as evil and lack* to happy and innocent plenitude. It would come from an outside which would be simply the outside. This conforms to the logic of identity and to the principle of classical ontology (the outside is outside, being is, etc.) but not to the logic of supplementarity, which would have it that the outside be inside, that the other and the lack come to add themselves as a plus that replaces a minus, that what adds itself to something takes the place of a default in the thing, that the default, as the outside of the inside, should be already within the inside, etc. What Rousseau in fact describes is that the lack, adding itself as a plus to a plus, cuts into an energy which must (should) have been and remain intact. *And indeed it breaks in as a dangerous supplement, as a substitute that enfeebles, en-slaves, effaces, separates, and falsifies*²⁶¹

Particularly in regard to the final part of Derrida's passage (that has been given emphasis), the rescaled might be presented as enfeebling or characterised by its leaching of energy from what it supplements. Particularly, following thinking on passivity and spectacle, a spectator in contemplation—captured by the reveries that the rescaled may afford—is subsequently stripped of life.²⁶² Across this section in *Of Grammatology* dealing with the dangerous supplement, Derrida conspicuously reiterates states relating to expenditure: to deficiencies, or lacks of energy, the destruction or loss of energy, moved to comment that: "The dangerous supplement destroys very quickly the forces that Nature has slowly constituted and accumulated. In 'out-distancing' natural experience, it runs non-stop [*brûle les étapes*—literally 'burns the halting-points'] and consumes energy without possibility of recovery."²⁶³ Such a statement, once applied to rescaling, provides an opening for thinking surrounding the miniature, particularly in regard to the miniature's stasis or lack of action, often described in terms like: arrested, frozen, static; described in terms of stillness, characterised by a lack of energy. In the spectating of the rescaled,

²⁶¹ Derrida, J. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. p. 216.

²⁶² Rancière, J. (2009) *The Emancipated Spectator*. p. 7.

²⁶³ Derrida, J. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. p. 152

so too might the spectator be considered to be ‘enfeebled’ by the tableau, arrested, taken by an image in loss, as Stewart writes “In its tableaulike form, the miniature is a world of arrested time; its stillness emphasizes the activity that is outside its borders. And this effect is reciprocal, for once we attend to the miniature world, the outside world stops and is lost to us.”²⁶⁴ So, in the light of the dangerous supplement the rescaled might be presented as a supplementary space of entropic drawing. Like the concrete pillar of *06/10/2011–21/10/2011* drawing body heat from the unwitting sitter, the (dangerous) supplement may be characterised as a ‘false’ accretion that consumes more than it radiates. To counteract this displacement of life—its lifelessness—requires an against the grain regulation,²⁶⁵ an increasing expenditure to animate, to ameliorate this lifelessness. Such a situation might be considered to present a bleak picture of rescaling, and particularly of the reveries that can accompany states of rescaling like the miniature, but, both offsetting and providing a counter narrative to any drawing out or loss, the state of reverie is put forward as a space of generative potential.

Also, worthy of note is that any loss is not a complete loss. The rescaled is partial, our relations to scale are not singular nor need to be. Multiple relations may occur, existing in simultaneous cohabitation. It is not the mechanistic realm where contradictions cause fractious melt-downs, but the realm of subject, where the holding of contradiction and continued function is business as usual. It is entirely possible to feel two (or more things at once) so this exegesis is not concerned with authoritative singular understanding of how we relate to scale.

²⁶⁴ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 132

²⁶⁵ Bois, Y., & Krauss, R. (1997). *Formless: a users guide*. On this, Rosalind Krauss relating the approach of Bataille writes: “Nor is entropy (meaning the constant and irreversible degradation of energy in every system, a degradation that leads to a continually increasing state of disorder and of nondifferentiation within matter) taken from Bataille’s vocabulary. (He would have preferred “expenditure” which does not cover the same field and might even seem to be entropy’s opposite. Bataille used the classical example of entropy — the inevitable cooling down of the solar system — against the grain: the sun expends extravagantly, forcing us into overproduction and waste in order to maintain even a fragile balance. Entropy is a negative movement: it presupposes an initial order and a deterioration of that order. Expenditure, on the contrary, is the regulation, through excess, of an initial disorder and such regulation is never successful because always insufficient — hence the bidding war unleashed.)” pp. 34–35.

—*Grafting (Arbors and Arboretums)*:

What might also be taken from the depiction of the forests and landscapes in works like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, and what might further inform a sense of persuasiveness via a process of interpolation, is the efficacy of the embodied gesture that constitutes the main production method in the work—the gesture of taking something and making it upright. To speculate on such an act within the context of the representative elements of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, the act of taking a stick and stabbing it into the ground could be considered to be an originary act of representation, accessing what might be the very first sculptural representations of that variety, the double beat or schism, where one displaced *thing* was presented as another *thing*. In this respect, the beautiful simplicity of the stick as a placeholder for the ‘whole’ counterpart is that it accesses the most archetypal representation of the tree, an archetype tinged with assumptions of primordial purity and the authorisation that is suggested by that purity. Reinforcing this, employments of such a technique, often enacted throughout formative periods like childhood, further contaminate with assumptions of origin (sticks in the sandpit *etc.*). This moves to locate such a method of representation at *an* origin, in particular an origin associated with a certain simplicity or purity, thus a naturalness.²⁶⁶ Whether such an originary method of representation actually happened or not, and whether it can actually be proved, does nothing to diminish its “naturalness” or apparent proximity to origin, as the persuasiveness of its fabricated, aligned, origin operates in a space of immediacy that does much to resist analysis (much like operations that fall under the category of common-sense or taken-as-a-given). So in this way, enacting both a likeness and proximity, works to affect a counterfeiting made to pass scrutiny in the inattention of immediacy.

²⁶⁶ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. This sentiment is echoed by Susan Stewart, stating “The miniature, linked to nostalgic versions of childhood and history, presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable, version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination.” p. 82.

Further enhancing the persuasiveness of representation in miniature, is what might be communicated through the actual act of placing upright, and the meaning that might be drawn from that act in terms of a recuperative or restorative gesture (no matter how futile). Robert Smithson in *Entropy Made Visible*²⁶⁷ relates the example of Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass*²⁶⁸ where a glass sheet in the work was accidentally broken and put back together by Duchamp. Smithson sees the attempt to reconstruct all the pieces as an attempt to overcome entropy—a futile gesture as although the glass sheet in this work is reconstructed, the damage is irreversible. No amount of repair will return the glass to its prior, unblemished state, nor the work to an identical state prior to this accident. In this context, the twig is representative of that same irreversible loss with an additional dimension of separation, as in its emplacement within the miniature diorama, the twig-as-tree is permanently displaced from its source. Here, a true state of reconciliation is precluded by art production, as a rejoining or reunion (or a *grafting*) of part with whole is unachievable and impossible. But, in the face of this impossibility, the futility in the gesture of planting the twig upright might come attached with a certain hopefulness—a whimsy that it might take root. In a method of 'fixing' that relies on a most simple form of mimicry, such a gesture might communicate and be interpreted as restorative or recuperative, and in this, posit the potential (or suggest the existence) for further recuperative gestures that might close the distance held between part and whole, habitable and uninhabitable, drawn together and reconciled in an affective immediacy. Such a space set out as recuperative (that could be just as easily categorised in similar sites of exchange like the littoral, intertidal, or liminal),²⁶⁹ might be considered in terms of a breakdown in boundary conditions, in this case a boundary that differentiates part from whole, dead from alive. To again reiterate Schneider's analysis of war reenactment, a

²⁶⁷ Smithson, R. (1996) *Entropy Made Visible*. in J. Flam (Ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.

²⁶⁸ Duchamp, M. (1915-23). *The Large Glass*. [sculpture]. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

²⁶⁹ Accessing earlier discussions on the potential slippage of language, it is noted that a variety of terms could be used to articulate this space.

conflation provoked by representative and performative enacting of likeness and proximity allows for affective reverie to take hold—a reverie than may then allow for a sort of quasi-transmission where ‘inaccessible’ zones of experience might be temporarily occupied.²⁷⁰ In both the ‘wargasm’ of the reenactor²⁷¹ and the persuasiveness of the miniature diorama, the ‘recuperative’ state playing out between part and whole might be approached in much the same way Roger Caillois is recounted by Bois & Krauss to describe the insectoid reflex of the preying mantis: as a “most spectacular model of the simulacrum performed as death imitating life imitating death”,²⁷² a space of reflectivity “undecidable-into-infinity”.²⁷³ In this context, both the form of the twig-as-tree and the restitutive gesture might be considered as a further form of imitative reflex occurring in a space set out by the back-and-forth of a “simulacral riddle”.²⁷⁴ Here, an *imitative immediacy*, works a ‘naturing’ operation (or at the very least a suspension of denaturing) that further contributes to an overall persuasiveness of the miniature diorama.

Returning to point made earlier on the virtuosity attributed to the miniature diorama foregrounding authorship, particularly the presence of the author through an exaggeration of ‘hand-made’ status, the recuperative gesture, might be considered to further exaggerate such a state. Namely, in those repetitive, individual placements, is held the repeated gesture of the maker. These acts punctuate the works. They are interventions that attest to

²⁷⁰ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. Here Schneider writes on the potential for bodily habituation informing a temporal chiasm: “the “period rush” reenactors’ reference can function like a queasy portal in time where a momentary forgetting might take place, where time and space seem to come undone, or overlap and touch to the point of confluence. To the point, perhaps, of habit – where habit is an act or set of acts learned so well they become body knowledge, though acquired through sometimes quite arduous rigors of what Bergson calls “effort” or “search.” p. 77

²⁷¹ Ibid. Schneider relates the ‘wargasm’ as “reenactors who claim to experience a physical collapse of time, or at least a profound confusion of time – call their experience a “period rush,” a “time warp,” a “wargasm” (deeply troubling word), or they borrow a phrase from the Civil War itself to say they are “seeing the elephant.” It is important to note, however, that for most reenactors any experience of temporal return is, at best, partial and incomplete.” p. 92.

²⁷² See Bois, Y., & Krauss, R. (1997). *Formless: a users guide*. p. 78.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.



Spielberg, S. (1977). *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. [film]. Los Angeles: Columbia Pictures.

a one time presence, a presence that might slip to contaminate the diorama, or be conflated to exaggerate a liveness present in the world of the miniature. Similar to the absent presence of the hoarder suggested by *The Dark Pool*, miniature diorama such as those the scale of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, might attribute a mania or obsessiveness to their production. An attachment to the miniature of frenzied or excessive states of making owes much to cultural tropes such as the retired man who recreates a city from matchsticks, or like the character Roy Neary in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, who stricken by mania models the form of (an unknown to him) ‘Devil’s Tower’, a mountain in northeast Wyoming, USA, that forms the site for the climax of the film.²⁷⁵ In a work like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* that already foregrounds the handmade through the largely bespoke nature of the site-specific artwork, with the use of the miniature diorama, the restorative gesture might transmit to further load (the landscape of) the work with a kind of accumulated

²⁷⁵ See Spielberg, S. (1977). *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* [film]. Los Angeles: Columbia Pictures. Particularly the scene where Roy Neary models a replica mountain in the lounge of his house, much to the bewilderment of his wife.

imminent presence, or imminently missed presence. Although many of these operations (twig, narrative, spectral presence *et al.*) might be fairly unconvincing individually, conflated, and held within the miniature diorama, where they not only occur in concert, but in the purported immediacy of the tableau,²⁷⁶ the diorama presents a kind of filled-out rhetorical device (ethos, pathos, logos) or *hook*. The persuasiveness or liveness of the diorama in this respect is attributed to how it is weighted, like a cinematic slight-of-hand where a bag of money turns out to be cut up newspapers with a veneer of real currency occluding the fakery. It feels right in the moment until you really look. In this respect, I would be at pains to distance this type of persuasiveness to the ‘persuasive analogy’ employed by Christopher Braddock vis-a-vis Stanley J. Tambiah.²⁷⁷ Although in commonality, both engage linguistic frameworks, I would categorise the efficacy of the miniature’s persuasiveness as specific to temporal phenomena, in that it is reliant on tableau-like immediacy in instantiating a structure that in some way precedes and evades scrutiny. In this way the persuasive technique of the miniature might be better located in a similar territory to rhetorical techniques of obfuscation used in political messaging, particularly in techniques of signalling, such as the type made to low information voters, where something feels like it makes sense, until you think about it more and realise it is a conflation of two proximate, but none-the-less yet distinct concepts. Often including racist ‘dog-whistling’, such rhetoric creates an opening for retrieving Žižek, who would posit that racism stems from a personalised fantasy frame (that is resistant to rationality) through which reality is parsed.²⁷⁸ Drawing forth previous discussion on the inscribing (or framing) mechanisms operating in the articulation of an artwork’s site through the anamorphosis of presentation, the same anamorphic quality that is discussed in relation to the inscribing ‘in’ and ‘out’ of spectatorship,

²⁷⁶ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p.62. The miniature as recounted by Stewart presents a limited space, the detailed delineation of tableau presents a closure or totality, in all this articulates a sense of immediacy in unfolding, a potential ‘all-at-once’ laid bare before the spectator.

²⁷⁷ Braddock, C. (2013) *Performing Contagious Bodies*.

²⁷⁸ Žižek, S. (1989). *The Sublime Object of Ideology*.

posited as inherent to, and propagated by *presentational* structure, might be present in the miniature diorama. From this perspective, spectatorial operations of the diorama, in addition to the equally anamorphic fantasy frame, can conflate as a (re-)positioning system. Here, the ‘hooks’ of the miniature diorama might operate as heuristic cues for the spectator (such as the spatialized *point-de-caption*) that unfold with the volatility of the tableau, interpreted and reassembled into something convincing.²⁷⁹

—*Below:*

The table section of 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) was constructed to support the miniature landscape held *Above*, acting as a divider or roof for a miniaturised ‘garden’ below.²⁸⁰ As outlined, the platform was made from interlinked door blanks and the supporting framework was constructed with 50x50 Radiata Pine clears (42mm x 42mm).²⁸¹ In terms of material selection²⁸² this type of timber has been used with relative exclusivity throughout the project for a number of reasons; its everydayness

²⁷⁹ See Braddock, C. (2013) *Performing Contagious Bodies*. p. 8. Again, highlighted by Braddock, drawing on Teresa Brennan, is that a transmission of affect is in someways unexplainable, in similar ways the excess persuasiveness of miniature diorama contains an equally unexplainable dimension.

²⁸⁰ As a note, an approach to miniaturisation will be discussed later in this section.

²⁸¹ Radiata Pine as a precursor to the 50x50 clears is the most efficient wood as a construction timber in terms of production and sustainability.

²⁸² Materials are selected in part for the expediency in achieving a certain goal, if a platform needs to be built in a space, often the fastest way is to make something is out of easy manipulated or easy to work materials such as wood or plywood. Such materials are easily handled or transported by one or two people, likewise if something needs to dissolve, dissipate or be eroded, easily sourced materials such as sand or dirt are employed. This also allows a freedom of construction by using fairly easy to grasp skills, not requiring (or minimising) the need for engaging specialised professionals. This method of self reliance gives a fluidity to art-making as it is often limited by time, and allows an evolution of ‘constructing on the fly’, letting the specific intervention respond to new thinking provoked by making. An additional use of these materials is that they are easily recognised by the people engaging with the work, they are materials that they see and use themselves, and there is a logic and ease to the construction, to the extent that they might could it something they could do themselves. This is intended to engender a type of empathy in the viewer to solicit engagement, and to also play off the previously elaborated workings of rupturing encounter—of which there is always a stage of recognition—which through familiarity may provoke a variety of reactions in the person who engages with the work, such as unconscious, unconsidered or spontaneous action.

as a recognisable do-it-yourself (DIY)²⁸³ material identifiable to the many spectators; the square form of the timber makes mathematical calculations easier; the size to strength ratio is balanced; the ratio of the timber is also fairly pleasing to the eye; the price is good; and finally, it is easy to cut and work. Selective vertical supports were anchored in cast objects. Some casts were produced from geometric moulds. Others, provisionally orientated in form, were poured, or hand-shaped—cast by the cupping of hands together. Made of concrete, asphalt concrete, and plaster, the anchor/objects provided a foundation that was linked with horizontal beams to distribute the weight of the platform. Many of the anchors also served the ancillary function as housings or as planters for specific types of indoor plants; as receptacles or vessels for pools of liquid; as holders for bottles of spirits (as intoxicants and potentially combustible liquids). Pylons bisected the platform to varying heights. At some points the impaling supports barely penetrated the surface of the platform of the miniature landscape that sat atop, at others points the pylons would tower over the work at levels that suggested a redundancy, or worse, a theatricality of the sculptural form divorced from utility. The bisecting vertical supports operated by a plate-like square anchor, crafted from pine. The supports passed through this anchor before bisecting the table. The anchors were fixed through to the support with bolts and wing-nuts. The overall effect of this provisional scaffolding was to prop the table from below, generally in locations of intensity in the work where additional support was needed. In this regard, intensity was manifest as additional areas of construction and subsequently greater weight. Additionally, within the context of a landscape diorama which might be read in a narrative

²⁸³ Materials used in the construction of works are intended to draw on an egalitarian sensibility. The 'drawing out' of or 'deferring of context', as mentioned previously, also influences the way works are constructed. Drawing out tensions between classifications of art and everyday life is assisted, for example, by collapsing the distance between the two by the materials selected and the ways of making. These materials are common, or quotidian, just as the construction techniques are accessible. It becomes about attempting to work in a space that a wide range of the potential audience can also cohabit. The study also engages with how certain forms of making, and the experience by the audience, operate (and are approached) within understandings or interpretations of class. An example could be the concept and culture of DIY renovation—where the study draws many of its materials—which could be understood to exist as a distinctly middle-class phenomenon. The study looks to investigate the ways in which making, materials, and their resulting outcomes can resonate or work with (and within) such understandings, and how these may mediate and modify encounter of an artwork.



Cribb, A. (2009). *Untitled Weight*. [sculpture].
Auckland: Auckland University of Technology.

context, structural weight maps to an analogous narrative or thematic weighting in the form of landscape or landmarks.

As the iteration of the ‘support system/supported-content’ paradigm plays out across the projects that make up *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, it may be argued that such a paradigm works to challenge the conventionally understood ontology of the plinth. This ontology suggests that the plinth’s ‘reason for being’ is in providing a nondescript, discrete pedestal for some object or thing. In problematising this model, or eroding a distinction between traditionally held hierarchies of ‘what might be considered content and what is simply a mechanism for displaying said content’, *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* and in following *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, employs devices that contribute to what O’Sullivan²⁸⁴ (when writing on Guattari) terms a rupturing encounter. This is a deterritorialization—according to Guattari²⁸⁵—which manifests as an atypical encounter where recognised forms are declassified

²⁸⁴ See O’Sullivan S. (2006). *Art Encounters*. pp. 1–2.

²⁸⁵ See Guattari, F. (1996). *Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse*. p. 198.

(deterritorialized) producing some new association. One way in which the activation of rupture (through the erosion of hierarchy) seemingly plays out in the project is through the symbiotic relationship of the support mechanism and content such as in earlier pre-naming convention works like *Untitled Weight*—the reciprocal material process forming a literal non-differentiation between materials. In 24/04/2010–01/05/2010, the elaborate geometric framing system worked to occlude observation of what could be understood as content through the manner of its imposing scale and complex construction relative to the perspectival tray that held the miniatures.

In an expanded context of contemporary art-making, the method of privileging mechanism in excess of (or at least as much as) content is demonstrated in the installation by Mark Manders titled *Silent Factory*.²⁸⁶ In this work two brick chimney stacks are placed on a plinth formed by a structure of tables, trestles and chairs. Complex geometric rhythms are created by the stacking of rescaled objects such as the trestles and chairs, and also a sense of redundancy as many of these items do not directly support the chimney stacks. In employing these objects a wealth of external associations are provoked due to their former functions, that, alongside the geometric tempo and redundancies results in an excessively indiscrete support mechanism. This lack of discretion, and complexity in comparison to the reasonably austere form of the chimneys, foregrounds a tension occurring in entrenched relationships between the plinth and what the plinth is purported to support. Due the plinth's ability in Manders's work to initiate dialogue with the spectator (on par with the chimney stacks), as a system, the support mechanism shifts to become of obviously equal consideration to what it supports. As a device, the usage of the table, and particularly culturally established understandings of this device, articulates a distinction between top and bottom, above and below. Like a Saussurean bar, an internal ruction runs counter to the singularity of the art object as presented to the spectator, doing much to resist holistic readings of the singular object.

²⁸⁶

Manders, M. (2000). *Silent Factory*. [Installation]. Munich: Neue Pinakothek.



Cribb, A. (2010). *24/04/2010–01/05/2010*. [installation].
Auckland: ST PAUL ST Gallery 3



Manders, M. (2000). *Silent Factory*. [Installation].
Munich: Neue Pinakothek.

In the context of performance, scholar Amelia Jones, notes Kantian aesthetics as a model put in place to contain the vicissitudes of embodied human experience, to prohibit the attachment of embodied desires in art. Jones continues that the Kantian framework acts as a form of containment to safeguard the internality of the ‘artwork’ from the abjection of the outside world, analogous to Stewart’s proposition of the reduced scale of the miniature acting to protect its internality from corruption by the exterior world.²⁸⁷ Jones goes on to propose that the potential of strategies generally relating to performance and body art is in their de-containing potential to break free of the framework of Kantian aesthetics and thus the modernist ideal of the discrete (wholly manifest) artwork.²⁸⁸

Processing these thoughts in the context of ‘sculptural’ practices (particularly works like Manders’s installation), what might be articulated is a de-containing or *rupturing* internal contradiction. The artwork is presented as simultaneously whole (an adherence to that framework), but at the same time simultaneously splintered with parts set against itself. The frame (or vitrines) ambition to operate in excess of being a mere container foregrounds uncontainable aspects of the artwork, operating analogously to the “explosions” employed and exaggerated in body art for which Jones lists a few: smells, durational temporalities, excessive desires, blood, boredom, affect.²⁸⁹ It is in this way that tabular devices that are engaged in an ‘ambitious’ fashion like *Silent Factory*, *bitumen lid*, and *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, could arguably exaggerate tensions between perceived statuses of part and whole. As such, what might be drawn into consideration, and what such devices might be understood to facilitate (following operations of rupture, or conversely of undecidability), is a possible reordering of spectator associations towards hierarchies in visual arts, of what is considered content and what is supplementary to that content—that in these fairly mundane employments, might be strategies that can

²⁸⁷ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 82.

²⁸⁸ See Jones, A. (2009). *Performance: Time, Space and Cultural ‘Value’*.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

affect a challenging of framing mechanisms allowing for extended understandings and extended experiencing of visual art in places not normally expected.

The work of Daniel von Sturmer provides an engaging example of a practice that makes extensive use of platforms and tables as a key devices in the artwork. Considering von Sturmer's engagement with the platform as an accumulating set of ongoing concerns across a body of work, a useful point of entry is the 2003 work *The Truth Effect*²⁹⁰ bookended by the 2013 work *Paradox Park*.²⁹¹ *The Truth Effect* comprises a large, austere white, tabular platform, the surface of which is interspersed by a number of small and finely built screens. Video works featuring studies of manipulations or meditations on a range of objects are both projected and rear projected on to the face of the screens; coloured disks on a turntable; plastic cup, roll of tape, cork block flipping inside a box; the panning shot of the mirror, the chair. To unpack a work like *The Truth Effect*, specifically, to discuss operations of scale and its related concerns within the work, the oscillation between the literal, i.e. observable, core platforms that constitute the artwork become significant. These platforms are identified as the floor/surrounding space, the tableau; the screens that sit upon the table, and the interior space of the screen which forms the video content. A mechanism often employed by von Sturmer, across works, and immediately apparent in the viewing of *The Truth Effect*, is the troubling in status of the support structure. This accesses the lineage of both the plinth and screen, namely, that both are traditionally intended to be forgettable and easily ignored objects that recede in the face of the true content, faithfully delivered free of cluttering distraction. This is a conceit shared between maker, exhibiter, and spectator as it is only through the 'nudge nudge wink wink' complicity/consensus, set out by the sticky accumulation of established traditions, that the plinth (or screen) might operate as expedient signals for the location of the 'real action'. von Sturmer calls attention to the pedestal and these mechanisms that work in

²⁹⁰ von Sturmer, D. (2003). *The Truth Effect*.

²⁹¹ von Sturmer, D. (2013). *Paradox Park*. [installation]. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.



von Sturmer, D. (2003). *The Truth Effect*. [installation]. Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.



von Sturmer, D. (2013). *Paradox Park*. [installation]. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

abbreviating display. The table in this work is not a benign object. The white square is oversized in its dimensions, the language of the table communicated through dimension and often constrained by the stock 2.4m x 1.2m unit is obliterated by the near monolithic 4m x 4m size. The table's supports are inset to such a degree that the white field looks to levitate from the ground, its whiteness and large scale evoking a sense of being cut straight from the container—the cubic walls of the gallery space. This 'cut' represents a displacement or repositioning that although conservatively tabular (this operates in a language we are all familiar with), seeks to challenge that trope, enacting a potential for recuperation or *re-placement*, providing for an almost allegorical troubling of the apparent horizontality (an effect reinforced by the content of the video works). In effect, this seems to charge the object with a sense of partiality or strangeness, it both belongs to the space as the platform and is kindred (in regard to its materiality) to the white cube that contains it. But, the platform's failure to adhere to the encircling regimented planes, in not staying stuck to the wall, is the action of a deviant or an outsider, one suspended between wall, floor and ceiling. The scale of the table focuses attention on the spaced screens. These projection surfaces are almost ethereal in their delicate construction, capturing projected light with a delicate sluggishness, operating in contrast to the spartan, grey, utilitarian appearance of the video projectors, that in the context of the work present as far more weighty than they have any right to be. In the mechanisms of content delivery the flow of light from projector to screen is drawn out spatially and so unavoidably temporally. This spacing almost affects a slowing in the delivery of content where the speed of light becomes almost like the flow of liquid, through the piping-like conduits of the projector and thrown onto the projection surface where it is absorbed by the gossamer material of the screen.²⁹² The seemingly contradictory relationship of the immediacy of the screen as that which is presented in immediacy, with the instantaneity of light, chafes counterintuitively against the unavoidably narrative unfolding of the moving image. Here, the screen becomes a scaled

²⁹² It is in this apparent 'flow', that the latter work *Paradox Park*, with its liquid tubes intersecting the tableau, almost functions an indirect modelling of *The Truth Effect*.

down model, its placement in the work and the thoughtful and attentive construction, poses the screen as an object of study, a super-positioning where the status of the screen becomes both mechanistically slowed, immediate, and temporally unfolding at the speed of life. Seeming to capture the light, the method and mechanism of exposed rear projection, where light is absorbed into the material of screen, exaggerates a slowness where each step of the work is stretched and laboured and drawn out.

The plays between scales evident in *The Truth Effect*, (and employed by von Sturmer through to works like *Paradox Park*) are presented as series of checks, gates, or thresholds to be ‘negotiated’ by the viewer. These checks are gooey and porous, the ambiguity or uncertainty of this threshold, and the sticky contamination between scales provokes an instantiation of a disambiguating process. In this, disambiguation becomes a marker of ‘slowing’ or ‘slowness’ in work. The immediacy of the tableau might be deferred (particularly by the potential play of sequential narrative in the screens) and by the positioning of the spectator, like omnipresent god that hovers, isolated outside the world of the work. Through a process of nesting; space within screen within table within gallery, von Sturmer’s work reinvigorates a sense of containment, or, a pulsing exteriority and interiority, the potential for totality of the book as related by Stewart.²⁹³ As such, what might be suggested in encountering such a work, is an apparent availability of totality—although it cannot be taken up, it is hailed as available.

In *The Truth Effect* to be outside the work, separated by the demarcations of the tableau, is to be confronted with the impossibility of breaching the threshold of the screen—so if the inside of the work is to be considered a totality, the body of the viewer might be considered to inhabit an illusion of infinity. This spectator body (like the platform of the tableau)

²⁹³ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 52. Here, Stewart drawing on Derrida’s differentiation of the the book as an idea of a totality, and text, writes “The metaphors of the book are metaphors of containment, of exteriority and interiority, of surface and depth, of covering and exposure, of taking apart and putting together. To be “between covers”—the titillation of intellectual or sexual reproduction. To be outside the cover, to be godlike in one’s transcendence, a transcendence of beginning collapsed into closure, and, at the same time, to be “closed out.” Stewart goes on to note that this closure is an illusion of materiality—of the cover—once considered via its significance—as text (or discourse)—the book “threatens infinity”. It is in this context we might consider the apparent and implied material closure of the tableau upon spectatorship.

exists in a space suspended both within and outside the work. In the text *Screens: Viewing Installation Art*,²⁹⁴ Katie Mondloch discusses the tradition of long duration video works such as Douglas Gordon's *24 Psycho*²⁹⁵ and Bruce Nauman's *Mapping the Studio (Fat Chance John Cage)*.²⁹⁶ Mondloch considers these works as inviting 'exploratory durations' on behalf of the spectator. Here a spectator might enter the cycle of the work at any point that seems appropriate to them, the independence of the spectator in this regard is significant because as Mondloch states, it is a choice "understood to be one that the *spectator*, not the artist, artwork, or institution, will make."²⁹⁷ This outlook maps to previously discussed encounter of the installation *vis-à-vis* Groys, where the space of the installation is privatised by the artist, and then potentially offered up again in a recuperating gesture to the spectator.²⁹⁸ Accessing theorists Anne Friedberg and Dominique Paini, Mondloch elucidates a formulation of contemporary spectatorship mappable to Baudelaire's *flâneur*,²⁹⁹ or otherwise, Friedberg's analogy of the window shopper—a spectator who exercises 'autonomous' temporal control, seeing spectatorship in terms of something to be picked up and put down.³⁰⁰ In the context of discussing von Sturmer's work, *The Truth Effect* could be viewed as a convergence of 'window shopping' manifest in both screen and tableau,

²⁹⁴ Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*.

²⁹⁵ Gordon, D. (1993). *24 Hour Psycho* [Video Installation]. New York: MOMA. In the work Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho* is slow to span a 24 hour duration.

²⁹⁶ Nauman, B. (2001). *Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage)* [moving image]. New York: Dia Art Foundation This work is a 6 screen installation, each projected video is 5 hours and 45 minutes long documenting Nauman's studio.

²⁹⁷ Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*.

²⁹⁸ Groys, B. (2009). "Politics of Installation."

²⁹⁹ Notable in Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, The *flâneur* is generally understood as a bourgeois man, who strolls the city streets observing society. The work of this project, *12/01/2013–XX/XX/2013 (ARCADES)*, accessed the lineage of the *flâneur* as bourgeois spectator. In this context, it is interesting to note Stewart's engagement of the miniature as a metaphor for the interior space and temporality of the bourgeois subject. Conversely, the gigantic is used by Stewart as a metaphor for "abstract authority of the state and the collective, public, life", a position that might be mapped to a range of thinkers covered by this exegesis, from Althusser to Rancière, his one time collaborator. See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 14.

³⁰⁰ See Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*.



Gordon, D. (1993). *24 Hour Psycho*. [Video Installation]. New York: MOMA.



Nauman, B. (2001). *Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage)*. [moving image]. New York: Dia Art Foundation



Cribb, A. (2013). *12/01/2013–XX/XX/2013 (ARCADES)*. [installation]. Auckland: Ozlyn

that could be interpreted as devices that are porous, yet ‘structured enough’. This operation might be considered a move from ostensibly ‘public’ temporality in regard to the workings of the gallery, privatised by the artist, processed, and offered up again as a temporality open for occupation, one of which might be privatised by the spectator. This type of temporality (of the screen and the tableau, so of course the miniature) can be considered in light of the narrative structure of the miniature diorama. Although Stewart differentiates between narrative and tableau (tableau unfolds instantly in its stasis),³⁰¹ what might be divined is the hibernating, or cached temporality of the miniature diorama (and of the tableau), as the baiting of an ‘autonomously’ acting spectator who might seize upon that offered up temporality, travelling its meandering tracks at will, a track that might snare the spectator for longer than they expect. Thus the temporality of the miniature diorama might be a temporality of reception, a structural position ready for

³⁰¹ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

occupation by a spectator, to be used as they see fit—as device for time shifting—a world held and delivered for on demand viewing.³⁰²

—The Miniature and the Vitrine and the Miniature as Island:

Supposedly all miniatures are islands.³⁰³ The miniature by definition, represents deviation from the conformity of the 1:1 ‘lived scale’ of the everyday. The nature of the miniature is as ‘contained’, and the nature of the gigantic is as container.³⁰⁴ In this deviating action, processes of identification and classification are enacted that find and group based on commonality and difference. It is in this manner, that the miniature, defined by difference, sets about demarcating a set of spatio-temporal boundaries. The miniature is an island in a sea of reality. Like an island they are independent (in a way, or at the very least ‘offer up’ or distribute a sense of independence, like that offered to Mondloch’s ‘window shopper’),³⁰⁵ they may even be fortress islands (or prison islands) and operate accordingly, by attempting to shut out those that look to breach the borders of the island or, conversely, like a prison may look to contain. But the island is not completely autonomous nor are they independent, and as island neither is the miniature. Like islands, the edges of the miniature have littoral surfaces, zones of exchange. Some are more pronounced than others, some naturally steeper and inhospitable (Fortress/Prison). Certain littoral zones might display as an inviting sandy gradient, their island of the idyllic tropical variety (colonies, holiday resorts,

³⁰² Interestingly Mondloch also looks at ways in which ‘window shopping’ might be counteracted, noting a work by Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Construction Service*, a loose narrative thread looks to signal that a viewer not adhering to a linear viewing might miss out. A number of video works in this project have used a similar method, of proposing an apparent linearity which is in fact arbitrary as a hook for the spectator to engage with the video work in a more cinematic manner. Concluding the chapter *Spatialized Time and Exploratory Duration*, Mondloch also warns of the risks of this independent temporality, including the development of short attention spans, rewarding peripatetic spectatorship, and a privileging of a viewer who in a state of autonomy assumes all meaning resides in themselves. See Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*. p. 52–58

³⁰³ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 138.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 138.

³⁰⁵ See Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*.

amusement parks). These islands are merely illusions of independence, continuously in the process of assertion, erosion, and reassertion of their shores with the sea of the everyday. It is an independence that does not stand up to scrutiny. It is an independence that is indulged, reliant on an outsider, to which the miniature world is dependent upon to respect its boundaries. Miniatures are islands in the everyday.

As covered, an important aspect of scale relations, specifically those occurring between the miniature and the everyday, is the method in which scale becomes a key point of separation. These demarcations are not absolute as the boundaries between miniature and ‘the everyday’ are porous— additionally, the everyday of 1:1 scale forms the ultimate container for the miniature. However, that semi-autonomy, along with a number of devices that will be discussed, are enough to support an interiorising of a sometimes tenuous reality within the miniature. This nebulous internality is furthermore exaggerated (or made more substantial) when the miniature in question chooses to comparatively represent a world itself—the miniature landscape—the ‘contained’ holding ambitions to be the ‘container’. As stated by Stewart: “the major function of the enclosed space is always to create a tension or dialectic between inside and outside, between private and public property, between the space of the subject and the space of the social. Trespass, contamination, and the erasure of materiality are the threats presented to the enclosed world”.³⁰⁶ Drawing from this thinking, it is easy to make comparisons to analogous 1:1 examples occurring in contemporary art, particularly in the spatial entanglement of the installation, that codes and recodes space in terms of public/private and the sovereign space of the artist.³⁰⁷ Also noted by Stewart, is the potential of exchange (or outside contagion) that threatens the interiority of the miniature.³⁰⁸ It is in this way that a series of devices work to insulate this world, one of which might be identified as the tabular structure—the dyadic mode of presentation—a

³⁰⁶ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 82.

³⁰⁷ See Groys, B. (2009). “Politics of Installation.”.

³⁰⁸ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 82.

partial sundering or displacement from its context, a physical separation. Here, tableau presents as another container of delineation as it purports to present or describe in totality, as does its ‘micro’ equivalent—the vitrine or display case—noted as further exaggerating the operations of the miniature as island.³⁰⁹

The display mechanism of the vitrine (a display case primarily constructed from a transparent material like glass or a glass analogue) is traditionally and frequently employed in the display of the miniature. This use is understandable considering the fragility of many miniature objects, particularly those that take the form of domestic ornament, souvenir, or keepsake. Likewise, in institutional settings, like the miniature reenactment of Māori Pā life located in Auckland Museum that was a nostalgic influence for this project, the miniature has enjoyed frequent employment as diorama in museological contexts, as a pedagogical instrument for the display of historical scenes. Within this context, like many other objects within the museum, the miniature is cased and protected in the interests of longevity. It is through this lineage that the vitrine functions as a more overt form of the plinth (noting many plinths are vitrine hybrids). The nature of the vitrine, specifically the glass enclosure, more so that their uncovered kin, exaggerates many features of the plinth. As previously discussed, the culturally held acceptance of the plinth as pedestal is a heuristic signalling of where the centre of the action lies. But, the vitrine, due to a more complete demarcation from the outside world, surpasses the mere plinth due to the manner of its ‘closing out’, in its separation from the contagion of the outside world—an attempt to defer context. The vitrine indicates a need for protection, what is held inside the vitrine is either so important, fragile, or precious that it must be protected from the grubby fingers of interlopers. In this regard the vitrine might be considered privatised (or sovereign) space par excellence,³¹⁰ home to relics and crown jewels. This assumption (and its habituation) acts to exaggerate the operations of the plinth (as pedestal), as

³⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 81.

³¹⁰ This position is an elaboration on Groys approach to the space of the installation as a material. See Groys, B. (2009) “Politics of Installation.”.



Upritchard, F. (2005). *Doomed, Doomed, All Doomed*. [installation]. Auckland: Artspace.



Learning Site. (2010). *House of Economy*. [installation]. Auckland: Auckland Art Gallery.

not only is the vitrine the ‘centre of the action’, but the action is more tentative, perhaps more precarious than what might be expected on an uncovered counterpart. Following previously outlined thinking on the nature of the miniature exaggerating labour, virtuosity, and subsequent significance of the maker, the formalised vitrine, in concert with the miniature operations, doubles down upon this exaggeration, cemented as a locative epicentre and subordinating point of intensity.

Due to the ability to exaggerate relations inside its bounds, and the fact that the design of the vitrine has the capacity to be an intriguing element in its own right, the vitrine enjoys frequent usage within visual arts, employed in ways that look to make use of its practical application as a plain old fortress, protecting what is contained. Also, the vitrine may function as a more literal container like the ‘tank works’ of Neudecker, a prison to keep things in, namely the liquid that produces the sluggish lighting effects in works like *I Don’t Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*.³¹¹ Other employments of the vitrine might look to activate conceptual frameworks such as the museological, taxonomic, or institutional states.³¹² An example of this behaviour can be drawn from a vitrine containing informative documentation in the installation *House of Economy* by Danish collective Learning Site.³¹³ As *House of Economy* looked to engage with learning relating to the ‘Global Financial Crisis’ that was still fresh at the time of exhibition, the deployment of vitrine worked to signal (then subsequently reinforce) pedagogical frameworks occurring in the work. Other uses of the vitrine might exaggerate interior states like reverie. This becomes a particular point of interest for the project. In a significant passage discussing the operations of the miniature as island that is worth quoting in full for the ground it covers, Stewart states:

³¹¹ See Neudecker, M. (1998) *I Don’t Know how I Resisted the Urge to Run*.

³¹² For an example, see Francis Upritchard’s usage of vitrines in housing mock-artefacts such as: Upritchard, F. (2005). *Doomed, Doomed, All Doomed* [installation]. Auckland: Artspace.

³¹³ See Learning Site. (2010). *House of Economy* [installation]. Auckland: Auckland Art Gallery.

As is the case with all models, it is absolutely necessary that Lilliput be an island. The miniature world remains perfect and uncontaminated by the grotesque so long as its absolute boundaries are maintained. Consider, for example, the Victorian taste for art (usually transformed relics of nature) under glass or Joseph Cornell's glass bells. The glass eliminates the possibility of contagion, indeed of lived experience, at the same time that it maximizes the possibilities of transcendent vision. Thus the miniature world may always be seen as being overcoded as the cultural. The hearth at Penshurst, the Nuremburg kitchens, the dollhouse, even the interior sky of baroque architecture—all tend to present domesticated space as a model of order, proportion, and balance. Yet, of course, the major function of the enclosed space is always to create a tension or dialectic between inside and outside, between private and public property, between the space of the subject and the space of the social. Trespass, contamination, and the erasure of materiality are the threats presented to the enclosed world. And because the interiority of the enclosed world tends to reify the interiority of the viewer, repetition also presents a threat. It is important to remember that the miniature object, in its absolute (i.e., conventional) representativeness, is “unique” as well.”³¹⁴

Such a dialectic looks opposed to contemporary concerns like those grouped under Bourriaud's moniker of relational art, of which he states “takes as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private symbolic space”.³¹⁵ In this regard Bourriaud's notions of relational art, and what artists grouped under that moniker (like Liam Gillick, Tiravanija, or Höller) looked to achieve,³¹⁶ collides somewhat with Stewart's thoughts on the temporality of miniature. Relational art focuses upon human interactions and the social,³¹⁷ whereas the miniature (traditionally understood in its uncomplicated function) skews the experience of the social by deferring the

³¹⁴ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

³¹⁵ Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational Aesthetics*. p. 113.

³¹⁶ Ibid. An example might be found in this passage in the introduction to *Relational Aesthetics*, Bourriaud, writing on a ‘chance’ or opening in the art world states: “This “chance” can be summed up in just a few words: *learning to inhabit the world in a better way*, instead of trying to construct it based on a preconceived idea of historical evolution. Otherwise put, the role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist.” p. 13.

³¹⁷ Ibid. p. 113.

social.³¹⁸ Adding to this matrix is the thinking of Groys on the space of the installation as the sovereign space of the artist, the public space of the gallery made private again, and the choice of the artist on how to distribute or cede the privatised space.³¹⁹ From a perspective influenced by the apparent dogma of relational aesthetics, the newly privatised space of the installation, at the indulgence of the artist (in a gallery context largely operating through the indulgence of the curator as representative of the ‘public’) becomes a locus for the open social interaction and the creation of the critiqued ‘micro-utopia’.³²⁰ Here it is worth noting that critiques of *Relational Aesthetics* have been critiqued in turn by artists and thinkers such as Liam Gillick,³²¹ and particularly Amelia Jones, who frames some of this criticism in terms of an attempt to re-contain artworks that are “messy, interactive and situational”³²² (much like the containing nature of the receptacle or the vitrine). Returning to Stewart, the realm of the miniature is framed as a deferral of the social, the private or the interior is said to be entrenched in place of social interactions. Following this thread, Stewart writes:

This relation to language is an ironic one at every point. The problem of the miniature described, as we noted above, emphasizes the noniconic nature of language as sign. The miniature always tends toward tableau rather than toward narrative, toward silence and spatial boundaries rather than toward expository closure. Whereas speech unfolds in time, the miniature unfolds in space. The observer is offered a transcendent and simultaneous view of the miniature, yet is trapped outside the possibility of a lived reality of the miniature.³²³

³¹⁸ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. Here Stewart writes, “Such a transformation of time, which serves to skew the experience of the social by literally deferring it, parallels the miniature’s transformation of language.” p. 79.

³¹⁹ Groys, B (2009). “Politics of Installation.”.

³²⁰ There are widespread examples here, although in the context of this section See Jones, A. (2009) *Performance: Time, Space and Cultural ‘Value’*. and also Bishop, Claire. (2004). “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics”.

³²¹ Gillick, L. “(2006) Contingent Factors: a Response to Claire Bishop’s “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics”.

³²² Jones, A. (2009) *Performance: Time, Space and Cultural ‘Value’*.

³²³ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. pp. 79–80.



Chapman, D., & Chapman, J. (2008). *Fucking Hell*. [Installation]. London: White Cube.

Stewart posits that the barrier protecting the miniature world inside the vitrine preserves that world from the contagion of the everyday. Such a barrier might be based in nostalgia, Stewart goes on to state in the conclusion to her chapter on the miniature: "The miniature, linked to nostalgic versions of childhood and history, presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable, version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination".³²⁴ Such an insulation, both by nostalgia and history, resonates with Žižek's thinking on the resilience of the fantasy frame.³²⁵ This conservation, or insulation of the world within, according to Stewart, gives to the possibility of heightened senses of interiority evoked by the corresponding interior nature of the

³²⁴ Ibid. p. 129.

³²⁵ See Žižek, S. (1989). *Sublime Object of Ideology*. Where he writes: "The crucial point that must be made here on a theoretical level is that fantasy functions as a construction, as an imaginary scenario filling out the void, the opening of the desire of the Other. by giving us a definite answer to the question 'What does the Other want?', it enables us to evade the unbearable deadlock in which the Other wants something from us, but we are at the same time incapable of translating this desire of the Other into a positive interpellation, into a mandate with which to identify." p. 128

vitrine/miniature world. The illusion of the absolute contained world makes available states of reverie and the possibility transcendent vision.

One of the most well known contemporary artworks that uses the miniature and vitrine in concert is *Fucking Hell*,³²⁶ by Dinos and Jake Chapman, a work raised from the metaphoric and literal ashes of its progenitor, *Hell*, that ironically perished in the inferno of the 2004 MOMART fire. *Fucking Hell* is a reconstruction and expansion on the original 1999 artwork. The new updated version of hell consists of 9 large rectangular display cases arranged in a swastika formation. Each vitrine contains 'hellish' representations depicted in the form of diorama. These visions, which are populated by two inch high figures, many attired in Nazi costume, depict all manner of possible and imagined horror and degradation, all performed in a modelled landscape more reminiscent of the backyard train set than the fire and brimstone one might expect from the title. Each diorama is contained in a large, wooden framed, glass display case, the glass reaching from ground to the top of the case. The case and housing of the dioramas becomes a notable feature of the work, as although well finished, they stand on almost ramshackle and haphazard framed base, this base is in turn housed within the immaculate sealed glass display case complete with its own wooden floor. The vitrines in *Fucking Hell* function in a number of ways; to protect the fragile contents, as pedestal to display the contents, as means to modify the viewers navigation of the space, and as an attempt to create a cohesive completeness to the work by aligning the content of the vitrines with their method of presentation—the placement of the vitrines forming a representation of the symbolic element of the swastika.

The content of the Chapmans' vitrines is unarguably obscene, drawing inspiration from Dante's Inferno³²⁷ and works of tableau such as Hieronymus Bosch's *The Last Judgement*³²⁸ and *The Garden of Earthly*

³²⁶ Chapman, D., & Chapman, J. (2008). *Fucking Hell*.

³²⁷ Alighieri, Dante. (c1308–1321). *Divine Comedy*.

³²⁸ Bosch, Hieronymus. (c.1492). *The Last Judgement*.



Bosch, Hieronymus. (c.1490 -1510). *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.
[painting]. Madrid: Museo del Prado

Delights,³²⁹ examples of a movement in Flemish painting, that like the work of the Chapman Brothers in *Fucking Hell*, revelled in the weight of detail that could be compressed into limited space—for Bosch the picture plane of the triptych, for the Chapmans', the interior space of the vitrine. The vitrines of *Fucking Hell* feature depictions of degradation; genocide, impalement, rape, murder and cannibalism; alongside grotesque distortions and abnormalities of the human figure. In this context the vitrine's function can be considered as a further displacement (alongside the displacement of scale and those provided by ideological frameworks such as the museological or taxonomic which could be argued to locate the spectator as an unattached/unaffected observer). Here the distance that this displacement creates opens up a sanitised space for occupation by the spectator—a requisite distance for the content of the Chapmans' hell to be revelled in, or indulged. In this way the vitrine functions as a vital separation between self and the *other*,³³⁰ the other

³²⁹ Bosch, Hieronymus. (c.1490 -1510). *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

³³⁰ This might be complicated: if the miniature space of the vitrine can be understood as appurtenance of the self, the vitrine might not protect the space from the otherness of abjection, but the otherness of other spectators, preserving the miniaturised space as the interior domain of the self, as a site for indulgence.

articulated as the abject: the ejected object, grotesque and visceral.³³¹ This separation allows for a recuperation where content that would otherwise be considered overly traumatic is somewhat sanitised, its potential to drive-off or discourage spectatorship diminished. Alongside the function of the vitrine as a plinth par excellence, the status and act of spectating is foregrounded through the function of voyeurism. Thus if theorisations of the abject (such as those of Julia Kristeva) are to be followed,³³² the displacements or repositioning worked by the Chapmans' can be considered to be a recuperation of what is "cast out". Like the casting out of fell souls to hell, the otherness of the abject is recuperated and contained within the structural conflation created by vitrine and miniaturised space. Within this conflated space, the vitrines of the Chapmans' might operate as objects of suspicion, a gravitational drawing of the barred spectator who is framed by their restriction, when the supposedly 'precise' function of the vitrine is to 'keep something in'.

Usage of vitrine as a physical container is demonstrated and clearly intensified in the 'tank works' of Mariele Neudecker. Works such as *Heaven the Sky*³³³ and *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run*³³⁴ are well known examples of an aspect of Neudecker's practice that deals with perceptions of space and time. In these works, the diluvian weight of viscous liquid that swamps Neudecker's miniature landscape works to trap light, attending to a process taken for granted in the everyday. In the confines of Neudecker's work, light's passage through the 'fantastic' or perhaps 'mythic' landscape is slowed and held in a near static state and presented to the viewer. In someways it could just as easily be a jar of water, but the link through the landscape to connotations of the picturesque and of course sublime, bestows a mundane happening with a profundity or weight not

³³¹ See Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press. pp. 2–4

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Neudecker, M. (2008). *Heaven, the Sky*. [Installation]. Singapore: Wonder.

³³⁴ Neudecker, M. (1998) *I Don't Know how I Resisted the Urge to Run*.



Neudecker, M. (2008). *Heaven, the Sky*. [Installation]. Singapore: Wonder.

found in the everyday. This weight on and of these works are threefold: the pressure on the landscape, on one hand crushing, on the other a slower erosive or dissolving press; the constant pressure against the wall of the tank, like the spilling yoke of a cracked egg, the rushing escape of liquid always a nascent promise; finally, an accumulated weight embodied in the viewing subject, manifest as a sense of sluggishness or slowness. Following the theorised predisposition to project *in* to the miniature that occurs due to an inability to inhabit the site of the miniature in the same way that one might inhabit a lived landscape, such a projection (like the light), is suspended. Owing to this operation, Neudecker's vitrine might be positioned more in terms of an experience of an effect rather than the affect of habitation.

In the context of both Neudecker's tanks and the Chapmans' vitrines, the vitrine functions as a quasi-psychological support structure for the spectator, as much as it is a spatial support structure for the miniature diorama.³³⁵ In this way, the vitrine might exaggerate (or more overtly articulate) the interiorised aspects of miniature space through what might be

³³⁵ Such a position is supported by Stewart's previously outlined position on the interiority of the miniature. See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. pp. 81.

thought of as a ‘dialogue of habitation’. As covered, scale relations, particularly relating to the miniature, are approached by this project as necessarily anthropocentric—the body as point of alignment becomes an epicentre for these relations through a dialectic pulse between liveability and non-liveability (habitable and inhabitable states). Illusiveness is noted as a key aspect of Neudecker’s tank works, offering up a momentary view away from the everyday, to some other fantastical dimension.³³⁶ As such, through its alignments, the ‘space’ articulated by the miniature might be considered as an appurtenance—something that belongs or ‘goes’ with something else—noting Stewart who states “Here we might remember the meaning of appurtenance as appendage, the part that is a whole, the addition to the body which forms an attachment, transforming the very boundary, or outline, of the self”.³³⁷ Thus, the space articulated by the conflation of the miniature as island might be considered in the same light—as a partially, and ephemeral, privatised (and interiorised) space. In this context the appurtenance might be thought of in terms of heterotopic models, as it is at once part of something but separated from it, and although the heterotopic was only ever a vague (and playful) outline,³³⁸ fulfils many of the symptoms set out by Foucault.³³⁹ A recent work by Neudecker can be approached as overtly referencing this dialogue. *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*³⁴⁰ is a work that is sited in a domestic space, the distribution of exhibited works echoing divisions, or strata, occurring in nature: The first floor containing photographs of the arctic sun, the basement oceanic deep-sea videos, and of particular interest to this project, the ground floor, site for the sculptures

³³⁶ On this Neudecker states: “you get seduced into this other world, but not for too long, because you’re reminded, when you see the edges, that it is obviously ‘not quite real’. See Neudecker, M. (2013). “Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes.” [interviewed by Alex Leith]. Vivabrighton May: 19. Available from <http://www.vivabrighton.com/may2013/19.pdf>

³³⁷ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 13.

³³⁸ See discussion in Johnson, P. (2012). *Some reflections on the relationship between utopia and heterotopia* [pdf file]. Available at heterotopiastudies.com

³³⁹ These symptoms were roughly: examples existing in all cultures, synchrony of culture, compensatory etc. See Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces”.

³⁴⁰ Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*.



Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*. [installation]. Brighton.

There is Always Something More Important (Iceberg). In this fragment of the installation, miniaturised models of icebergs are distributed in what was a domestic residence. In regard to siting, Neudecker approached the house as a particular method for framing, likening the residence to the vitrines and cases she had used in the past.³⁴¹ On the subject of the heterotopia that contributes to the titling (and framing) of the work, Neudecker interprets this concept as “spaces that are neither here nor there ... they are simultaneously physical and mental”.³⁴² Here, Neudecker’s thoughts echo theorised operations of miniature space, particularly this space as a site of appurtenance, or belonging—a convergence of material and interior spaces.

Like the primordial/eschatological framework of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, Neudecker works to access the politics and imagery of global warming. *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, by accessing Robert Smithson, particularly geological time, and the entropic slowing and heat death of the universe,

³⁴¹ Neudecker, M. (2013). “Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes.”.

³⁴² Cressey, D. (2013). “Framing Change.” *Nature* 497 (May): 187.

might be compared alongside Neudecker, as works that (although miniaturised) engage with what philosopher Timothy Morton refers to as hyperobjects, “things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans”.³⁴³ In this regard the miniaturisation of both *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* and the fragment of *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes* titled *There is Always Something More Important (Iceberg)*, might be read in terms of rescaling the hyperobject back into a set of dimensions where they might be better thought or apprehended. Stewart posits that we know the miniature as a spatial whole or as temporal parts, whereas we know the gigantic (what we could read as the hyperobject) only partially. Stewart states “We move through the landscape; it does not move through us”,³⁴⁴ but with the anthropocentric focus of the miniature, and open possibility of the ‘autonomous’ temporalities of the spectator,³⁴⁵ a landscape rendered in diorama might be a zone of exchange where the landscape might “move through us”. If as Morton states in *Hyperobjects*, that the world has already ended with the invention of the steam engine and the beginnings of global warming,³⁴⁶ works like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* and *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*, as quasi-earthworks, may indeed follow Stewart as “an art of the souvenir or memento insofar as the aesthetic artifact is a trace of an original event”.³⁴⁷ These works might be operate as instances, souvenirs of the world as ended, their own (miniature) worlds obliterated with each opening and closing of a spectators temporality, a temporality that is both primordial and eschatological.

³⁴³ Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects*. p. 1.

³⁴⁴ Stewart, S. (1984) *On Longing*. p. 137.

³⁴⁵ See Mondlock, K. (2010). *Screens*.

³⁴⁶ Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects*. p. 6.

³⁴⁷ Stewart, S. (1984) *On Longing*. p. 148.

—*Kind of like an Island:*

The impact of display mechanism such as the vitrine on the spectatorship of the artwork is overtly asserted as an interest of this project, visible in the use of certain examples of these mechanisms: the plinth, the display case, the vitrine, the shelf, the table, the platform, and the seat. Ostensibly, a ‘traditional’ manifestation of plinth as display device can be drawn from the field of plinths in Daniel von Sturmer’s *The Field Equation*.³⁴⁸ However, the directness of the presentative gesture is complicated in *The Field Equation* through an over-abundance that hyperextends the function of the plinth as epicentre for the action. Here the field of distribution works to add a degree of non-differentiation through mass valorisation. In addition, the visual statement created by the field of plinths overwhelms former display mechanism/content hierarchies. Also, apparent in the work are a series of trans-spatial bridging gestures (the light of separated projector and screen), raising the projection mechanism to the same or similar status of ‘content’ thus further foregrounding ‘mechanism’ as a significant aspect of the work. Conflating these gestures in the apparently direct employment of a conventional display mechanism, the [once attributed] autonomy and prestige of the pedestal is placed under suspicion—in works of von Sturmer, like *The Field Equation*, both the display mechanism and content (as signifiers and concepts) are put under erasure.³⁴⁹ Extending the series of confections apparent in von Sturmer’s work, and strikingly captured in documentation of *The Field Equation*, the employment of mass distribution and rescaling devices moves to recode the body, creating a sense of miniaturisation where the body of the spectator as navigator of the field is rendered downwards in palpable rescaling. Here, the spectatorial body shifts to operate in much the same register as von Sturmer’s objects that occupy

³⁴⁸ von Sturmer, D. (2006). *The Field Equation*.

³⁴⁹ Here the phrase under erasure is borrowed from Derrida who in turn borrows from Heidegger’s ‘sous rature’. See Derrida, J. (2005). *Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences*.

the operative faces of the plinths.³⁵⁰ Operations in *The Field Equation* can be read as a series of activated spatial operations (one of which is the previously discussed installative space), where the states of spatial autonomy (the apparent island of the miniature) works in conflation to affect what is perceived as 1:1 space—the space of properly performed bodily occupation. This becomes a zone of interest: the apparent stability suggested by the vitrine, set against other ‘open’ plinth analogues (the table, platform etc), where spatial demarcations might be presented as volatile, at once stable/unstable, closed and/or porous. What this means for this project is how demarcations that are stable *enough* (enough to suggest a demarcation in the first place) and subsequent porous exchange between these boundaries, offer up scale conflations in much the same way as the spatial implications set by installative space.³⁵¹

In ‘opening up’ the vitrine, states of porousness (and so exchange) are foregrounded in a bleed between miniaturised and 1:1. Within this research, the bleed between rescaled and 1:1 installative space is visible in works like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* or *24/04/2010–01/05/2010*. The format of these works as tabular structures might be considered to play off the expectations set by high-profile artworks such as those by the Chapmans and by Neudecker (not to mention museological examples), where the miniature diorama is accompanied by the vitrine. In sans-vitrine works (like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* or *24/04/2010–01/05/2010*), or Neudecker’s *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*, that make use of tabular display mechanisms (or the suggestion thereof), it might be argued that the spectral presence of

³⁵⁰ As an aside what might be activated in this recoding is an instantiation of liminal space. Theorist Victor Turner recounts liminality in ritual practice achieved through a recoding of relations. Over the course of a ritual low might become high and high become low. Aside from the recoding of the spectator through rescaling, this might be observed in von Sturmer’s work particularly taking into account the ‘content’ that von Sturmer sources: many everyday materials that though artistic wizardry are rendered with a certain momentousness. Turner speaks about the co-constituting nature of ‘low’ and ‘high’, and the blends of homogeneity and comradeship found in liminal phenomena, particularly for furthering states of ‘communitas’. Here, comparisons might be drawn between Turner’s thinking and the states of recoding and repositioning in installation as noted by Boris Groys, producing a community of spectators. See Turner, V. (1969). *The Ritual Process*. pp. 97-99. and also Groys, B. (2009). *Politics of Installation*. p. 5.

³⁵¹ See section 2 of this exegesis.

the vitrine still occupies these works, or at the very least, these works are still haunted by a structural rule set that the vitrine articulates (inside/outside *etc.*).

Early in the project the traditional vitrine was noted for its interiorising qualities—informed by both first hand encounters with these objects, and also by theorists such as the over-referenced Susan Stewart.³⁵² Occurring in a range of works produced in this project is a set of extensions where the vitrine analogue is tested sans-vitrine. This is intended as a means to explore how works of miniature (or works in general) present spatial relations (rescaled, inside, outside, public, private etc), without definitively overt markers of containment like the glass case. To once again revisit *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, there are fairly direct suggestions of spatial demarcation—the geometry of table sets out a series of relations. The spectator is able to approach this work in a much more ‘physically intimate’ or ‘invasive’ manner, leaning over to view or scrutinise in a partial occupation of the space of the miniature diorama. In excess of the vitrine the space of the miniature becomes far more tentative and prone to redrawing. This is approached as a way in where the articulations of different spaces, be they miniature or 1:1, might bleed together as a result of ‘flexive’ play where a spectatorial occupation of the zone between these spaces might vary from moment to moment—from an outsider orbiting the miniature world, to one that is virtually immersed in the space of the miniature. Observed in the tests conducted by *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, the miniature world open to contagion holds the possibility to articulate a simultaneously clear but volatile spatial demarcation. Here the [at least initial] operation of this world might be likened to the volatile temporal unfolding of the *point-de-caption* or *z-point* where proximity sets about providing structure, even if those structures are accretions spun around a void. To once again reintroduce tableau, by its structural nature this device effects a quasi-miniaturisation—a compression where everything [important] is seemingly put in proximity through

³⁵²

Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

descriptive delimitation. Here it becomes not so much about that ability to institute a permanent and final totality, but the ostensible persuasiveness of that demarcation, that needs only an instance—long enough for an immediate structure to form and the sense of that structure to be transmitted and interpreted—even though its basis may have dissolved, or it may no longer have any real basis. So like the void points and the accretive acts that might provide for subjective capacity,³⁵³ with a kind of inertial structuring where the originating actor may have dissipated, the existence of that force as trace presupposes preceding structure...interpolating, then incarnating that deceased (or diminished) progenitor state. This might be the active function of the window shopper according to Mondloch,³⁵⁴ allowing for apparently discrete, ‘autonomous’ temporalities that are continuously activated, discarded, and reactivated.

—*Speculation upon Miniaturisation:*

To reiterate, this project explores the potential of ‘installative’ space in the context of exchange between miniature space and lived, everyday space (as expanded conflation of installative space). Subsequently, this area of investigation has provoked thinking of how conflations exaggerated by the miniature diorama might be rendered in 1:1 space, in what might be thought of as full scale works. A motivation for this interest was the potential influence that scale relations might have on temporality. Linked to this, Stewart outlines a series of experiments where perception of expended time could compress relative to reductions in scale.³⁵⁵ This piqued interest as to how modulations in scale across installative space could work to recode the spectator’s body in relation to what would be a baseline of normative, anthropocentric scale. As covered in the work *06/10/2011–21/10/2011*, the

³⁵³ See Burrows, D, and S O’Sullivan. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*.

³⁵⁴ See Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens*.

³⁵⁵ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. In these experiments perceptions of time seemed to dilate the smaller an object was. The smaller the scale, the longer participants perceptions grew in regard to how much time they had spent manipulating miniature objects. p. 130.

seat/platform/plinth was approached as a way to affect a slowing, or potentially extended duration, through the provision of a rest-state. At other times this type of object might form a covert barrier that must be negotiated. On a larger scale and perhaps more akin to the tabular structure that nominally held the miniature diorama, the early work *09/11/2010–15/11/2010*, might be considered an influential point in the project. This work featured a number of large platforms, built to a dimension, that, once scaled by the spectator would place his or her body in a similarly rescaled ratio to objects held on a series of other platforms scattered throughout the installation. Aside from ‘viewer viewed’ operations, and concerns of unwitting/unknowing participation in the artwork, these platforms provoked thinking on spatial recoding, and the way that 1:1 space might be reconsidered in light of the operation of the miniature.

It is within this context, I argue, that certain works occurring in *and* at 1:1 scale can also exhibit characteristics of the miniature to the extent that they can be critically examined in much the same way *as* miniature. In this, the displacing schism or distancing that allows art to operate, whether that is a distorting ideological lens, the anamorphosis of Žižek,³⁵⁶ the undulating manifold of Laruelle’s Möbius strip,³⁵⁷ or the displacement metaphor of Foster’s parallax,³⁵⁸ might be characterised by the distance of the microscope. Stewart comments on this phenomena as she writes “While the miniature book reduces the world to the microcosm within its covers, the microscope opens up significance to the point at which all the material world shelters a microcosm”.³⁵⁹ She goes on to state “That the world of things can open itself to reveal a secret life—indeed, to reveal a set of actions and hence a narrativity and history outside the given”.³⁶⁰ Thus the distancing operation of artwork might be theorised in much the same way, as a containment

³⁵⁶ Žižek, S. (1992). *Looking Awry*.

³⁵⁷ Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy.”

³⁵⁸ Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real*.

³⁵⁹ Stewart, S. (2004). *On Longing*. p. 55.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 68

action, but one opening up a world of multiplicity and abundant significance, albeit one that is inscribed with mirroring and distant proximity of the microscope.

In particular, mechanisms like the exhibition space that might exaggerate framing,³⁶¹ suggest the possibility of finitude, containment, or closure.³⁶² In this light, artwork held and presented within this container might become unavoidably suggestive of a similar potential for finitude (as the presented artwork can be argued to operate in tableau). So, to operate in such a manner might be to indulge in the closure of tableau or the finitude of the toy world. On this Stewart states:

The toy world presents a projection of the world of everyday life; this real world is miniaturized or giganticized in such a way as to test the relation between materiality and meaning.³⁶³

Such a relation, exaggerated by the exhibition space, and perhaps (although to perhaps lesser extent) by any art that is able to articulate, designate, or demarcate a site, might be argued to function in tableau, and through that apparent compression, might be approached as evident of an operational miniaturisation. Thus, the presentative schism, again accessing Laruelle³⁶⁴ and the parallax of Foster,³⁶⁵ might (when parsed spatially) be interpretable as a rescaling, as a world rendered in microcosm—redolent of the claims of micro-utopia attributed to works grouped under the moniker of *Relational Aesthetics*. Although the artwork held within this field might be discursive and referential, plotted by key *pylons*, the ideological distortion formed by that plotting, understood as the unified field of contemporary art (through

³⁶¹ An example might be Ozlyn the site of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, an operation supported by comments made by Neudecker on her own siting of *There is Always Something More Important*.

³⁶² See Stewart, S. (1984). On Longing. p. 16. Here Stewart writes “In this sense, every narrative is a miniature and every book a microcosm, for such forms always seek to finalize, bring closure to, a totality or model.”

³⁶³ Ibid. p. 115.

³⁶⁴ Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy.”

³⁶⁵ Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real*.



Ciuffo, L. (2012) *Tilt-shift photography of Campos do Jordão, Brazil*. [photograph]. *Campos do Jordão*.

which art is *spectated*), might be thought of as an intrinsically miniaturising lens. Like the, microscope, or, like the depth of field of a tilt shift photograph, such a lens seemingly pulls what is within its purview into proximate, miniaturised intensity.³⁶⁶ Also, although there may be action, or narrative unfolding within this space, following Mondloch, these actions contained in tableau-like artwork might be rendered with a theatricality stemming from life (re)enacted, presented, and received as discrete, experienced through autonomous temporalities, that may be taken and discarded—window shopped.³⁶⁷ In this context the comments of Stewart become of more significance, particularly those that chart the transitory states of the arrested life of the tableau, that Stewart describes in terms of the “transition from hesitation to action, from the inanimate to the animate, [that] continually appears in the theme of the toy come to life.”³⁶⁸ Such a operation resonates with Mondloch’s observation of the apparent autonomous temporalities of

³⁶⁶ Facilitating an intensity in focus is a key function of presentation.

³⁶⁷ Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens*.

³⁶⁸ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 69.

the spectator. The world of the artwork, (like the world of the book), is one that can be opened and closed at a whim.³⁶⁹ Additionally ‘hesitation of action’ might be compared to the hesitation located in the process of disambiguation—the interval where possibilities are measured and culled, the subject deciding how to proceed in undecidable terrain. Stewart goes on to state:

The inanimate toy repeats the still life’s theme of arrested life, the life of the tableau. But once the toy becomes animated, it initiates another world, the world of the daydream. The beginning of narrative time here is not an extension of the time of everyday life; it is the beginning of an entirely new temporal world, a fantasy world parallel to (and hence never intersecting) the world of everyday reality.³⁷⁰

This reverie might be might be likened to the ‘displaced’ artwork—life within life. The operation of art as miniaturisation has been circled and toyed with, and discussed in the miniaturised recoding of the spectator’s body both in *The Field Equation*, and *06/10/2011–21/10/2011*. But, in excess of this recoding, I want to focus on the area of practice often occupied by ‘relational art’, ‘participatory art’, ‘social practice’, or ‘delegated performance’. This approach is useful as it focuses upon an area of discussion relating to traditionally held binary relations occurring between ‘active’ participation set against ‘passive’ spectating (often assumed in the miniature, and in latter sections states of reverie). In this context, operations of miniaturisation (as articulations of differences), might call to attention supplementary systems that complicate and make contingent the relationship between binary partners, making visible the porous boundaries and littoral surfaces that ‘separate’ the two formations, an operation that works to undermine structures that presuppose these relations as autonomous and independent. Due to interlinking and semiautonomy, exploring one side of a dyadic formation often yields understandings useful for the partner state. Therefore, focus is given to participatory works that are frequently employed as avatars by thinking on participation and collaboration, particularly those that feature

³⁶⁹ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 71.

³⁷⁰ See Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*.

heavily in contemporary literature used by this project like *Untitled (Still/Free)*.³⁷¹

Examining the relation of the ‘participatory work’ to its site, specifically works that manifest within the exhibition space or gallery environment, we become overtly aware of the operations of the institution as a method for the demarcating of art, and also its function as a load-bearing column for a number of conceptual support structures (in addition to those physical elements that also occupy the space). Movements such as minimalism and institutional critique,³⁷² historical precedents, and common sense have contributed to such an awareness. The format of the gallery, exemplified in the ‘white cube’, is an attempt at sanitising and distancing, or dampening down cluttering relations for a clearer apprehension of the artwork, to lend an intensity to relations that the artwork is understood be provoking or invoking. Elucidated in previous recitations of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, the exhibition space of Ozlyn quite clearly functions as containing vitrine, a device used by a number of artists. Mariele Neudecker (who might be considered an authority on vitrines) notes the relationship in her recent sculptural works,³⁷³ and sculptor Callum Morton frequently employs the device across a number of his works.³⁷⁴ Curator at large, Hou Hanru’s *The Lab*³⁷⁵ at the *5th Auckland Triennial* is an alternative example of the exhibition space operating like receptacle or vitrine, although in contrast to the direct use of architectural elements as a method for framing, Hanru might be better understood to rely on a general recoding, the designation of a space as vitrine, as a site for containing experimentation. *The Lab* is self described as “a joint project between the architecture and spatial design faculties of AUT University, The

³⁷¹ Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)*.

³⁷² For a concise historicisation of the development of institutional critique see: Buchloh, B. (1999). *Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetics of Administration to the Critique of Institutions*. *October* 55: 105–143.

³⁷³ Neudecker, M. (2013). “Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes.”.

³⁷⁴ See works by Callum Morton such as Morton, C. (2005). *Monument #25: Grotto*.

³⁷⁵ Hanru, H. (2013). *The Lab*. [participatory art]. Auckland: Auckland Art Gallery

University of Auckland and UNITEC. These institutions worked alongside students, local academics, designers and architects to develop a series of two to three week-long interdisciplinary design projects”.³⁷⁶ Following observed development of the art gallery as a site of experimentation,³⁷⁷ and as evidenced by its title, *The Lab* made explicit the potential functionality of gallery space as scientific vitrine—a container for experimentation and observation. Less explicitly, the much cited example of *Untitled (Free/Still)*³⁷⁸ by Rirkrit Tiravanija, makes use of the exhibition site as vitrine. Tiravanija’s *Untitled (Free/Still)*, is an enactment of the ‘everyday’ scenario of cooking and serving food. Constructed, depicted and reenacted in the gallery space, this scenario is not performed in the domestic confines of the home, or in the commercial delimitation of a restaurant or cafeteria, but in an art gallery for art gallery patrons. In recent manifestations of the work (such as its 2012 reincarnation at MOMA), *Untitled (Free/Still)* has developed to include a scale model of the original gallery space where ‘*Untitled (Free)*’ was performed. As such *Untitled (Free/Still)* can undoubtedly be considered in light of a double beat, first enactment, then reenactment. The model gallery (nested inside the ‘real gallery’) works to exaggerate existing displacement operations, particularly those that play out in the schism between the act of sociability as performed in the praxis of life and as performed within art-making contexts. Here, the habituation and general conviviality of sharing a meal might counterbalance such a relationship through a reverie of repetition—operational loss where a participant might slip between contexts (from a participant/spectator in an artwork, to a civilian enjoying a meal). And yet, despite the capabilities of ‘loss’, the positioning of the work as distinct from the everyday is still profoundly overt, as an always ‘present’ point of return.

Due to existing expectations of art as something observed, *Untitled (Free/Still)* is undoubtably visual, and adheres to the general orthodoxy of

³⁷⁶ The Lab. (9th May, 2013). Retrieved from <http://aucklandtriennial.com/lab/>

³⁷⁷ See the extensive footnote by Claire Bishop in Bishop, Claire. 2004. “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics.” *October* 110 (Autumn). MIT Press: 51–79. p. 51.

³⁷⁸ Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)*.



Hanru, H. (2013). *The Lab*. [participatory art]. Auckland:
Auckland Art Gallery.



Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)*. [participatory installation].
New York: MOMA.

presentation (now exaggerated by the scale model). Adherence to this aesthetic and method of presentation, although containing the possibility of the ‘uncontainable’ due to the *active* elements of the participant, is evocative of the tableau through its ‘over-descriptiveness’. In this context, the scale model can be viewed as somewhat of a trope for Tiravanija. Other works, like the recreation of his apartment,³⁷⁹ become examples of a set of demonstrative concerns (realised through the scale model that seemingly gravitate towards tableau—affected by the compression of miniaturisation). Because of this, *Untitled (Free/Still)*, is compressed and made more compact, more ‘complete’, more total, to adhere to presentation to a spectator in addition to the participant, both as visual proposition in the gallery space, and as easily consumable image for those who missed the work.

The function of tableau in addition to the demarcating nature of the exhibition space, and the nature of art as a demarcation in itself, works to displace the ‘everyday’ act of *Untitled (Free/Still)* from its aligned referee (although as stated this might be recuperated to some extent). This rupturing can be interpreted as a scaling down through isolation and dissonance, and like the miniature, functions as an island in referential exchange.

In surveying art across this spectrum, the necessity of display, based on the needs of spectatorship, the needs for *presentation* (and also, following Bishop, for the demonstrable outcome for people who pay),³⁸⁰ might provoke a tendency towards the demonstrative, the didactic, and pedagogical (much

³⁷⁹ Tiravanija, R. (1999). *Untitled 1999 (Tomorrow Can Shut Up and Go Away)*. [participatory art]. New York: Gavin Brown's Enterprise.

³⁸⁰ Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*. See Bishop's comments on art's alignment with New Labour's social agenda. Writing on reductive and unproductive quality of the activity/passivity dyad, Bishop states: "This insight can be extended to the argument that high culture, as found in art galleries, is produced for and on behalf of the ruling classes; by contrast, 'the people' (the marginalised, the excluded) can only be emancipated by direct inclusion in the production of a work. This argument – which also underlies arts funding agendas influenced by policies of social inclusion – assumes that the poor can only engage physically, while the middle classes have the leisure to think and critically reflect. The effect of this argument is to reinstate the prejudice by which working-class activity is restricted to manual labour." p. 54.

like the genealogy of many miniatures).³⁸¹ What results from this condition is the miniaturisation of social concerns, where a demonstrative modelling of the social, through its reenactment, works to defer the social. Following this line of thought, *Untitled (Free/Still)* might be parsed in a similar way to Stewart's description of the amusement park (a space that often employs the miniature). In this, Stewart notes the image produced "not only bears the tangible qualities of material reality but also serves as a representation, an image, of a reality which does not exist",³⁸² going on to recount how although the content of the amusement park is often fantastic, through miniaturisation it is given life. Significantly, Stewart notes that miniaturisation can only occur in relation to *things* that have some sort of material being, thus they align to real world referent. Finally, Stewart goes on to note the frequent function of the space of the amusement park as "bringing history" to life—as a space of reenactment.

In this context, the space of *Untitled (Free/Still)*, although not necessarily a container for the fantastic like the amusement park (although the conviviality of micro-utopia may indeed be fantastic),³⁸³ might undoubtedly be read in terms of the ambition of both the miniature (that has been parsed through the thoughts of Stewart),³⁸⁴ and the affective reverie of reenactment as understood through Schneider.³⁸⁵ Within the 'toy world' presented by Tiravanija, within the doll house of the gallery, in drawing the 'lost' social into immediacy—to bring the arrested life of the tableau *to life*—we might be taken in an operative oscillation characterised by a [temporary] affirmative erasure or loss. This would not be to repress antagonisms, at least

³⁸¹ Here we might think about Neudecker's recent work, particularly with its focus upon global warming in the context of the arctic. See Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*.

³⁸² Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 73

³⁸³ Ibid. Significantly, Stewart writes on the nostalgia of the miniature that might be read in the ambitions of *Untitled (Free/Still)*: "the miniature unfolds in space. The observer is offered a transcendent and simultaneous view of the miniature, yet is trapped outside the possibility of a lived reality of the miniature. Hence the nostalgic desire to present the lower classes, peasant life, or the cultural other within a timeless and uncontaminable miniature form." p. 80.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

not in the sense proposed by Claire Bishop,³⁸⁶ but in the erasure of affective reverie, to be lost in a presentness where “understanding is sacrificed to be in context”.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ See Bishop, C. (2004). “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.”.

³⁸⁷ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. Stewart writes on this “For the function of the miniature here is to bring historical events “to life,” to immediacy, and thereby to erase their history, to lose us within their presentness. The transcendence presented by the miniature is a spatial transcendence, a transcendence which erases the productive possibilities of understanding through time. Its locus is thereby the nostalgic. The miniature here erases not only labor but causality and effect. Understanding is sacrificed to being in context. Hence the miniature is often a material allusion to a text which is no longer available to us, or which, because of its fictiveness, never was available to us except through a second-order fictive world.” p. 74.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #4:

Reverie

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—*In Reverie:*

What the cartographic endeavours of this project have attempted to map are conflated spaces in the art encounter; spaces that present as improbable assemblages of juxtaposed *other* spaces, many having no proper business being ‘space’ in the first place. Here the artwork is an occasion, for the invoking or the drawing forth of *heterotopia*. Spaces are pulled into proximity and bound as appurtenance, transmitting to become a shared state of belonging pinioned by the artwork. Some spaces seem to oscillate between avowed space-hood and something else. However, the artwork shows little regard for either precarious spatiality or any apparent incompatibility to what is drawn into tableau at the invocation the art encounter.

On certain registers, this tableau, or site, or event-space of art encounter, may vary in what it contains. It may appear ostensibly barren or pared back in terms of things (like Tino Sehgal’s delegated performances),³⁸⁸ or, in stark contrast to any absences, calculated or otherwise, this event-space might be fully occupied (like a Tricia Middleton installation³⁸⁹ or 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) that swamped a space to near capacity with a 6x3m structure, and a trailing series of installative gestures). However, belying the superficial quantification of visible materials in the art encounter, other registers flicker, unrealised surfaces, penetrating and inheriting parent spaces, excessive, expanding in all directions. This space is densely plotted, aspected in part as an ideological space where meaning is emitted, flows, arranges, accretes, dissolves, and accumulates. It is a space plotted with bodies, tagged by things—as *pylons*—that attempt to parse sensation, while regulating the flow of meaning, thus regulating and structuring identification and understanding. These *pylons* bisect and penetrate the spaces of the encounter, attached to other bricolages, enmeshed with the artwork, as multi-dimensional assemblies.

³⁸⁸ See Sehgal, T. (2010). *4th Auckland Triennial*. As stated previously although Sehgal disavows official documentation, a large amount of crowd-sourced documentation can be found by the simple performance of a google search. Here it can be observed the evocative bareness of Sehgal’s aesthetic; a focus upon the human form in an unadorned exhibition space.

³⁸⁹ See Middleton, T. (2012). *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy*. There will be a discussion of this work later in this section.

So in occupying the ‘site’ of art,³⁹⁰ (understanding this site as a conflation of spaces bisected by bodies), a series of modes are available to a spectator for experiencing what is encountered; what is perceived, viewed, felt, or thought. Of particular interest to this research in extending a notion of encounter, is a specifically unspecific space, that is often irreducible, unpredictable, and volatile—the space occupied *in* reverie. Particular to the use of miniature diorama in this research, such as the ravaged primordial/eschatological terrain of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, is an experience of reverie often recounted by spectators, brought about in the encounter of such works. This might be traced in part to the content; the terrain of these diorama might be located in archetypal fantasies, auto-invoking a cluster of narratives; from *Stalker*, to *LOTR*, to *The Evil Dead*, to fairy tales, to myth and legend. In addition, the device of the miniature is posited by scholars such as Stewart³⁹¹ as tending to isolate the spectator through its perceived fixity, gesturing towards states of interiority embodied in the viewing subject. However, although the miniature diorama might lend itself openly to reverie and operates in invoking this state (its tableau-like form³⁹² almost begs for such a state to be embraced), what begs attention, is the capability and capacity for reverie outside the ‘low-hanging-fruit’ of the miniature diorama. In other words, shifts provoked by the miniature might jump to other *bodies*, not normally associated with states of reverie.³⁹³ Following this supposition of miniaturisation outlined in the previous section, reverie (as articulated in the

³⁹⁰ To reiterate, an expanded conception of site is used by the project to refer to the conflated form of the art encounter as an event-space. Usage slips from time to time, because as was touched upon in the introductory sections of this document, the project follows a similar sentiment to that held by scholar Rebecca Schneider in relation to her discussion of the syncopated temporality of performance. Like Schneider expresses in terms of theatricality, that seems to slip between terms like copy, simulacra, mimesis. Such slippage is in the nature of those terms. So in that same way encounter, or the event-space, is approached with a similar sense of slippage informed by the inherent uncontainable quality in systems of this kind. See Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

³⁹¹ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

³⁹² See section 3 of this text. Here the miniature diorama is posited to draw out an imagining by the spectator, a projection of their body in the uninhabitable miniature space.

³⁹³ To a close reader, this jump is evidence of a debt to Teresa Brennan, accessed through Schneider. See Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. And of course, see Brennan, T. (2004). *The Transmission of Affect*.

miniature), might be expanded to create understandings located in the 1:1, but none-the-less miniaturised space of art.

O'Sullivan³⁹⁴ partially attends to this concern, discussing a problematic posed by Derrida on writing's 'lack' in engaging visual art.³⁹⁵ In following Derrida, O'Sullivan is troubled by a situation where writing may take up the role of coloniser. As writing on art generally follows in the wake of artworks, the written text might risk 'colonising' the visual text. O'Sullivan identifies the need for an approach that "does not reduce or seek to limit the art experience, but rather opens it up to further adventures."³⁹⁶ Such a sentiment resonates with Robert Smithson's attraction to entropy, related by scholar Felicity Colman as "a device for unlimited speculation".³⁹⁷ O'Sullivan puts forward the model of the "pagan"³⁹⁸ Buddhist *Puja*, as a heterogeneous ritual activity; suggested as a method for a multi-modal participation³⁹⁹ in encounter. Operating in contrast to many contemporary contentions of how

³⁹⁴ O'Sullivan, S. (2001). *Writing on Art*.

³⁹⁵ For source discussion see: Derrida, J. (1987). *The Truth in Painting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 155.

³⁹⁶ O'Sullivan, S. (2001). *Writing on Art*

³⁹⁷ Colman, Felicity. 2006. "Affective Entropy." p. 176

³⁹⁸ O'Sullivan, S. (2001). *Writing on Art*. O'Sullivan is tipping his hat to Lyotard here, but the idea of the heterodox is worth emphasising.

³⁹⁹ It is worth noting here alternate interpretations of 'participation' in an art related context. Claire Bishop notably defines participation as involving groups of people, distancing participation and 'participatory art' from 'interactivity', on this Bishop writes: "I will be referring to this tendency as 'participatory art', since this connotes the involvement of many people (as opposed to the one-to-one relationship of 'interactivity') and avoids the ambiguities of 'social engagement', which might refer to a wide range of work, from engagé painting to interventionist actions in mass media; indeed, to the extent that art always responds to its environment (even via negativa), what artist isn't socially engaged?". For this project Bishop's quantification of participation is overly prescriptive and overly presumptive particularly in the case of encounter, although it is acknowledged that it may be drawn from a need to focus her research. This project considers participation as capable of existing in a diverse set of temporalities and localities. For further reading on Bishop's position see Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells*. p. 12

encounter *should* operate, a model like the *puja* may be capable of reconciling art operating on a number of various registers.⁴⁰⁰

Although O'Sullivan's gaze is initially focused upon a model for reconciling writing and art, the model of the *puja* displays the potential for a broader reach. To persevere with an interpretation of an art encounter as an invocation of *heterotopia*, ritual practices—like the *puja*—might be considered akin to a practice *of heterotopia* due to the various spaces that are knotted together in its practice. In applying the *puja*'s framework, the art encounter is framed as a kind of ritual practice. In this context, a meditative moment in the *puja* is particularly resonant with reverie when considering archetypal and aestheticised conceptions of reverie—how reverie is thought to present, how it *looks* and appears; passivity, stillness, introspection, interiority and so on. This part-*puja*, the meditative state, is described by O'Sullivan as “a focused state of listening, of waiting, for moments of intensity (a trembling) [...] suspension of usual sensory distractions; a preparation and an intense threshold.”⁴⁰¹ This is a thread of discussion that exists throughout a number of O'Sullivan's texts⁴⁰² drawing from Jean-François Lyotard's ‘practice of patience’⁴⁰³ that “produces an opening for, an experience of the event”.⁴⁰⁴ This thinking positions the meditative ‘loss’ of the *puja*, and the ‘opening’ of the ‘practice of patience’ as exemplary

⁴⁰⁰ O'Sullivan, S. (2001). *Writing on Art*. This is a paraphrasing of O'Sullivan's essay to get to our own point but clearly O'Sullivan states: “The *puja* as access point onto other worlds might not be a bad model for all art. For all art is ritual in this sense. It may invite a reading. Indeed it may invite a deconstruction. But to remain solely within this remit is to miss what art does best: effects a transformation. As such art, like the *puja* itself, calls for a different mode of interaction: participation. To miss – or elide – this magical – and immanent – function is to remain unaffected by art.” p. 119

⁴⁰¹ Ibid p. 117

⁴⁰² O'Sullivan, S. (2001). “The Aesthetics of Affect: Thinking art beyond representation.” *Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities*, 6(3), 125–135.

⁴⁰³ Lyotard, J.-F. (1988). *Peregrinations: Law, Form, Event*. New York: Columbia UP. O'Sullivan quotes Lyotard as such: “[One must] become open to the “It happens that” rather than the “What happens” ...[and this] requires at the very least a high degree of refinement in the perception of small differences ... In order to take on this attitude you have to impoverish your mind, clean it out as much as possible, so that you make it incapable of anticipating the meaning, the “What” of the “It happens...” The secret of such ascesis lies in the power to be able to endure occurrences as “directly” as possible without the mediation of a “pre-text.” Thus to encounter the event is like bordering on nothingness.”

⁴⁰⁴ O'Sullivan, S. (2001). “The Aesthetics of Affect.” p.128

apertures for reverie. Unsurprisingly, the mental impoverishment as suggested by Lyotard, and the general occlusion of selected sensory data that are amicable to meditative states (so probably to reverie), are evocatively presented in the orthopraxy *and* orthodoxies⁴⁰⁵ of the contemporary exhibition space—particularly the contemporary conception of the white cube. In this regard, prior discussions on the *island* become pertinent. Of particular significance, and worth brief reiteration to locate and hold these key points in a proximate space of thought, are methods discussed in the preceding section of this exegesis for shoring up the ‘stability’ of the island. Apparent in the exemplary display devices of the vitrine—an island *par excellence*—these devices present as attempts at ‘isolation in the open’; preserving the interiority of the miniature diorama, an interiority that might be seized by the spectator.⁴⁰⁶ Likewise, if art as a miniaturisation or diminutive is to be acknowledged, the re-spatialising intensity of such a miniaturisation further works as a displacing and thus isolating device. Here the spectator might be understood to occupy a structural position as conduit between interior and exterior sites, their vitality working to arrest the structural lack of the artwork, their autonomous temporalities working to revitalise the lifeless world of the tableau.

To reengage with O’Sullivan’s initial goal, described as a ‘flattening’ of the distinctions between making art and writing about that art,⁴⁰⁷ or, reformulated and rephrased: easing the transition (or an easing of antagonisms occurring) between the *event* of the artwork and the *event* of

⁴⁰⁵ It is noted that many galleries and museums seek to disrupt these orthodoxies and orthopraxies from time to time, ‘bring life into the gallery’ *etc.*, but nevertheless, these things are ubiquitous enough and prevalent enough to make any deviations temporary.

⁴⁰⁶ See section 3 of this text, particularly in the context of Susan Stewart’s comments on the miniature.

⁴⁰⁷ It is worth noting here that in later texts O’Sullivan positions diagrammatic forms and their emergence in the written text as being more than justified as operating as an artwork in the expanded field. See Burrows, D., & O’Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*.

the responding written text,⁴⁰⁸ it is useful to emphasise a fairly obvious condition of reverie; that reverie is indifferently intertextual in its occupation, able to take a reader of a text as easily as a spectator beholding an object. So when O’Sullivan speaks of the description of art in a text as a conjuring of its object, and the *puja* as an immersive space that may incarnate the invisible that lies outside the immediate of human experience—outside the “fantasies of realism”⁴⁰⁹—he may well be describing a space kindred to reverie (blood brothers). It is worth cautioning at this point that if we are to consider our own reveries, they are not necessarily bound to a specific register, such as the register of sensation ‘directly hitting the psyche’—a revelry in immediacy where the mediation of language is temporarily suspended or loosened (although this may be the case). Instead, our reveries are capable of containing a wide gamut of registers in addition to those that are intimated by the meditative moments. Like the multi-modal framework of the *puja*, reverie can be just as much a meditative revelry in sensation as it can be a revelry in narrative, reenactment, recollection, speculation, historicising, rethinking, or labour.

—I Can’t Tell What is Happening Because I Cannot See it:

The volatile and unpredictable nature of reverie, the impenetrability of its subjectivity, constitutes a key obstacle and also a key point of interest a critical approach to reverie. Like secrets, or hidden caches, our reveries are spaces of interiority and isolation. The experience of inhabiting reverie can be shared, but not the reverie itself, so they can be at once communal and solitary, simultaneously open and isolated. A reverie may be transmitted through recitation, although a secondhand reverie is bound to shed some of its vitality (although it may gain a different vitality in the process). A

⁴⁰⁸ It is worth noting here that under the decisional analysis of art, the states of presentation to representation to writing might be anticipated as specular turns informed by the structure as inevitable. Thus in this light, distinctions made between events such as the presentation and the written text can be viewed as arbitrary, reiterating O’Sullivan’s view that such distinctions are fictional.

⁴⁰⁹ O’Sullivan, S. (2001) “The Aesthetics of Affect.”. p. 128. O’Sullivan borrows this phrase from Lyotard who is referenced extensively throughout the text.

transmission of reverie is also reliant on the command of language (and its limits), so the ability to exchange the content of a reverie, even in this reduced capacity, is reliant on the capability of a subject to articulate or to delineate.

Communicated reverie (or states of reverie in general) may also be suspicious sites due to their location within the *other*, the contents of *other* spaces are unknowable—we just have to take their word for what is in them. A reverie may also be unpredictable, the control of reverie by its inhabitant (who is also its container) may be tenuous and their recollection may be *insufficient*. So the theorisation of what occurs when inhabiting a space of reverie is empirically fraught and exposed to being written off as pointless speculation. None-the-less, while acknowledging the structural blindness presented by reverie, and the potential folly in speculating on this site, this project will not be cowed, proceeding unhindered to speculate on reverie in relation to (the project's) sculptural practices, holding forth the basic reasoning that it is interesting and provokes intriguing lines of thought and possibility for a practitioner.

A potential approach to temper speculation on the contents of reverie (which is evasive in regards to the art encounter), is in terms of what reverie separates, demarcates or punctuates: to approach reverie in terms of thresholds or portals, of openings and closings. This approach is an acknowledgement that what happens *in* reverie is significant and important, but of equal importance is entry and exit and re-entry—how the traversal of these thresholds might configure and refigure encounter upon a return from reverie. Collaborators Burrows and O'Sullivan posit Guattari's '*z-points*' as voids or points of collapse. Although such points are characterised as (black) holes in a discourse, ringing these disturbances and singularities are formations of accretions or consistencies—no matter how fleeting the disturbance might be. Subjectivity is spun around the void and its surrounding accretions, creating a precarious sort of consistency based upon subjectivity and chaos.⁴¹⁰ As such the *z-point* might be compared to the

⁴¹⁰ See Burrows, D., & O'Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*.

Lacanian ‘phallic’ spot that is espoused by Žižek to be a key function of the anamorphosis. In this context Žižek writes:

it is by means of the "phallic" spot that the observed picture is subjectivized: this paradoxical point undermines our position as "neutral," "objective" observer, pinning us to the observed object itself. This is the point at which the observer is already included, inscribed in the observed scene"⁴¹¹

Here, like the *z-point*, the ‘spot that sticks out’ might present as a similar assemblage around which subjectivity is hooked, and subsequently accumulates. So like the accretions of these points and spots, reverie might be approached in terms of its own accretions, the accumulated consistencies and arrangements that form at its portals. Furthermore, as reverie is not just a void around which subjectivity is spun but a portal that subjectivity can transgress, the exit points of reverie may be doubly interesting in their status as littoral zones, not just as accretions of the sensible, but as the leavings of reverie. Also, if *ex-reverie* (as the space we traditionally locate reality, or the sensible, through a sovereign act of volition or purposiveness; focus and intention and control) is *more* ‘trustworthy’, *more* ‘empirical’, *less* ‘suspicious’, then perhaps like strobing bulbs that fill each other out to become solid light, the conflated space constituted by *in* and *ex* reverie may perform a similar function, as an *interpolation*, filling in the flaws of the other, with each cycle, with each strobe.

—*Detaching Reverie:*

Reverie cannot be reduced to states of passivity. Such a passivity/activity paradigm presents an often problematic dyad where passivity is frequently characterised as a lack of engagement and as a disengagement of the spectator.⁴¹² On this subject, Claire Bishop contends that many recent methods of quantifying encounter have been established through institutional imperative, driven by bureaucratic reporting criteria that

⁴¹¹ Žižek, S. (1992). *Looking Awry*. pp. 90–91.

⁴¹² Bishop, C. (Ed.) (2006). *Participation*.

institutions are required to comply with.⁴¹³ This type of situation may lead to the institutional incentivising of artists to produce projects that help meet such criteria, like the ideological apparatus of Althusser and Žižek.⁴¹⁴ But, in a broader context, the privileging of what is seen (and suspicion of the unseen or hidden), may be deciphered from the methods of interaction modelled by the Lacanian partial subject⁴¹⁵ as described by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe; the privileging of visibility becomes a strategy for ameliorating (or reducing) antagonisms produced by the impenetrability of the *other*.⁴¹⁶ After all, many actions and gestures are performed precisely to mitigate the impenetrability of the other, as a beneficial process of disambiguation, to assuage suspicions—the handshake, the wave, the white-flag, the bird, the fierce haka, the warm and welcoming waiata.

I contend that reverie is not restricted by categorisations of this variety. As such, it is of diminished worth to become captured in the gravitational pull of re-litigating debates on activity or passivity.⁴¹⁷ Here, the unbound volatility that characterises reverie engenders an indifference to activity. We might be *taken* by reverie, lost to reverie, but sometimes also *cede* to (or indulge in, or like Lyotard, create openings to) reverie—as a sovereign act of volition to *cede* and be *taken*.⁴¹⁸ The threshold to reverie can be traversed regardless of positioning. Reverie is as open to the spectator beholding an object, as it is to the participant producing in the ‘laboratory’, or any combination created by these constructions. This could amount to being lost

⁴¹³ Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells*. p. 34. Here Bishop writes: “The production and reception of the arts was therefore reshaped within a political logic in which audience figures and marketing statistics became essential to securing public funding.”

⁴¹⁴ Žižek, S. (1989). *The Sublime Object of Ideology*.

⁴¹⁵ See earlier discussions in this exegesis on antagonism, or otherwise see: Laclau, E., & Chantal, M. (2001). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. pg. 88

⁴¹⁶. Ibid.

⁴¹⁷. See introduction to Bishop, C. (Ed.) (2006). *Participation*.

⁴¹⁸ This statement accesses earlier discussion on the politics of installation, where Groy's looks as the space of the installation as privatised, but none-the-less given space, operating by sovereign fiat of the artist. For further reading see: Groy's, B. (2009). “Politics of Installation.”.

in thought, shifting from tack to tack, or party to a ‘low-level scanning’.⁴¹⁹ Here it might be useful to consider the anecdotes of those lost in action and *in reverie*, like runners lost in their thoughts, tracing the contours of unexpected territory as they traverse terrain. For all its potential mundanity, it may also be useful to consider other instances where states of reverie may foreclose a subject performing the ‘praxis of life’, from domestic chores to other kinds of labouring—it would be an impoverished subject that is devoid of these experiences.

Foucault rather poignantly employs the analogy of the ship as “heterotopia par excellence”, a floating part of space in space, at once isolated, yet traversing a sea of possibility, point to point, point to the reaches of the edge—to the colonies—searching for precious things.⁴²⁰ Cynically approached, Foucault’s sentiment might be written-off as overly-whimsical, particularly when employed in concert with reverie. But, what is touched upon by Foucault (if we are to posit reverie as heterotopic), is an autonomy based in *interconnectedness* or the ability to forge interconnections, to map, and traverse, and to join dots and points and spots. That reverie, while detached and isolated (you are either onboard or are cast overboard), is simultaneously enmeshed in substance. So if the art encounter is like an island (in the way it forecloses in the open), then maybe reverie is like the ship (which Foucault describes as reserve of imagination),⁴²¹ or what this project conflates as art encounter and reverie are both ships, crossing (or colliding) in the night. Reverie may be a mobile space of traversal, that may traverse trade lanes and currents that are only

⁴¹⁹ See earlier descriptions in this text of Smithson’s method of site designation, here Smithson talks about a kind of low-level scanning, where materials hit the psyche. This kind of description is quite easily interpretable as like a state of reverie, if not a full state of reverie.

⁴²⁰ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias.”. Foucault writes in full: “Brothels and colonies, here are two extreme types of heterotopia. Think of the ship: it is a floating part of space, a placeless place, that lives by itself, closed in on itself and at the same time poised in the infinite ocean, and yet, from port to port, tack by tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies, looking for the most precious things hidden in their gardens. Then you will understand why it has been not only and obviously the main means of economic growth (which I do not intend to go into here), but at the same time the greatest reserve of imagination for our civilization from the sixteenth century down to the present day. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations where it is lacking, dreams dry up, adventure is replaced by espionage, and privateers by the police.” p. 27.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

intimated from the shore of the island. Reverie may be itinerant but anchored when needs be, extensive but returning to a home port, and like the freedom for exploration and commerce afforded by the ship, and the often cited loophole of ‘international waters’, is unrestricted by simple categorisations.

Rancière’s theories on spectatorship and emancipation, become significant in supporting a theorisation of reverie, in part by casting away connections to prescriptive interpretations of encounter. Rancière’s *Emancipated Spectator*⁴²² posits an egalitarian model of the spectator, Rancière working to re-complicate traditional understandings of spectatorship that tend towards reinforcing divisive categorisations of active and passive. As such, these binaries are often linked to negative assumptions of empowerment/disempowerment and capacity/incapacity. To break down these divisions, Rancière proposes a spectatorship that participates through translation and the ‘refashioning’ of the image.⁴²³ In this regard, such a refashioning might also be extended to benefit interpretations of reverie, complicating assumptions of passivity as disengagement. And yet, reverie holds the potential for a radical disengagement, to the extent that it exceeds activity/passivity engagement/disengagement paradigms.

—It’s about Availability:

Reverie—a volatile state of subjectivity—cannot be expected to occur. Reverie requires a shift, so it may not be assumed that reverie will *take* or foreclose

⁴²² Rancière, J. (2009). *The Emancipated Spectator*.

⁴²³ Idid. In a significant passage Rancière writes: “Emancipation begins when we challenge the opposition between viewing and acting; when we understand that the self-evident facts that structure the relations between saying, seeing and doing themselves belong to the structure of domination and subjection. It begins when we understand that viewing is also an action that confirms or transforms this distribution of positions. The spectator also acts, like the pupil or scholar. She observes, selects, compares, interprets. She links what she sees to a host of other things that she has seen on other stages, in other kinds of place. She composes her own poem with the elements of the poem before her. She participates in the performance by refashioning it in her own way – by drawing back, for example, from the vital energy that it is supposed to transmit in order to make it a pure image and associate this image with a story which she has read or dreamt, experienced or invented. They are thus both distant spectators and active interpreters of the spectacle offered to them.”

the subject of the art encounter. Nor, following O’Sullivan and Lyotard,⁴²⁴ can we assume that a spectator will be ‘open’ to reverie. 24/01/2013–17/02/2013 crafted a platform that was covertly deployed in relation to the real ‘action’ of the work. Within this project the viewing platform, regardless of whether it is standing or seated, has become an important device for creating conditions where reverie might become ‘more available’ for a spectator. Within the context of the contemporary art, the platform (as seating or as a raised dais) is ubiquitous in exhibition practice as an aid for spectators. XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX openly acknowledges the status of the bench/platform as a cliché—if we are to follow O’Sullivan, it is an object of reaffirming recognition, not of ‘rupture’.⁴²⁵ In a response to this ubiquity, 24/01/2013–17/02/2013 employs certain visual cues and devices to displace or destabilise the location and identification of these objects as institutional fixtures. Motif such as the tinted putty that fills holes, herringbone joinery, or materials like the 50x50 clears, create a consistency or visual language that locates these platforms as a potential part of the artwork.

The viewing platform suggests an orthopraxy or correct action. It is habituated as site for contemplation (so perhaps reverie).⁴²⁶ In this way, the pursuit of reverie by these means might echo the pursuit of conviviality or micro-utopia in works like Tiravanija’s *Untitled (free/still)*.⁴²⁷ In the reverie of habituated ‘activity’, the pretension (and presentation) of art may be lost, and the spectator might find themselves immersed in something else, the spontaneity and temporality of lived reality—partially exceeding the ideological displacement of the artwork. As previously discussed, the platforms used in XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX may also call to attention

⁴²⁴ See Lyotard, J.-F. (1988). *Peregrinations*. Or otherwise, see O’Sullivan, S. (2001). “The Aesthetics of Affect. p. 128.

⁴²⁵ O’Sullivan S. (2006). *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari*. pp. 1–2.

⁴²⁶ The platform is a ubiquitous part of many art practices and is an engrained aspect of exhibition practice for institutions. As such, it might be taken as a low-level signal that locates the ‘variety’ of art to the spectator.

⁴²⁷ Tiravanija, R. (1992-2011). *Untitled (free/still)*.



Cribb, A. (2013). 24/01/2013–17/02/2013.
[outdoor installation]. Waiheke

to the act of spectating itself. For the spectator that makes use of the platform, and for *other* spectators observing the spectator that is presented in the artistic tableau–milieu, these plinth analogues foreground spectating as an *act*. Additionally, the unattended action of *spectating* is often a contemplative process (so is generally internal). So with an accounting for the self-consciousness of the spectated-spectator, and also the interiority suggested by the act of unattended spectating, a duo of potentially internalised modes of experience are presented, both of which may go someways in enabling, or providing fertile conditions for *other* internal states like reverie. The platform, in addition to occupying space as a (physical) obstacle that may require negotiation, through the act of drawing a spectator in/out, may also intervene in an art encounter—soliciting a change in the tempo and rhythm of spectating. In this respect the platform might be an ‘eddy’, an unwitting occasion for pause in the larger swirl of encounter—often we sit automatically when an opening is provided—the platform may move to temporarily (or sometimes with finality) arrest the performance of

reading, a synchronisation with the arrested world of the artwork.⁴²⁸ Here, the punctuating of encounter may allow for a slippage (or for switching) between modes—like an em dash allowing for a momentary diversion or deviance—creating an aperture for reverie to be taken up or to foreclose a subject.

As a means of engaging with an oscillation occurring in the art encounter—a ‘mode within a mode’—the platform of *24/01/2013–17/02/2013*⁴²⁹ (not pictured in the documentation) was initially conceived (quite literally) as a ternary structure.⁴³⁰ With a design that followed the format of the Victorian Conversation Seat, or *tête-à-tête*, the platform was used for spectating on participation taking place in the work (and at times interpreted as another agility obstacle in the trial format of the installation). Secondly, it was a platform for participation in face-to-face conversation with another subject: the aforementioned *tête-à-tête*. Thirdly, the platform offered up an opportunity for spectating away from the artwork, done in the face of the artwork, out across a stunning vista of the Waitemātā Harbour. This material intervention was in essence a diagramming of encounter; inside, outside, active, passive, isolated, use, misuse, communal, encounter, and importantly, attended to the possibility of the non-encounter as an important aspect of the diagram. Here the non-encounter stands as a vital and radical possibility of non-participation, as an encounter that failed to

⁴²⁸ See Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. Here Wall writes in full “Presented as arrested, the atmosphere of art presents the return of that which can never be excluded but which, at the same time, excludes everything. In the space of literature qualities cling to nothing, to no being. Something eludes cognition, but makes itself felt (if obscurely) as that which is never “itself,” that which is only “suggested.” Something comes but remains arrested in its “meanwhile.” p. 45.

⁴²⁹ *24/01/2013–17/02/2013* was an outdoor installation that used the format of the dog agility trial as a method of engaging with notions of site, space, and spectatorship. Alongside teasing out antagonisms occurring in the local community between advocates of dog access/non-access to coastal areas, through siting the installation on a multi-million dollar piece of private coastal property (that was opened up to the public for the exhibition), the work foregrounded notions of the public/private, capacity/incapacity, and of ‘proper’ use and misuse. The ‘agility trials’ in the work also made extensive use puns in reference to spectatorship: “setting a low bar”, “jumping through hoops” et cetera, functioning as a modelling of the spectators passage through the remainder of the Waiheke Island sculpture trail. As touched upon earlier in this exegesis, in engaging modes of labour (such as play), *24/01/2013–17/02/2013* might also provoke states of ‘active forgetting’, a reverie of action that might punctuate the encounter.

⁴³⁰ Here it must be noted that the platform is perfectly capable of exceeding any initial operational quantifications by the maker.

fire: either through a lack of identification, indifference, or as sovereign act of volition—to *not* categorise the assemblage of presented *things* as an artwork. It is that fundamental decision that forms the threshold of the art encounter, regardless of its duration.

The *tête-à-tête* of 24/01/2013–17/02/2013, as much open and *in* the installation (as isolated and objective to the installation) *could* be a site for reverie, just as much as it could be a substation for a variety of other more normative modes. Within the context of *tête-à-tête* as a diagram, the spectator can be accounted for in a way the theorist Grant Kester, generally identified as a proponent of participatory and collaborative practices, critically characterises as a “unilateral modelling”,⁴³¹ where the spectator’s presence is understood hypothetically.⁴³² Abiding by what Kester characterises as the “textual register” of art-making, an image, event, or object, that precedes the viewer, the unreliability of reverie creates questions of whether reverie adheres to classifications as a *mode* of art encounter in the first place. If as Kester states, artworks derived from the textual register are an enacting of artists’ vision, “for, or against” the spectator, then a spectator *in* reverie is an enacting of the spectators’ vision “for, or against” the artwork.⁴³³ From such a perspective, the term ‘mode’, made in reference to reverie, must be employed with some caution, as the same volatility and unpredictability that makes reverie a site of critical potential can just as easily be argued to locate reverie as alien and detached, so potentially not party to the art encounter at all. Thomas Carl Wall states in *Radical Passivity*, that:

Art is a caricature of life, not another, better, life. The artwork cannot assume or take on life. It overflows life on all sides, like water without a container. Unable to attain

⁴³¹ See Kester, G (2009) *Grant Kester*. This unilateral modelling might be considered in comparison to decisional structure as approached in the second chapter of this text. See Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy”.

⁴³² Ibid

⁴³³ Ibid. p. 9

the present moment, the artwork spills all the aspirations the artist built into it. Art can only empty itself of all the artist's efforts.⁴³⁴

In that context, reverie might be part of that overflow—that *excess* of an artwork that is understood in terms of its porousness. In this regard, reverie may meander, or pulse, or rupture, in and out of encounter, in and out of the configurations dictated by Decisional structure. Or owing to its capriciousness, it may leave and not come back. For the art encounter, reverie may become its punctuating mark. This volatility and potential finality is what makes it interesting.

—*Availability II:*

A range of devices relating to scale, spectating conditions, form, content, and theory have been employed in exploring states of the conflated art-encounter, and also to trace the outline of the speculative, contemplatively volatile space of reverie. Like the use of the *puja* employed by O'Sullivan to model a broad based ritual practice in art encounter, to Burrows and O'Sullivan's recent use of *non-schizoanalysis* to model an understanding of art via Guattari's therapeutics, operations in the artworks of this project have been informed by a similar application of *non-* models such as liminality in ritual.⁴³⁵ By drawing in these wider frameworks, *XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX* has attempted to provoke conditions amicable to reverie. Initial approaches were twofold, targeting display mechanics, and looking to provoke senses of indeterminacy or undecidability; to draw out or suspend processes of disambiguation, speculatively hopeful that this was an ill-formed space where reverie could flourish. The basis of that hypothesis was that these in-determined or undetermined spaces could create capacity for a spectator to express self-determination, therefore assuaging twin-goals: firstly, opening up a generally less prescriptive encounter—allowing for an expanded creativity on behalf of the spectator, and secondly, that the

⁴³⁴ Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. p. 41.

⁴³⁵ See Turner, V. (1987) *The Ritual Process*.

exercise of navigating a world of soft-edges, soft-boundaries, and littoral surfaces, might be an exercise where the traversal of a mind ‘less encumbered’ may lead to the thresholds of reverie.

In this regard, the initial employments based around the miniature diorama have been vital in testing how reverie may be made more available. As outlined, the miniature world foregrounds a dialectic between interior and exterior worlds. According to Stewart “the miniature becomes a stage on which we project, by means of association or intertextuality, a deliberately framed series of actions”.⁴³⁶ Amidst this thinking, the landscape of the diorama, uninhabitable by *other* bodies, becomes a landscape that may be seized and colonised by the spectatorial gaze. Here, diorama as diminutive might be more easily recoded as some sort of appurtenance, an interiorised space of belonging. It is into this space that the temporality of the spectator may unfold. In this gap, the *pylons* of the tableau create starting points for an ‘independent’ unfolding of whatever narrative actions the spectator might divine from that landscape.

Curator Susan Daniel-McElroy writes on the capacity of the miniature world in the context of Mariele Neudecker’s tank works. Daniel-McElroy states:

Her tank pieces envelope our gaze, prickle our imagination and lure us in to see beyond the obvious – albeit enchanted – illusion, we know that this is no representation of reality. But our imagination is caught, we look beyond the pleasure principle, to see what is behind the illusion and whilst Neudecker takes us into the light, she also reminds us of the creepy, spine-chilling quality of the silent forest in a continuing and clever critique of its cultural exploitation.⁴³⁷

The creepiness of the silent forest echoes observations made in the works of this project upon the primordial-anxiety produced by the landscape devoid of markers.⁴³⁸ But, also significant is Daniel-McElroy’s gesturing towards Bachelard’s observation on the natural inclination towards grandeur in

⁴³⁶ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 134.

⁴³⁷ Daniel-McElroy, S., & Neudecker, M., & Young, D. (2004). *Mariele Neudecker*.

⁴³⁸ See chapter 3 of this exegesis on the miniature.

reverie. Interestingly, Bachelard also notes the apparent volatility of reverie, and its capacity to ‘take’ a subject, writing “We do not see it start, and yet it always starts the same way, that is, it flees the object nearby and right away it is far off, elsewhere, in the space of elsewhere”.⁴³⁹ Bachelard goes on to write of the frequent locating of the ‘elsewhere’ in natural surroundings, where reverie might function as the original contemplation of the immense.⁴⁴⁰ In this, works using miniature diorama like those of this project, and also those of Neudecker such as *Heterotopias* and *Other Domestic Landscapes*,⁴⁴¹ might echo that sentiment: as representations of immensity, rendered diminutive, to the extent that they might be contemplated optically—spoor for a track traversed in reverie. Significantly Bachelard writes that “In this direction of daydreams of immensity, the real product is consciousness of enlargement”.⁴⁴² Here, the consciousness of enlargement might be analogous to the intensity in the spectating of miniaturisation. Such an intensity might be exaggerated in works of miniature diorama, yet is arguably visible in artworks that engage presentation methodologies that are tableau-like (or ‘vitrine-like’) in their articulation or framing of site. Finally, in a point that resonates with arboreal works like *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, Bachelard relates the attribute of the forest as transmitting a sense of the limitless world, a heterotopic space that is at once veiled, but transparent to action, “closed and, at the same time, open on every side.”⁴⁴³ In these sentiments are suggested an operation that echoes with the thoughts of Stewart on the relationship between the subject in regard to the miniature and ‘the gigantic’. Here, the gigantic is positioned as an interface point between the self and that which surrounds (and contains), the spaces we move through. In this context the contemplation of the immense, of the gigantic—played-out in the space of reverie—might be considered a method

⁴³⁹ Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. p. 183

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 183

⁴⁴¹ Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*.

⁴⁴² Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. p. 184.

⁴⁴³ Ibid. p. 185.

of reconciliation or recuperation, between the origins, of the private, individual history, and of public, natural histories.⁴⁴⁴

—*Soft Spaces:*

Neudecker's *I Don't Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run* employs viscous liquid that swamps the miniature landscape. Light's passage through the landscape is slowed and held in a near static state for presentation. In terms of communicating an effect, this mechanism summons conceptions of the picturesque and of the sublime, granting what is ostensibly a mundane occurrence of submersion—of immersion—an accumulated drama—a profundity, or *weight*, in excess of what might be found in the practice of everyday living.⁴⁴⁵

Amidst the diluvian substance of Neudecker's tank, the representational landscape of the vitrine (although miniature) produces a type of trap, for light but also for the spectator, positing a space of capture that the body can occupy, even if that affective occupation is an impossibility. This is a key function of the miniature and of rescaling: the drawing of the spectator's body into alignment (or referentiality), and ultimately into body(less) projection as an extension of this alignment⁴⁴⁶—a drawing into the physically uninhabitable space of the miniature landscape. In this, reverie might present as an opening into a volatility (recklessness or disorder) of the sublime that is tamed by containment in the vitrine. It is in this context that the contemplation of the gigantic, of the immense, might be argued to recuperate (or compensate for) the orderliness and domestication of the frame.

⁴⁴⁴ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 138.

⁴⁴⁵ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. In this context Susan Stewart significantly comments on the differences between the picturesque and the sublime. The Sublime according to Stewart is "marked by a potential recklessness, a dangerous surrender to disorder in nature, the picturesque is marked by a harmony of form, color, and light, of modulation approached by a distanced viewer. As is apparent in the word itself, the picturesque is formed by the transformation of nature into art and thus the manipulation of flux into form, infinity into frame." p. 88.

⁴⁴⁶ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 110

As already noted in the previous section, this type of relationship has been located within an approach to reenactment, reoccurrence, and re-performance. Here, civil war reenactment becomes a vehicle for Schneider's analysis how (re)performances may trouble conceptions of temporality, noting on the (re)enactors that "the act of putting their physical bodies into the (imaginative) picture, yields often unexpected results."⁴⁴⁷ Relating Schneider's reenactors to reverie in art encounter, it is the potential volatility of 'unexpected' results that provokes an interest in reverie for extending encounter. For the art encounter, affective reverie both as heterotopic space, and as a generative extension, may allow for an extended encounter that, as Foucault puts, "goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens".⁴⁴⁸

Returning to a crucial section of *Performing Remains*, Schneider elucidates a series of relations and operations in relation to theatricality and reenactment that evocatively resonate with this project's approaches to reverie, and more generally, to art encounter. Significantly, Schneider uses (war) reenactment to relate a state gained via a conflation of bodily labour, a connection to historical *traces*, and the performance of that trace. Schneider's contention is that in this conflation, bodies may be "partially merged across difference",⁴⁴⁹ partially collapsing temporal distinctions between one time and another. In relation to this project, Schneider's position rings true, as a key assertion of this project is that the bodily labouring of performing *spectatorship* and the poetic labouring of performing *reverie* are capable of collapsing distinctions, particularly those held within the proximity of the tableau. In historical reenactment and in some theatre (both of which can be argued to operate as miniaturised),⁴⁵⁰ a series of states are 'drawn out' that might be understood in terms of the

⁴⁴⁷ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

⁴⁴⁸ Foucault, M. (1986). "Of Other Spaces."

⁴⁴⁹ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 119

⁴⁵⁰ See chapter 3 of this exegesis, particularly the section on miniaturisation.

miniature. Such an analysis is based on two major features of the tableau as described by Stewart:

...first, the drawing together of significant, even if contradictory, elements, and thereby the complete filling out of “point of view”; and second, the simultaneous particularization and generalization of the moment. The tableau offers a type of contextual closure which would be inappropriate to genres rooted in the context of their utterance; the tableau effectively speaks to the distance between the context at hand and the narrated context; it is possible only through representation, since it offers a complete closure of a text framed off from the ongoing reality that surrounds it. Here we might think not only of sculpture but also of the photograph, which has made possible the dramatization and classicization of the individual life history.⁴⁵¹

In fact, Schneider accesses the tableau through the *tableaux vivant*⁴⁵² which she describes as dragging the “frozen scenes” from drama or from history, first into the live, then into the still of the image, and finally back into “stilled liveness”.⁴⁵³ In this instance, Schneider’s position might be translated into the oscillation or flickering occurring within the art encounter, either *in reverie*, *in action*, or *in proximity*,⁴⁵⁴ particularly, in the context of installation practices that exaggerate the status of space as image.⁴⁵⁵ Such a position may be considered overly anthropocentric, *things*; objects, gestures, images, are dragged in *and* out of liveness by the spectator, however, counterbalancing the anthropocentricity of this position, these *things* might be considered to reciprocate: not only drawing out each other, but drawing the spectator out into *liveness* (or *live-lifelessness*). Here the spectator might become a positional agent in an extended encounter, characterised in its

⁴⁵¹ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 63.

⁴⁵² Ibid p. 212. The *Tableaux Vivant* is form of entertainment where groups of silent and motionless people are arranged to create a specific scene. Susan Stewart recounts a parlour game called *tableau* where participants strike poses meant to convey a message and cry “*Tableau!*” as a signal that the pose is complete and now may be read. See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 124.

⁴⁵³ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 237

⁴⁵⁴ See back to discussions in the first chapter of this exegesis, particularly in the context of A.D. Schierning .

⁴⁵⁵ As covered earlier in the second chapter of this exegesis, the installation can operate pictorially, as was the case with *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, and the manner in which it might be viewed through the frame of the vitrine..

punctuation by moments of affective reverie—like a stone skipping the skein of the sensible.

Following this thread, reverie (as the loss/gain or suspension of *something*), might be considered a kind of hyperextension:⁴⁵⁶ broaching, bypassing, or collapsing distinctions and demarcations. In terms of the practice of affective reverie, and in reference to the temporality of performance, Schneider writes:

In an affective reverie, troubling the archive-driven tracks of a strictly linear approach to time, and manipulating the pitfalls and promises of anachronism like so many notes on a bugle, reenactors use their bodies to chase moments of forgetting where something learned (about time) becomes something played (in time), and where something played can touch or generate experience, even if “only for a minute.”⁴⁵⁷

What Schneider identifies is the ephemerality or capriciousness of such a state seemingly operating in spaces or moments of inattention. In this moment the gulf of the sensible that restricts ‘real’ experience gives way to a chiasmic, potentially cross-temporal, cross-spatial structuring, where crossing times appear to touch.⁴⁵⁸ And yet, it is that same ‘restricting’ sensible—that *knowledge*—as a source of understandings, that make possible conditions of ‘proximity’ required for states chiasmic contact.

Returning to Neudecker’s vitrines, the viscosity of the liquid and the way it retards the flow of light transmutes the instantaneous (the unfathomable) into something *more* containable: something better able to be contemplated. In this regard, the *immensity* of the flow of light, the *speed* of light, might be considered a hyperobject alongside other entities cited by Morton such as geological time, black holes, or global warming.⁴⁵⁹ This

⁴⁵⁶ Here hyperextension is a play on words—particularly in the context of disambiguation—referring to the extension in computer software: a supplemental (often third party) piece of code, adding additional functionality to software: an extension of capabilities, and also hyperextension as an understanding of a joint or limb worked beyond its normal limits.

⁴⁵⁷ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid. p.71.

⁴⁵⁹ Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects*. pp. 1–5.

material lethargy of the ‘immense’ may affect a slowing in spectating, playing into the softness and liquid insubstantiality often associated with the dream, and particularly, with presentations of reverie in the visual arts.⁴⁶⁰ Such a device activates the connotations of slowness and spectral fluidity that so often positions reverie as passive. However, Neudecker engages a series of counter-balancing devices to complicate an encounter that might otherwise leave a work like *I Don’t Know How I Resisted the Urge to Run* wallowing in a singular dimensionality. This weight on and of these works are threefold: the pressure on the landscape, on the one hand crushing, and on the other a slower erosive or dissolving press; the constant press against the wall of the tank, like the promise of the spilling yoke of a cracked egg, the rushing escape of liquid always a nascent promise; and finally, a weight embodied in the viewing subject manifest as a sense of sluggishness or slowness.

In this environment the hard space of the sensible with its *pylons*, and *z-points*, *point-de-captions*, and consequences for failures and misnomers, becomes a soft-space where these arranging assemblages are perhaps less explicit, more truly contingent. So now the plotting, the passage and deployment of arranging devices like the *pylon*, may be somewhat slowed. In this languid environment these assemblages may no longer operate like the pseudo-immediacy of the torch, illuminating a scene, taking it from darkness and dissolution to disinfecting and organising light. Instead, some latency might be introduced to the operations of the pylon, like the decent of a dye in water, a passage subject to temporal drag in its transition from proximate space—light transmuted into liquid. So in a traversal of a soft-space the flow of meaning is less ordered, or the consequences of non-adherence to a rule-set defined by structuring phenomena is reduced. What this might allow for is a reflection on how *pylons* are contingently held, thus provoking a

⁴⁶⁰ See Reverie: Contemplative Paintings from the Collection (July, 2014). Retrieved from <http://dowse.org.nz/exhibitions/detail/reverie>. This recent exhibition from the Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, Aotearoa is an example of treatments and interpretations of reverie. The blurb describing the exhibition titled Reverie is as follows: “To feel reverie is to be lost in a state of contemplation, and this exhibition brings together a selection of dreamy oil and watercolour paintings from The Dowse’s collection. In Reverie, still lives, beach scenes, landscapes, pets, portraits and ghostly figures reveal how these artists translate their musings about the world around them into paint. However, rather than making perfect copies of what they see, each artist accentuates a certain quality or feeling they associate with their subject. In showing their own personal vision through their contemplative painting, these artists reveal the beauty and emotion that can be drawn out of day to day living.”.

rethinking of what is encountered. Also in this place of fluid friction the softness of organising *pylons* might allow for heterodox organisations on behalf of the subject, of new arrangements, or contemplations, occurring outside the chaining signification of the sensible, freed of consequence—a reorientation, a vestibular resetting. To inhabit reverie might be to inhabit a realm of *more* free play, where the contingent structures instituted to arrest disorder are gelatinous in a degradation of the (quasi)concrete. However, traversal of this space, is not without *some* friction, as it is not a true vacuum⁴⁶¹ (or a true absence either). It is still a forest of things.⁴⁶² So in this passage, in this state of reduced friction and slickness, accretions may form and may be accumulated and retained, either wittingly, unwittingly, or a mixture of both. These barnacles or stowaways, or passengers on Foucault’s ship⁴⁶³ (or rust that never sleeps), are carried from port to port, from colony to colony. Some of these accretions might not stick, they might be sloughed away. On contact, those that arrive intact may infect the localities to which they are introduced. This might be the potential of reverie: remnants dragged back to contaminate the sensible, to contaminate the encounter, wild, or wrong, or ill, or mundane, or boring. So in an oscillation or pulse of this type, if we think of the dimensions or conflatons that are drawn into tableau by the artwork as present in some form within the space of reverie

⁴⁶¹ See Arnheim, R. (1971). *Entropy and Art an Essay on Disorder and Order*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Arnheim sees the articulation of order and structure as a necessity for anything the human mind is to understand. Divining the order of an object through optical perception (or physical appearances) alone is limited since such objects are often understood through their reflection of an underlying order: physical, social or cognitive. He views disorder as relative to specific temporalities and may shift overtime. In relating order to an underlying function, something may be perceived to be disorderly, but if it serves a function (such as a shuffled pack of cards) it articulates a functional structural order. Likewise, he sees appearances of order to be deceiving if they are in tension to an underlying order. From this we can understand that states of disorder can only be perceived in relation to, and within, an already constructed order. Such thoughts on structure are important for this project as they elaborate the way we encounter and understand art. What this study is interested in is not just the identification of states that could be interpreted as order and disorder. It asks, if these states of order or disorder are ambiguous or unidentifiable, does this indicate an absence or lack (however momentary it may be) in the overlying structure, and, how does the human subject proceed when confronted with such absence? If such a state indicates a momentary vacuum in which perceived structure is absent, and such vacuums must be filled by something, what rushes into fill this void? Is this lack of an overlying structure indicative of a limit to our ability to experience states of true disorder—a ‘non-order’?

⁴⁶² Rancière, J. (2009b) *The Emancipated Spectator*.

⁴⁶³ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces.”

(as an extended encounter), then the penetrability of these potentially incompatible spaces may be exaggerated. Such a model of viscosity is referenced by Schneider as she recounts scholar Sara Ahmed in preferring the appellation of emotion to affect. She writes of “emotion as sticky. A viscosity that does not sediment in a body as singular nor exist as completely contained, stickiness is a leaky, even fleshy descriptor suggestive of touch (and being ‘touched’ or ‘moved’ become monikers of affect that signify a between bodiness and between objectness or between materialities of emotion that can jump, or travel, in time as well as space)”.⁴⁶⁴

In this context we might consider the artwork of Tricia Middleton, particularly the 2012 installation *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy*.⁴⁶⁵ In this work a series of waxy, gelatinous non-sites punctuate the spaces of Oakville Galleries, a manor like building stripped of the accoutrements of its class. Here the waxy residues bind together ruins—the ruins recuperated by pastel pinks, blues, and greens. The waxes and resins, perhaps in excess of the detritus, operate as theatrical renderings of accretions, the ruins functioning as scale models of the accumulation of affects—as ‘after-affects’. Middleton’s installation functions as a sort of inverse reality to the world rendered viscous in Neudecker’s tanks, instead presenting as a kind of postdiluvian trace, the ruins of a civilisation congealed into peripatetic forms: flotsam, jetsam, lagan, and derelict. Middleton makes use of a near 1:1 rescaling, the mounds of the installation nearing the size of the body, and although containing artefacts that can be located within the 1:1 of the sensible, retained across the installation is a quality of miniaturisation—of the scale model—perhaps stemming from the obvious displacement, from ‘nature’ (or some form of it) into the framing space of the exhibition hall. Within this milieu, Middleton employs a number of devices to modulate the performance of the exhibition site as framing for installative space. Across the site Middleton varies scale, mass-distribution, and the ability to inhabit or move through works. Certain

⁴⁶⁴ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 70.

⁴⁶⁵ Middleton, T. (2013). *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy*.



Middleton, T. (2013). *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy*. [installation]. Oakville: Oakville Galleries.

aspects of the installation present as singular monoliths (much like Neudecker's icebergs in Brighton),⁴⁶⁶ whilst others function as immersive landscapes occupying the entirety of a room. An overt device employed by Middleton is a pastel wash that covers the wall surfaces of the exhibition site, as a kind of immersive mesh, a containment exchange, that leaves little doubt to a potential spectator of their location inside the space of installation. What such a device achieves is an activation of an oscillation between interior/exterior paradigms. The spectator is ostensibly inside the work as material signals suggest—they are inhabitants of the installation—but at that same time are arguably trapped outside the world of the installation, unable to inhabit the 'lived reality' of the work. In this, the fictive, ruined, world created by Middleton is in some ways resistant to spectatorship, presenting as a personalised interior world made manifest. In this world, particularly the aspect of the installation subtitled the *Crones' Room*, the low-level signalling of the palette, sticky materials, and whimsical wash, locate the work as a apparent representation of reverie. But, perhaps in

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Neudecker, M. (2013). *Heterotopias and Other Domestic Landscapes*.

contrast to the generalness of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* or of *I Don't Know how I Resisted the Urge to Run*, the specificities of *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy* code the apparent location of the work as a personalised space of belonging. The space created by Middleton is the appurtenance of the mind, but is of the *other's* mind, populated by the accoutrements of the other. In inhabiting Middleton's work we inhabit the reverie of the *other*, a space that is sovereign, accessible by the public (as it is an installation), but a tentative type of access, the space is 'opened up' but never 'given over'. In some ways to occupy this space is to be an interloper, and in this, belying the pastels and twee materials, Middleton's work might be understood as a site of antagonisms, as a site of difference between the self and the other, a chiasmic point of interface, but a place of friction. In this way, more overt framing mechanisms like the tabular structure of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)*, or the containing vitrines of Neudecker, (accounting for the different subject matters) might strangely work as a ceding of sovereign space—although produced by an author, they are fortresses that keep everyone out (even that author), in this, they might preserve the capacity for occupation and colonisation by the spectator.

Shuttling back to Schneider's thoughts on temporality in the context of this discussion, she writes:

The stickiness of emotion is evident in the residue of generational time, reminding us that histories of events and historical effects of identity fixing, stick to any mobility, dragging (in Elizabeth Freeman's sense) the temporal past into the sticky substance of any present. To be sticky with the past and the future is not to be autonomous, but to be engaged in a freighted, cross-temporal mobility. This is a mobility that drags the "past as past" (to quote Heather Love) – the "genuine past-ness of the past" (to quote Elizabeth Freeman) – into a negotiated future that is never simply in front of us (like a past that is never simply behind us) but in a kind of viscous, affective surround. Indeed, jumpiness and stickiness are words that undo the step-by-step linearity of Enlightenment plots for autonomous, unfettered progress in an unimpeded forward march.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁷ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

Following this line of thought, *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy* might be considered in terms of kind of viscous mobility, a passage of sticky accretions, trace of a passage, of thresholds: inside/outside, fictive/actual, private and public. In this, a work like *Form Is The Destroyer of Force, Without Severity There Can Be No Mercy* and the miniature diorama works of this project, might be read in relation to a similar sort of mobility, in relation to a passage from nature, through thresholds of culture. As touched upon, Stewart looks upon such a traversal as stemming from the Victorian domestication of nature that she links to the earthworks of 1960s land art. In this Stewart sees earthworks as undoubtedly tied to notions of the picturesque as they are humanistic rearrangements of nature.⁴⁶⁸ Middleton's work (like works of this project), employ the artistic trope of entropy in a fairly obvious fashion,⁴⁶⁹ accessing the lineage of Robert Smithson, so in following, institutional critique, and 1960s ecological ideals.⁴⁷⁰ Using earthworks as a means of mapping a distancing or remoteness of the beholder in the production of subject/object relations, Stewart writes:

Such a 'return to nature' must always be nostalgic. Because the earthwork is a work of the moment of creation and conception, it cannot be returned to in its original form; it exists only through the distance of the photograph. Like other forms of the

⁴⁶⁸ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 89. Here Stewart writes in full: "Thus, insofar as the earth art movement centers on a humanistic rearrangement of nature, it may be linked to the picturesque. And, despite its gigantic scale, the enclosure of the earth object within gallery space further links it to the Victorian attempt to domesticate and re-form nature within cultural categories. The earth-work that is displayed out of doors and traveled through is closer to the experience of landscape in the sublime; the viewer is dwarfed by the landscape, which allows him or her a partial vision over time. But the earthwork that is contained becomes an object; the viewer stands away from it in a distanced position approximating a simultaneous and transcendent vision."

⁴⁶⁹ Colman, F. (2006). "Affective Entropy.". Reiterating the interpretation of entropy by this project, accessed through its cultural understandings, Colman writes: "As an information-energy notion produced in the 1960s climate of political-social change, entropy is a conceptual trope for the perception of temporal modalities in art forms. In Smithson, and in Deleuze and Guattari's usage, entropy becomes a term that describes teleological histories (Art History for Smithson, Royal Science for Deleuze and Guattari), drawn through the formal stabilisation of the physical organisation of differences, to their commonly accepted material point of non- differentiation. The metaphorical association of entropy with such nullification of form/meaning is rejected by both. Individually, Smithson and Deleuze and Guattari's utilisation of the term entropy is, respectively, a way to chart the thinking of a sensible regime – of what Rancière termed the "aesthetic regime" of the sensible aesthetic." p. 156.

⁴⁷⁰ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 89.

picturesque, the earthwork is an art of the souvenir or memento insofar as the aesthetic artifact is a trace of an original event now subject to transformations out of the control of the creator and the beholder.⁴⁷¹

Following Stewart, in addition to an aspect of irreversibility that might be redolent of entropic tropes, what is proposed is a contained nostalgia for a [potentially] ‘lost’ referent. Returning to Wall, that loss as communicated by Stewart (and assumed in the supplementarity of souvenir or memento) strikes a comparison with Wall’s readings of Emmanuel Levinas, Maurice Blanchot, and Giorgio Agamben in *Radical Passivity*. In this text, Wall outlines the concept of radical passivity in relation to these thinkers, characterising this antediluvian state as:

passivity in the radical sense, before it is simply opposed to activity, is passive with regard to itself, and thus it submits to itself as though it were an exterior power. Hence, radical passivity conceals, or harbors in itself, or communicates with, a potentia; it is always outside itself and is its own other.⁴⁷²

As such, this type of passivity might be compared to non-philosophical mapping of decisional structure, particularly goals of thinking an immanence—a unilateralised reception prior to any presentational schism that separates the conditioned from its conditions (also analogous to the state of recapturing O’Sullivan proposes in his restructuring of the *puja*).⁴⁷³ Wall positions an idea of art where “the artist substitutes an image for a concept. Uninterested in the intelligibility of the object, the artist does not maintain a real relationship with the object by knowing it, grasping it, and putting it to work. By substituting an image for the concept, all real relations with the object are neutralized”⁴⁷⁴ These types of thoughts seem to resonate with reading of Stewart, particularly in relation to the kind of neutralisation she

⁴⁷¹ Ibid. p. 89–90.

⁴⁷² Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. p. 18.

⁴⁷³ O’Sullivan, S (2001). “Writing on Art.”

⁴⁷⁴ Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. p. 30.

presents in the engagement with the miniature.⁴⁷⁵ Both readings (Wall and Stewart) seemingly suggest a reception characterised by operative loss (of something). Wall goes on to state:

The image that the artist substitutes for the concept is not another object and does not behave like an object. In everyday life, in everyday commerce with things, the seized object tends to disappear into its usefulness, its function, its familiarity. Art arrests this movement of recognition and industry. In art, that which vanishes into utility and knowledge reappears outside its usefulness, outside all real relations, in a space strictly uncrossable, infinitely fragile, only proximally there at all, as if its existence had been paralyzed, or as if the object led a phantom existence parallel to its truth.⁴⁷⁶

This moment of reception might be a moment of remoteness, what Wall refers to as a hypocritical schema of proximity—an infinite distance but also an extreme closeness, that might be analogous to the asymptotic proximity that art might engage.⁴⁷⁷ In this context (like the *puja*), the thresholds of reverie (or reverie itself) might be understood as a navigation of this space, the radical passivity of threshold states of return and the reiteration of reception—a repatriation.⁴⁷⁸

Immersed in this thinking, an intriguing possibility in speculating upon reveries is the capacity of reverie to disrupt or suspend structuring phenomena (like the *pylon* or *point de caption*). But, of equal significance and interest, is whether reverie (as a traversal of thresholds) may work to

⁴⁷⁵ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. On this Stewart states in full: "Its locus is thereby the nostalgic. The miniature here erases not only labor but causality and effect. Understanding is sacrificed to being in context. Hence the miniature is often a material allusion to a text which is no longer available to us, or which, because of its fictiveness, never was available to us except through a second-order fictive world." p. 74.

⁴⁷⁶ Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. p. 31

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid. Wall writes in full "This infinite distance or glacial remoteness is also an extreme closeness, contact, or proximity in the sense developed at length by Levinas in his *Autrement qu'être* ou *au-delà de l'essence*. It "lives" in consciousness as a trace or a persistent thought that cannot be thematized and that haunts the narrator in the second division of *L'arrêt de mort*. The oxymoronic conjunction or disjunction of these two moments—closeness and distance—is intended to indicate a heteronomy, or, if you prefer, a hypocritical schema that is, we may say, too "weak" to be resolved in simple images or announced in themes." p. 93

⁴⁷⁸ In this context Wall interestingly writes: "The image contrasts with concepts or, more precisely, it is the very event of contrasting with concepts. Precisely to the extent that I do not act on, know, or think the thing in its concept, there is an inversion of my everyday relationship with the object, and subjectivity is pushed to an extreme pole of passivity." See Ibid. p. 31.

reorder structural positions on its fringes. If we are to consider reverie in terms of its operations as a threshold state, through which ‘reality’ is departed and returned to, then there may be the possibility that on return something is different, or that like Schneider’s temporal lag and temporal *drag*,⁴⁷⁹ reverie may bring something back with it (like the affective wax accumulated on Middleton’s flotsam). To reengage earlier discussions on the nature of *pylons*, the deployment of the *pylons* is largely understood (in this project) to operate in terms of proximity; that through processes of repetition⁴⁸⁰ and hegemonic emplacement in the space of the proximate, pylons cached in this manner are simply ‘first-out-the-door’ in the volatile unfolding and plotting of ideological space. These pylons are close to the present, so are always ready to deploy in the art encounter. These proximate pylons are the first to plot the surrounding spaces to arrange and disseminate meaning.

The state of reverie is often related in terms of loss: to be lost in one’s thoughts, as a loss of reality (or a loss of the sensible) in favour of the fanciful. From the first instance, this can negatively locate reverie within a series of hierarchical dyads; the sensible over the fanciful, intellection over imagination, action over thought, actuality over speculation. To be lost (in thought), is to *lack* some *thing*, whether that is a lack of direction, the failure of navigation, or the obscured coordinating points and landmarks. To be lost suggests a deviation from the beaten track, to be in unfamiliar or unmapped territory. The landscape of *14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (LOW ORBIT ION CANNON)* is a landscape without trails but with markers, and contours: The unbound of hyper-subjectification in relation, and in dialogue with textual orthodoxy.

⁴⁷⁹ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

⁴⁸⁰ In this context we might once again refer to Schneider’s thoughts on repetition as a kind of extended thinking that backgrounds the pylon *and* recent discussions on reenactment. In the context of reenactment she writes: “Citation, repetition, and “twice-behaved behavior,” as the very material of daily behavior, provide the basis for why and how reenactors can reenact at all. Think of it this way: Battle reenactors can reenact the US Civil War because they can place their bodies in the gestic compositions – the sedimented sets of acts – that US Civil War soldiers composed when those soldiers were themselves behaving as they had been trained to behave, or as they emulated others to behave, behaviors likewise and at the time based on prior practices and precedent notions of what it means and what it might mean to fight.”. See *Ibid.* p. 31.

In *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*,⁴⁸¹ Burrows and O’Sullivan speculate upon a form of assemblage formed at an intersection of Guattari’s *z-point* and Lacan’s *point-de-caption*. As related in the introductory section of this exegesis, the *point-de-caption* is theorised as a master-signifier that distributes the flow of proto-ideological fragments, structuring the transmission of meaning and understanding, an act that lends ideology consistency. A point of particular interest that Burrows and O’Sullivan touch upon, is the modelling of the *z-point* as *like* a void, but a void around which accretions may form, a means where even an null entity might work to arrange and maintain consistency. So in this context, reverie might be interpreted as a recessionary state like a void. So indexical access points might function as openings for reverie, that on return, might achieve an accumulation gained in-transit. As such the void point as described by Burrows and O’Sullivan is redolent of the reception of radical passivity, particularly in terms of the hypocritical schema, or heteronomy of both Wall’s proximity, and the image, which Wall characterises in terms of an occupation of empty space, of nothing.⁴⁸²

Here, accretions are particularised, perhaps adhered to specific assemblages, but like exit points or returns might be expressed as a generality, “a kind of viscous, affective surround”,⁴⁸³ or, an “affective resonance”—of the body of the tableaux vivant—fixed in its locality but mobile with energy.⁴⁸⁴ In this, reverie might be understood as a space of potential, as an interface with the immense, of the negotiated future, a point of contact with lived gesture that to be thought must be broken apart⁴⁸⁵—a means of recuperating what is lost in the ‘theatricality’ of the image—an

⁴⁸¹ Burrows, D., & O’Sullivan, S. (2014). *The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis*.

⁴⁸² Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*. Wall writes: “The image is fundamentally or essentially passive. It eludes all attempts to seize it because it occupies empty space. An image, quite simply, is nothing. Our relation with the image “marks a hold over us rather than our initiative”. p. 31.

⁴⁸³ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*. p. 71.

⁴⁸⁴ Colman, F. (2006). “Affective Entropy.”. p. 76.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid. This expression is borrowed from Felicity Colman, resonating with the destroyed image posited by Thomas Carl Wall. See Wall, T. C. (1999). *Radical Passivity*.

imaginary experience of imaginary space, but none-the-less a means of closing the tragic distance that art presents. Stewart talks about the body's approach to the miniature, and the eruption of a "confusion of before-unrealized surfaces"⁴⁸⁶—the body as an undifferentiated landscape. In a strange inverse way this might describe the body of reverie, or the body of reception, an eruption of new surfaces characterised by accretive stickiness.

⁴⁸⁶ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 83.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #5:

Fragments & Conclusions

—XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX:

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX is still to be realised. As such, artistic installation has operated as test-bed for expanding possibilities in art practice and the ‘reception’ of the artwork, in the context of the miniature (a rescaled deviancy, a device, and a space) and reverie—a volatile and capricious state of encounter. Operating in a conflated space of encounter, and foregrounding processes that make available states of undecidability, ‘affective reverie’ is positioned as a means for spectatorial access to impenetrable states—raising the possibility of a recuperation, thus repatriation of these foreclosed spaces.

Accumulating methodologies utilise processes of ‘sticky’, surface laden temporal accretions imagined as a weighty entity dragging itself into the present where accumulated fragments snag and become imbedded. Whether they are studio methods or theoretical notions, these fragments are held in ever-present proximity, ready for volatile unfoldings.

Michel Foucault’s playful formulation of ‘Heterotopia’⁴⁸⁷ has functioned as a point of departure for mapping a hyperextended notion of event-space, modelled as a series of operative conflation ‘drawn out’ and ‘drawn together’. Designated by affective accumulation and ‘weighty’ occupation, it is a space plotted by *pylons*—reimagining the recessionary/expansionary entities that ‘stick out’;⁴⁸⁸ the spots of accumulation around which a *thing* is subjectivized. The non-philosophical ‘Decisional’ structure,⁴⁸⁹ is used to think through a schism or displacement performed in presentation, redolent of repositioning operations such as the parallax⁴⁹⁰ or of the heterotopic counteractions of the mirror.⁴⁹¹ This has set out an

⁴⁸⁷ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias.” p. 27.

⁴⁸⁸ Žižek, S. (1992). *Looking Awry*.

⁴⁸⁹ Brassier, R. (2003). “Axiomatic Heresy.”

⁴⁹⁰ Foster, H. (1996). *The Return of the Real*.

⁴⁹¹ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias.” p. 24.

asymptotic trajectory—a ‘tragic distance’ for art—that modalities of spectatorship, participation, and collaboration have attempted to question.

XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX has built upon existing scholarship in the field of sculpture, installation practice, and spectatorship through the under-theorised area of the miniature and reverie. 14/09/2013–XX/XX/2013 (*LOW ORBIT ION CANNON*) suggests art-making as a test-bed for thinking on the miniature as a sculptural device. Building upon the writing of Susan Stewart,⁴⁹² the miniature is presented as an increasingly complex device of its own accumulations, densely plotted by *pylons* and spots that might *take* the spectator. An interpretation of Charles Baudelaire's *flâneur* as *window-shopper*⁴⁹³ outlines a regime of spectatorial ‘on-demand’ viewing. In this context, the miniature incarnates a temporality through the spectral presence of the maker’s body, and narrative projections that conflate to charge the miniature with a liveness that belies its tableau-like stasis. In concert with this thinking, studio methods such as the miniature diorama, support structure, and tableau have been employed due to their capacity to trouble understandings of scale, space, and temporality. Here, the operations of the miniature propose a ‘body’ always in *excess*—the ‘rupture’ of ‘the island’ as an opening for possibility.

Alongside scholarship on the miniature, post-structuralist thinkers including Slavoj Žižek, Ernesto Laclau, Claire Bishop, Jacques Rancière, Jacques Derrida and Rebecca Schneider are discussed as foregrounding ideas of *undecidability* and *excess*. This framework has been employed to parse the studio practice of this project in the context of wider contemporary art-making in Aotearoa and Australia (in addition to international precedents like the work of Jake and Dinos Chapman, Mariele Neudecker, and Tricia Middleton). Set alongside these avatars of the miniature, are participatory art-makers such as Rirkrit Tiravanija (who might ostensibly be considered the antithesis of the ‘static’ miniature), in order to re-think participatory installation practices through the operations of the miniature.

⁴⁹² Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*.

⁴⁹³ Mondloch, K. (2010). *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*.

In that context, not content to remain within the island of the miniature, I employ operations gleaned from the operations of rescaling in order to theorise the art encounter in terms of a miniaturisation—the displacement⁴⁹⁴ of art understood through the extreme proximity of the microscope. As a device that opens up a ‘secret world’ and unveils abundant signification, ‘art as diminutive’ not only applies the richness of ‘miniature thinking’ to the reading of *things* ‘naturally’ inhabiting the 1:1 scale of the everyday, but offers an alternate approach to thinking art’s ‘tragic distance’ from the praxis of life and the locating of antagonisms produced in art encounter.

Resident in the miniature (and in art encounter), *pylons*, void-points, and other assemblages—as *ruptures*—are presented as potential apertures to the volatile state of reverie. Referencing Rebecca Schneider’s space of reenactment⁴⁹⁵—and the space between *things*⁴⁹⁶—a series of movements occur that detach reverie from traditionally assumed structural positions that pin down reverie in terms of passivity.⁴⁹⁷ Entering into contemporary debates on paradigms of activity/passivity and spectatorship/participation, I offer a reconsideration of reverie as a speculative space, evoked as a site of generative potential in an expanding art-encounter (although this space will always be evasively partial, and partially unknowable and unexplainable). In this context, I argue for the faculty of

Confronted by the impenetrable interiority of the *other*, confronted by an asymptotic gulf (or any other obstacle), I argue the opening and closing of affective reverie ‘makes available’ a means for (partially) recuperating foreclosed states—if only for a little while. In this *excess*, the newly expanded

⁴⁹⁴ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. Stewart relates the ‘tragic distance’ of the body trapped outside the miniature, this term is repurposed to refer to the asymptotic displacement of art from the praxis of life operative in miniaturisation.

⁴⁹⁵ Schneider, R. (2011). *Performing Remains*.

⁴⁹⁶ Schneider, R. (2005). *Solo Solo Solo*.

⁴⁹⁷ Rancière, J. (2009). *The Emancipated Spectator*.

body of spectatorship, as an eruption of accretive surfaces,⁴⁹⁸ is habituated to accumulation and the process of retrieval. The spectatorial body is reimagined as a vessel that travels from “port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel [...] as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens”.⁴⁹⁹ But, more importantly it is realised as the kindred body of accumulation, as *cache*, that repatriates these treasures in a process of retrieval that contaminates the sensible.

⁴⁹⁸ See Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. “an eruption of new accretive surfaces” is an expansion upon Stewart’s description of a body confronted by the miniature as an eruption of unrealised surfaces drawn out by the scale of the miniature. Stewart writes “The miniature offers us a transcendent vision which is known only through the visual. In approaching the miniature, our bodies erupt into a confusion of before-unrealized surfaces. We are able to hold the miniature object within our hand, but our hand is no longer in proportion with its world; instead our hand becomes a form of undifferentiated landscape, the body a kind of background. Once the miniature world is self-enclosed, as in the case of the dollhouse, we can only stand outside, looking in, experiencing a type of tragic distance.” p. 83.

⁴⁹⁹ Foucault, M. (1986). “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias.”. p. 27.

—DESIGNATED SPACE #6:

Addendum



Cribb, A. (2015). *XX/03/2015–28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE)*. [installation]. Auckland: ST PAUL ST Gallery.

—XX/XX/03/2015-28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE)

XX/XX/03/2015-28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE) was an installation artwork sited in ST PAUL ST Gallery 3, AUT University, for the occasion of the doctoral examination. This installation might be broken down into three main fragments and two ancillary fragments. On entering the space, immediately evident in the ‘lobby’ of ‘Gallery 3’ is a storage table set on trestles, supporting a series of ‘out-of-action’ materials like plants and cast objects. Sitting on the lower level was a set of maintenance and construction materials like bags of soil and water drums. Like the lobby, the table formed a liminal space within the installation, a holding pattern where things might enter the space perhaps to take their place within the installation *proper*, or otherwise depart. The table accessed the material and visual language of the project—there was a acknowledgement that it was far more than a benign presence, it was a signal to spectators, drawing on the lineage of ‘in action’ and ‘out of action’ in contemporary art performance. Yet, like many movements in *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, the presence

of the table was informed by pragmatic motivations—as partial response to the lack of storage within the space. Working in order of visible identification, the second fragment that a spectator might view from inside the space (it is acknowledged that the fragments might be viewed through Gallery 3’s many windows) is a rudimentary barrel raft, suspended from the ceiling of the gallery space by anchors and steel rigging. On the face of the raft sat a set of objects that would rotate throughout the exhibition event—a expansive rolled sheet of plastic, smaller plastic bags, a large plastic drum as a container for a small eco-system of plants, and a chain of fluorescent tubes. In an annex behind the raft—but closer to the entry to the gallery—sat a mid-sized miniature that was sundered into two closely related objects, a large maunga (the shape was redolent of volcanic islands like Iwo Jima or Rangitoto) and a recessive pond—the pond’s fibreglass formed an echo of the maunga that loomed above it. Like previous usages of miniature diorama in *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, the material aesthetic was in line with the ‘entropic’ landscapes found in works like *LOIC* or *Untitled Weight*, in that the cracked and broken landscape was punctuated by rocks and stands of trees. The diorama was tended throughout the exhibition, an application of moisture working to somewhat arrest the process of cracking and dissolution that would take the landscape. The pool contained brackish dark water, half filled (or half empty) as a signal of supreme forlornness. The support system for this miniature diorama, although well crafted, seemed to threaten imminent collapse—the weight of the maunga sagged over the edges, and the slender system set on small casters gave an impression that the table was extended up on to its toes. Given the weight of the work and the scale of the wheels, this was a sign of futile mobility. At the lower lying end of the gallery space an ‘L’ shaped pine framework was constructed, spanning the length of the space. Mounted upon the framework were a series of fluorescent tubes, marking out a series of X-like variables. Between these vitruvian forms, plants and concrete planters, spray-bags, and stylised stalactites were hung, their emergence a slow accretion over the course of the exhibition. A less overt fragment was the provision of seating in a corner of the space, a

waiting-room like format, with a single trapeze-like fluorescent light hanging above.

Evident in this event are measurable antagonisms: presentation as both *examination* and as *exhibition* can hold somewhat conflicting agenda, particularly when contextualised by *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* and its methodological drivers. A spirit of open-endedness privileged in *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX* often manifests as works that modify over time. Stressed throughout this document, a work that might modify over the course of its presentation complicates rudimentary models of spectatorship—temporal instability working to stymy decisive apprehension, and subsequently, authoritative acts of judgement. This continues to be the case for the process of doctoral examination. Here questions are provoked on how a work that might modify can be examined—*just what is being examined?*—the process of *judgement* (like processes of exhibition) momentarily deferred, operating in the shadow of inevitability, as within the processes of examination a decision *must* be made. Visible is the ‘moment of madness’, as *matter* for the artwork, as yet another accumulated material, another gate or aperture or byway (or dead-end) that must be traversed in the navigation of *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*. Likewise, the accumulative methodology of the larger project, the hyper-reflexivity as a sort of quasi-change engine, provokes a type of making that does not repeat itself. This drive provides further complication through a temporal gulf laid out between the event of the artwork and its writing, laying bare the synthetic union of thesis. In many ways this is a necessary tension, a requisite gulf, as to not literalise the thought process for interlocutors, as to not misrepresent theoretical thinking, to evade the lure of fabulation.

Cycling back to the exhibition space, owing to the process of accumulation that forms the methodological framework for *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, a range of notably ‘new’ fragments were unveiled within the *mise-en-scène* of *XX/XX/03/2015–28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE)*. As noted, electric lighting in the form of slimline fluorescent tubes punctuate the occupying structures across the transitive zones of exhibition site. Hanging, lying, and mounted, these bars of light oscillate



Wyn Evans, C. (2014). *Temporary Exhibition*. [installation]. London: Serpentine Sackler Gallery.

between registers, as pragmatic producers of light, as diagrammatic gestures, as textual signposts. It is here that bars of light, although admittedly sharing many similar markers, sit uncomfortably within the lineage of formalist minimalism such as that of Dan Flavin. Rather, usage of textual and diagrammatic signals (the *X* variable of this projects title, or the gradient of the heavenly bar above the most directly ‘miniature’ fragment of the installation), seeks to dip one toe in a contemporary space articulated by artists like Cerith Wyn Evans,⁵⁰⁰ light’s utility as a *sign* conflicting with its formal characteristics. This specific accumulation—the usage of electric light—has a hidden history within the project, albeit one of continual resistance. Over the course of the *XX/XX/XXXX–XX/XX/XXXX*, the overt employment of lighting elements has been avoided due to the perceived ‘theatricality’ of these forms (as cheap trick, smoke and mirrors and so on). As such, the emergence of light used in the manner demonstrated by *XX/XX/03/2015–28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE)* might be better

⁵⁰⁰ See the use of illuminated text by Cerith Wyn Evans. See Wyn Evans, C. (2014). *Temporary Exhibition*. [installation]. London: Serpentine Sackler Gallery.

understood as an erosion occurring over time, in terms of resistance made in the face of the readily apparent effectiveness. Perhaps recuperating the ‘collapse’ of previously held principles, the pragmatic requirement to illuminate a dark exhibition site might work to reconcile decorativeness within the practical frame of “just needing light”.

Locatable in the genealogies of the project, the raft can be translated through the language of the island, particularly the kind of laborious itineracy favoured by this project, at once fixed and mobile, movement requiring acts of increased expenditure. This laborious mobility might be interpreted as somewhat of a theme for the exhibition, albeit an internalised sort of mobility—as a pragmatic response to a problematic site, the object fragmented, drawing thin and across space as hyper-extensive gesture. Here, the fragments of *XX/03/2015-28/03/2015 (VARIABLE-SPAN-VARIABLE)*—miniature, raft, falsework *et al.*—occupy by division, the accumulated terrain of the project cracked and partially sundered, reconciliation, *re-consolidation*, left up to the interlocutor. It is across this fragmented space that the ‘sculptural object’ *in* installation ‘exchanges’, drawing out an expansion of embodied knowledge through the traversal of its interstices. As noted in discussions on the miniature and rescaling earlier in this text, the body functions as informal measure based on its perceived ability to ‘inhabit’ *something* (whether that thing is a space or an object). Confronted with the rescaling pulse of the miniaturised, transitory shifts work to oscillate this body between registers. Miniaturised tree lines and pebbles-cum-boulders shift the spectatorial body between moments as an “undifferentiated landscape”, the body becomes “background”.⁵⁰¹ Performative objects foreground the bodies knowledge of utility, be it the seat or ramp that draws out restored behaviours, or the castors and suspended wires that allow for manipulative gestures, a willing into action, the push or pull that animates. The overt employment of these objects work as a way of priming for subsequent phases of bodily mapping, albeit one sited in a different temporal register than the ‘now’ of direct physical intervention: hands hold the

⁵⁰¹ Stewart, S. (1984). *On Longing*. p. 83.

potential to grasp objects, seeking alignment with marks of cast formations. These are gestures that draw back into time, unravelling temporal trajectories between made and unmade, maker and spectator, past and present. In the passage through the artwork any notion of passivity is dispelled, as the spectatorial body is reframed in terms of its engaged sensory surfaces, marked (and burdened) by its traversal of this space. In a similar way, transitions between spatial boundaries become equally marked experiences, the body reimagined as an interrogative device, learns space and learns time (and the slippery boundaries in between) by the embodied habitation of installative and/or miniaturised space.

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