

Limitlessness and the Sublime: illuminating notions

Grant Thompson

This exegesis is submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Art & Design.

2008

School of Art and Design
Primary supervisor: Dale Fitchett

Contents

iii	Table of Images
vi	Attestation of Authorship
vii	Acknowledgements
1	Abstract
2	Introduction
4	Chapter 1 Abstract Expressionism and the Sublime
5	Chapter 2 The Concept of Change
7	Chapter 3 Light and Change
8	Chapter 4 Limitlessness in a Contemporary World
9	Chapter 5 Chronology of Practical Research Methodology Recording the Research Process Linking Abstract Expressionism Practical Research 2006 The Sublime Practical Research 2007-2008 Final Exhibition
24	Chapter 6 Concluding Commentary
25	References

Table of Images

fig 1 Jackson Pollock (1950) <i>Lavender Mist</i> . Oil, enamel and aluminum on canvas, 221 x 300 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington _____	11
fig 2 Grant Thompson (2006) digital photograph _____	11
fig 3 Grant Thompson (2006) digital photograph _____	11
fig 4 Grant Thompson (2006) rust stain on paper, 20 x 30 cm _____	11
fig 5 Grant Thompson (2006) rust and shellac on paper, 20 x 30 cm _____	12
fig 6 Paul Jenkins (2003) <i>Phenomena Prime Meridian</i> , 2003, acrylic on canvas, 185.5 x 226cm, Milan, Private Collection _____	12
fig 7 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 75 x 150 cm _____	12
fig 8 Grant Thompson (2006), detail, mixed media on canvas _____	12
fig 9 Grant Thompson (2006), detail, mixed media on canvas _____	13
fig10 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 102 x 246 cm _____	13
fig11 Grant Thompson (2006), detail, mixed media on canvas _____	13
fig12 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 102 x 246 cm _____	13
fig 13 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm _____	14
fig 14 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm _____	14
fig 15 Grant Thompson (2006), mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm _____	14
fig 16 Grant Thompson (2006), detail _____	14
fig 17 Mark Rothko (1956) <i>Orange and Yellow</i> , oil on canvas, 180.3 x 231 cm oil on canvas, collection of Albright-Knox Art Gallery, New York _____	15
fig 18 Barnett Newman (1950-51) <i>Vir Heroicus Sublimis</i> , oil on canvas, 241.5 x 541 cm, The Museum of Modern Art, New York _____	15
fig 19 Grant Thompson (2007), mixed media on MDF, 110 x 110 cm _____	16
fig 20 Grant Thompson (2007), mixed media on MDF, 110 x 110 cm _____	16
fig 21 Grant Thompson (2007), acrylic sheet on mixed media, 20 x 20 cm _	16
fig 22 Grant Thompson (2007), acrylic sheet on mixed media, 20 x 20 cm _	16

fig 23	Grant Thompson (2007), liquid acrylic on MDF, 30 x 30 cm _____	17
fig 24	Grant Thompson (2007), liquid acrylic on MDF and plastic, 30 x 30 cm _	17
fig 25	Grant Thompson (2007), liquid acrylic on acetate, 15 x 30 cm _____	17
fig 26	Grant Thompson (2007), detail, liquid acrylic on perspex (two layers) __	18
fig 27	Grant Thompson (2007), detail, view from above through two layers of plastic _____	18
fig 28	Dale Frank (2007) <i>The unattended funeral where you should be glad what's in my head stays in my head</i> , varnish on canvas, 200 x 300cm _	18
fig 29	Grant Thompson (2007), liquid acrylic on perspex, 30 x 30 cm _____	18
fig 30	Grant Thompson (2007), liquid acrylic on perspex, 120 x 80 cm _____	18
fig 31	Grant Thompson (2007), glass and plastic with liquid acrylic and shellac.	19
fig 32	Grant Thompson (2007), resealable plastic bags and liquid acrylic __	19
fig 33	Grant Thompson (2007), 35mm slide painting _____	19
fig 34	Grant Thompson (2007), four 35mm slide paintings _____	19
fig 35	Grant Thompson (2007), 35mm slide painting _____	19
fig 36	Grant Thompson, slides projected on to rotating 3D surface. Foam and modelling compound, 30 cm diameter disc _____	19
fig 37	Katharina Grosse (2007), <i>Untitled (medium disc)</i> , acrylic on polystyrene plywood and resin, 150 x 150 x 50cm _____	20
fig 38	Grant Thompson (2007), balloons in glass case _____	20
fig 39	Grant.Thompson (2007), 35mm slide, projected onto balloons in glass case _____	20
fig 40	Grant Thompson (2007), shellac on plastic 30 x 30 cm _____	20
fig 41	Grant Thompson (2007), shellac on perspex, 12 x 12 cm _____	21
fig 42	Grant Thompson (2007), three shaped acrylic pieces, 30 X 30 cm _____	21
fig 43	Grant Thompson (2007), two shaped mdf pieces, 30 X 30 cm _____	21
fig 44	Grant Thompson (2008), liquid acrylic on perspex, 60 x 30 cm _____	21
fig 45	Grant Thompson (2008), acrylic on 50 cm diameter perspex dome ____	22

fig 46 Grant Thompson (2008), acrylic on 50 cm diameter perspex dome _____	22
fig 47 Grant Thompson (2008), floor plan of the gallery space for the final exhibition _____	22
fig 48 Grant Thompson (2008), gallery space with projector _____	22
fig 49 Grant Thompson (2008), five frames taken at different intervals of filmed rotating paintings _____	23
fig 50 Grant Thompson (2008), projected image in darkened gallery space____	23

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 by author: 

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge my appreciation for the guidance and support from my two supervisors, Dale Fitchett and Simon Clark. Their knowledge, experience and inspiration has been invaluable.

I would like to thank my wife Linda who has encouraged me and tolerated the hours I have spent completing this project.

I am very grateful to Auckland University of Technology for my Research Study Grant awarded to me in 2007. This project could not have progressed and developed to the same extent without this generous contribution.

Abstract

Limitlessness and the Sublime: illuminating notions

This project explores the basic tenets of abstract expressionism and is considered in relation to the idea of the sublime, limitlessness and the formless. In this research I am interested in investigating the progression from two-dimensional non-representational painting, through experimentation with light mediating materials to projection of the painting via the medium of film. Light is used to intensify the image with a view to expand the viewer's awareness and understanding of the sublime.

The research seeks to find ways that allow the viewer to explore the feeling of uncertainty and the sensation of wonderment. Through an ephemeral spaciousness that has no boundaries, the spectator is encouraged through contemplation to transform their experiences of the finite in order to approach the infinite and the sublime.

Introduction

Limitlessness and the Sublime: illuminating notions

The term 'limitlessness' used in the project title is drawn from the writing of Gilbert-Rolfe (1999) and is used in relation to an investigation about notions of the sublime.

Limitlessness refers to the transcendent reality Kant explains as a principle that allows us to go beyond the limits of our observation or experience.

Through light mediated effects an unlimited depth of mental awareness is encouraged to enlighten the viewer's understanding of notions of the sublime.

This exegesis accompanies an exhibition which takes the form of a continuous film of two paintings which are the end result of a systematic development of the research project. The project is made up of a practical component (80%) and the exegesis (20%), which clarifies the theoretical and research methodology as well as documenting the chronology of the practical component.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that surrounds my project is discussed in chapters 1 - 5.

The body of work bounded by this framework demonstrates how it has been applied through a practice based model and is presented in chapter 5, The Chronology of Practical Research. The final chapter is a conclusion that suggests ways in which my work might develop in the future.

Chapter 1 deals with the nuances of abstract expressionism and its connection to the sublime. The American abstract expressionists of the 1950s, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman are considered in relation to the idea of the sublime, limitlessness, and the formless as it relates to my project.

Chapter 2 investigates the concept of change in relation to notions of temporality, the transient states of experience and the idea of limitlessness. Through perceptual activity the viewer participates in the functioning of the work. The continuous process of decoding what is represented in painting, and the changes that occur in our mental state in which perception and memory play a vital role in transforming and creating, are characteristics of human life and art. The functioning of the unconscious by the artist and the viewer, and the nature of perceptual activity, are explored in my project at practical and theoretical levels.

Chapter 3 explores the relationship between painting and light. The nature and intensity of light can be altered depending on the surface it falls on. The visual effect can be analysed in terms of its spatial, temporal and spectral properties (Shevell, 2003). The visual sensation is processed in the brain where it is interpreted and sometimes emotionally responded to.

Chapter 4 considers the contemporary location of the sublime and how the practical work links to contemporary life. Limitlessness, an aspect of the sublime once found in nature, is explored in terms of technology's relationship with painting.

Chronology of Practical Research

Searching, studying, being open to significant dimensions of experience and pursuing knowledge through self enquiry is the practical basis Moustakas (1990) claims of a heuristic research methodology. Self-awareness and knowledge are the outcomes of this process. The practice based research methodology I followed is introduced in chapter 5 and explains the process used to gather and analyse information. It is followed by an explanation of the project's link to abstract expressionism and the sublime, and a chronology of my practical research that demonstrates how the methodology I have used has been applied. Through my investigations, both practical and theoretical, I have progressed from two-dimensional non-representational painting, through experimentation with light mediating materials, to projection of the painting via the medium of film.

This project explores the abstract sublime through non-representational images. The paintings of contemporary artists Dale Frank, Katharina Grosse and Paul Jenkins are used throughout this chapter for their similarities of practice. Their approaches to painting in terms of materials and technique differ, but their exploration of non-representational subject matter that allows for individual interpretation is common to all three artists.

Concluding Summary

This project has been a journey of discovery that is far from complete. The concluding summary relates to the abstract, outlining the key points that my research has discovered and the direction my work could take in the future. I am interested to explore how technology can assume a greater part in my painting by involving the spectator, who would no longer engage in the mere act of viewing, but become an active participant and creator.

Chapter 1

Abstract Expressionism and the Sublime

Using a variety of stylistic methods, a number of Abstract Expressionist artists painting in New York during the late 1940s and 1950s used non-representational subject matter to "...investigate human mental, emotional, and spiritual history and life from the psychological, cultural, and historical vantage point" (Polcari, 1991, p. 31) of the culture of the time. The Abstract Expressionists expressed, in their unique individual styles, their 'inner' worlds and the world around them. Jackson Pollock was considered an action painter where the gestural nature of his technique was obvious in his drip and splatter paintings. Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman were colour-field artists who created vast expanses of colour, the gesture less evident, or indeed necessary, for the end result. Although they all had distinct individual styles, they all drew on a number of conceptions of human life, including ideas related to the notion of limitlessness. The limitlessness in the work of these artists may have been a response to freedom both to live and move in a post-war society, and to the authentic expression of the individual. Freedom can equate to one of limitlessness, visualised by the artist in terms of the painting process and the finished painting.

By definition 'limitlessness', as defined in this project, can be related to psychology where the body and mind lies somewhere between a physical (absolute) and a transcendent reality. Kant, in his book *Critique of Pure Reason*, claims that transcendent reality is a principle that allows us to go beyond the limits of empirical understanding. The transcendent reality is equivalent to an ephemeral, constantly changing, open spaciousness or limitlessness, that has no boundaries. It encourages a depth of awareness through mental inwardness that is unlimited, and this is the limitlessness to which I refer.

Some of the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists "present what has not been seen... as a visual event" (Gilbert-Rolfe, 1999, p. 22) and as they involve the idea of limitlessness and the sublime, also include the formless. My paintings represent the visualisation of the formless. Formless, as defined in this project, is a term separate from the thinking that relates to the formal aspects of a painting and can be located in psychology where Freud refers to it as the unconscious. Goldsmith's (1999) assertion that the unconscious acts as a catalyst for the functioning of the conscious can be linked to the limitless in that it is always in the process of becoming. The paintings of Pollock, Rothko and Newman have been used as models because aspects of their underlying philosophy and elements of their work are important to this project. Form (idea) is reliant on memory and we unconsciously draw on past experiences to make connections between the 'inner and outer'.

Chapter 2

The Concept of Change

Change in terms of its philosophical location in my work can be related to the transient states of experience, which include aspects of consciousness, memory, perception, affective sensations and notions of temporality.

According to Guerlac (2006), French philosopher Henri Bergson maintained that the body operates in the present through perception that encounters matter. The viewer is involved in a continuous process of perception between subject and object, where temporality is the space between objectivity and subjectivity. The changes that occur in our mental state amount to a "...creation of self by self, so that our existence can only be understood on terms of constant change." (Gubser, 2006, p. 162). Life, as Bergson claimed, could be compared to an artwork, as they both represent this continuous transformation and creation where time plays an important role in our consciousness.

The role of consciousness, which according to Bergson is action in the present, is to gather together a series of images that are not our own. They, therefore, have little to do with our inner states of mind. The unconscious, by comparison to the conscious, acts more as a catalyst for the functioning of the conscious, where memories are located elsewhere in time. Bergson also maintained that through memory we could examine consciousness. Memories are ideas that refer us to the past and act independently of mind and matter. Perception, on the other hand, is tied to memory and its main function is to activate it. Every moment involves the mixing and adding of past memory-images with perceptual images of the present to complete our experience. In this way, Bergson claimed consciousness operates as memory. Through duration, which could be said to be the foundation of life itself in that it is invention and creation, Bergson introduces temporality and the inner experiences of feelings and sensations.

According to Guerlac (2006), Bergson's inner feelings and sensations give us information about the past and the future. My paintings are intended to create a response on behalf of the viewer. Affective sensations, as opposed to representative sensations, are feelings located within the body (Bergson, 1888). They are a response to a stimulus which can be a voluntarily action rather than an automatic response. They can correspond to what has already taken place in the past, as well as what might occur in the future. The change from an automatic reaction to one that we have some control over, can be seen as a sense of free will or freedom. These inner experiences, as part of a stimulus / response, occur temporally, having a connection to the aesthetic functioning of the object. Riegl's maintains, according to Gubser (2006) that we receive things with our

senses (passively) in order that we can interpret and structure our relations with the world. Perceptual activity is a continuous, possibly unconscious, process of decoding what is represented and the interpretation of it. The viewer is invited to become a participant in the aesthetic functioning of the work, becoming a point of departure for further mental images.

Bergson maintained that through the notion of duration we can explore inner experiences (feelings, sensations, and affects) which, if we consider as experiences of emotion, can be linked to the sublime. Marcel Duchamp's assertion that "the spectator makes the picture" (Macleod and Holdridge, 2006, p. 99) is the result of looking and thinking. This is a temporal activity where the viewer transforms the work by participating in an exchange in order to complete some construction of meaning. Bergson's philosophy of time and space, and the issues of interconnectedness that can be made in relation to change, and notions of temporality have connections with the project. In making the comparison that art has with the constant changes and creation of life, Bergson maintained that "our existence could only be properly understood in terms of constant change." (Gubser, 2006, p. 162). The transient states of experience, which are unforeseeable, relate to life and how it evolves, and it is this change of form that Bergson maintains is reality.

These continuous mental states, which are in keeping with the continuous nature of painting, does not change when the painting is transformed to a filmic image. Technology does have the capacity to intensify the image and makes the world more than it is by intensifying data and sensation. Although in my final work the painting is robbed of its physical substance through digital transmission, the image is intensified in terms of brightness and its increase in size. It is produced by, and gives, a visible form of technology and as such has moved towards a less human condition to one that is more artificial. The projected image is not produced artificially in that it has not been created digitally by the computer. It is a re-presentation of the painting that replaces substance with light.

Chapter 3

Light and Change

Light is immaterial to the human eye as it is not a physical substance. When we see things, we are actually seeing light. We know we can manipulate or mediate it through a variety of techniques and the later part of my project demonstrates this. Although we still do not know exactly what light is, studies of the science of light continue. Alan Pipes (2003) writes how Newton and Huygens disagreed about the nature of light. Newton believed that it was made up of particles and moved in straight lines, and Huygens believed it was wave-like disturbances in an air-like medium. Pipes (2003) maintains both scientists were correct; modern physics states it can be both or either.

According to Pritchard (1969), light waves can be mediated by reflection, refraction and diffusion. They can also be absorbed or pass through an object. The optical properties that are related to the eyes physical construction and the psychophysical properties, which are concerned with how the brain interprets the image, are in a constant state of readjustment and change. Visual cognition according to Zollinger (1999), occurs in the cortex of the brain as a result of information that the retina of the eye has received. Pritchard (1969) states that light is a form of electromagnetic radiation that travels at speed (approximately 3×10^8 m/s). He also maintains that the visible spectrum is the result of the way the eye responds to colours attributed to different wavelengths. To varying degrees my work investigates these characteristics through the use of a variety of supports that are textured and opaque, to smooth and transparent. Pipes (2003) says colour is a property of light and not the material itself, and that it is the structure of an object that influences how some wave lengths are absorbed and others re-transmitted. The nature and intensity of the light source changes an object's colour.

Gilbert-Rolfe (1999) asserts that light travels so fast that its speed is invisible, yet we perceive light as still. The painting's surface communicates the concept of movement and change as the process that creates the painting is an accumulation and, as such, is materially continuous. According to Guerlac (2006), Bergson noted these changes in intensity or saturation create a new sensation. The intensity and choice of colour in a painting affects the viewer's interpretation of their objective and subjective experiences. Light mediated changes occur throughout my project and serve not only to illuminate the painting, but create sensations for the viewer. In this way the painting becomes a vehicle for performance in that it functions as the stimulus for an 'affective consciousness' (Sartre, 1905).

Chapter 4

Limitlessness in a Contemporary World

The sublime in artistic terms was an 18th century concept, and it could be argued that we no longer share some of the ideals that existed 200 years ago. The sublime, once found in nature, is explored in my project somewhat closer to these traditions in the earlier stages, but moves towards a sublime that relates more with the present and today's technology.

Through painting I have explored how art can transform the finite in order to approach the infinite and the sublime, with the awareness that the infinite is only illusory. The indeterminate nature of the work of many of the abstract expressionists relates to my painting where the suggestion of formlessness evokes the idea of limitlessness and the sublime.

Technology's relationship to the painting is not one of materiality or process in the sense that the painting is visibly paint and plastic and an accumulation of layers over time, but a filmic extension and intensification of the object through film. The filmic image is one that is constantly regenerated by an invisible process, unlike painting that is one of "temporality and accumulation" (Gilbert-Rolfe, 1999, p. 83). Film fails to have a recognisable relationship with the essences it is re-presenting in, and an inability to be static. It does replace substance with light in a way unavailable to painting and does have the potential as something that is non-human, to have boundaries that are limitless. Because of these qualities, I chose to use film in my final exhibition.

Although the painting is increased in scale, it is still framed by the walls of the environment where it is presented. In this situation the consciousness of the viewer can be transformed, and the possibility of evoking a sense of the sublime created. The nature of the filmic image encourages the viewer to look beyond the gallery walls. By 'look', I refer to temporal activity where memory-images have been aroused and used to construct meaning. In doing so, the viewer may consider their relationship to the outside world.

Chapter 5

Chronology of Practical Research

Methodology

Moustakas (1990) maintains that heuristic research is the internal process of investigating human experience in order to discover its nature and meaning so that methods and processes can be developed for further investigation and analysis. An approach of searching, studying, of being open to significant dimensions of experience and pursuing knowledge through self enquiry is the practical basis, he claims, of this methodology. Heuristic research was chosen as the approach to my project as self awareness and knowledge are the outcomes of this process.

My engagement with art and design research in relation to its contribution to knowledge, demonstrates how the theoretical framework relates to the practical work. The abstract frames the project and has driven my investigations and practices to produce a body of work that are creative visual experiences. If we accept Brian Massumi's statement that "art practice is enacted philosophical thought" (Macleod and Holdridge, 2006, p. 84) and his view that the creative event produces "the moment of the actual" (Macleod and Holdridge, 2006, p. 83), then the experimental and processual nature of my research can be located around both a heuristic methodology and philosophical concepts.

For my research to move forward I had to be open to change, and so there had to be room to manoeuvre. Experimenting and investigating with potential directions and actions, in a way that was not simply superficially reworking what I was familiar with, required a process of discovery. In order to work in a non-linear way, and favour the 'rhizomatic' approach over more conventional research, the poetic model seemed most appropriate.

Terence Rosenberg proposes that poetic research "can be considered as a dynamic process in which the imaginative course of practice can be developed as research" (Rosenberg, 2000, p.5). He maintains that it starts in the complex and draws out from a number of sources simultaneously. My abstract poses the complex hypotheses and the enquiry evolves from this, extracting and realising certain potentials with an openness to multiple situations and an awareness of tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge, a concept of scientist and philosopher Michael Polanyi, is the knowledge we have gained that we often are not aware we have. Polanyi's aphorism, "we know more than we can tell", explains tacit knowings difficulty of access. Polanyi places importance on the contribution of tacit knowing to innovation. Throughout my research I have placed reliance on the learning

I gained in my years of teaching art. It has been the tacit knowledge that has contributed in a significant way to the creation of new and imaginative works of which I have been intuitively attached to. Mitchell (2006) describes Polyani's tacit knowing as a process that integrates three elements. Firstly, there are the subsidiaries, or background clues, that we use to focus on and secondly, the element which is the object of our attention. The third element is the knower. According to Mitchell (2006), if Polyani's claims are accurate, objective detachment is not possible because the knower is an active participant in this process. As the participant, my intention was to make myself more aware of the qualities, conditions, and relationships that painting could afford when exploring the abstract sublime. Aspects of abstract expressionism provided connections to the work I had done and what I intended to achieve in terms of my project.

Recording the Research Process

As a painter and photographer, it came very naturally to me to record the research process, photographing and documenting the images electronically. Notes, thoughts, reflections and unresolved issues were also recorded and placed in folders. My online discussions with supervisors' were retained as well as their accompanying images. This way I was able to continually review work and identify possible directions which is analogous to the Moustakas (1990) model of self-enquiry and acquisition of knowledge. A large pin board was used to attach photos of my work and this proved to be a useful way to plan the extension of ideas. These exploratory research experiments, which formed the basis of my methodology, also required 'tacit knowledge' (Polanyi, 1891) to reveal a new awareness and the discovery of new knowledge.

Linking Abstract Expressionism

The content and form of my work linked to notions underpinning Pollock, Rothko and Newman, who set out to express their inner worlds. The paintings of these abstract expressionists expressed the idea of the sublime through limitlessness, where there was no obvious beginning or ending. Their paintings reflected their individual psyches and, although they were trying to free themselves from the obstructions of the universal inner sources of memory and association, they all drew on conceptions of human life.

Pollock was one of the earliest abstract expressionists whose painting prompted the unconscious. As a painter whose work, particularly between 1948 and 1950, challenged the more traditional views of painting, Pollock developed a technique and approach that produced large-scale non-representational paintings that pushed the boundaries of what could be understood as painting at that time. His work reflected the conditions of the time, a post-war America where the fear of the apocalypse loomed

large in the minds of many Americans. Through non-traditional techniques, and the immediate expression of his emotions, he addressed the question of human existence. The limitlessness of Pollock's painting is presented as an image of expansiveness, both in the scale of the work and the illusion of space the painting evokes. Pollock's drips present a surface of addition, where the act of his gesture is a process, and the temporal nature of the layering is visible and present (see fig 1). As with Pollock's painting of the late 1940s, my paintings were also unplanned events in that there was no way of predetermining the action and reaction of the liquid colour on the canvas. Harold Rosenberg stated in his essay *The American Action Painters*, that "the painter no longer approached the easel with an image in his mind...what was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event"(Friedman, 1972, p. 195). The idea of abstract expressionism that I was exploring was one of the chance event with minimal evidence of the artist's touch. I wanted to explore the extent to which an approach that negated the hand of the artist could be used effectively to investigate my research question.

fig 1. Jackson Pollock, *Lavender Mist*, 1950. Oil, enamel and aluminum on canvas. 221 x 300 cm.

Practical Research 2006

The initial stages of my research investigated change. An old fishing trawler provided me with the visual evidence of how salt water can hasten changes to metal. The photographs (see fig 2 and fig 3) taken onboard the trawler were the inspiration for a series of works on the changing nature of metal.



fig 2. Grant Thompson, 2006, digital photograph.

Changes that occur as a result of chemical reactions were tested with salt water and iron filings. The resulting rust stains were recorded on paper (see fig 4). When the metal had reached the point at which a reaction to the water resulted in a change in colouration, the process was stabilised by sealing it off from the air using shellac (see fig 5, p.12).



fig 3. Grant Thompson, 2006, digital photograph.

The exploration of change and the chance event continued with the investigation of the incompatibility of various liquids mixed with liquid paint and pure pigment to explore the effect of chemical changes.



fig 4. Grant Thompson, 2006, rust stain on paper, 20 x 30 cm.

These changes effect the appearance of the paint, both in colour and the way it forms on the surface of the canvas. In doing so I was negating the hand of the artist by never making contact with the painting, intervening only through tilting the support.

Paul Jenkins (see fig 6), an American abstract expressionist artist, pours the paint onto the canvas which he then manipulates. Although his paintings do not rely on chemical reactions, there is an element of serendipity as the paint pools, runs, and is spread over the surface of the support. Similarly I decided to move on from my rust series and combine the unpredictable nature of chemical reactions with a degree of manipulation that would occur throughout the process, rather than at the end. This would allow me to be less of a passive observer and have a more active response to the changes, manipulating them as required.

The next series of paintings explored transformation and temporality. I worked on the floor and experimented with liquids that were reactive.

Oilophobic (repels oil) liquids, in the presence of oil based products were combined to test their effects.

The work was unplanned in that the results were not predictable. The process could be halted through the use of a heat gun. The media used in paintings fig 7 - 12 combines shellac, methylated spirits, liquid acrylic and oil-based products. The work was produced on a flat surface to allow for the liquid to pool and shift. The support was tilted and moved, and the liquid blown across the canvas with an air gun. See fig 8, where a detailed image of the

reactions that were taking place on the canvas in fig 7 is shown. Often reactions would continue for several days before the process ended. An important aspect of knowing when to stop was the avoidance of any literal references to the outside world. The fostering of affective sensations through non-representational images supports the hypotheses posited in the abstract that temporal activity by the viewer transforms the work and allows them to expand their awareness of the sublime.



fig 5. Grant Thompson, 2006, rust and shellac on paper, 20 x 30 cm.

fig 6. Paul Jenkins, *Phenomena Prime Meridian*, 2003, acrylic on canvas, 185.5 x 226 cm.



fig 7. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 75 x 150 cm.



fig 8. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2006, mixed media on canvas.

Pollock's action painting was achieved without the use of a brush in the traditional sense, but there was evidence of the gesture. The action in my paintings is much less one of a human gesture and more of chemical reaction and response to gravity. Pollock's *Lavender Mist* (see fig 1) is an outpouring of his emotion expressed in a non-representational form. The physical energy required in flicking and throwing the paint by Pollock, compares with a far less obvious approach in my paintings.

Following these investigations, I refined my approach gradually removing the more textural aspects of the work in favour of thinner more translucent washes, as depicted in paintings fig 9 -12. Translucency provided the opportunity to show the continuous process of painting and change demonstrated through the multi layering and modulations of colour and tone. My aim was to move beyond empirical understanding, which is based on experience, and encourage a depth of awareness that explored limitlessness. The colours were not intended to assume a referential function, but on reflection, made reference to land and water. By using a technique that removed much of the control in the application of the paint, I was engaging in an act of discovery that was in keeping with my research methodology. Fig 9 and fig 11 are details of the two triptychs (see fig 10 and fig 12). The triptychs were completed at the same time and link one to the other.

A further refining of my technique in figs 13, 14 and 15 shows greater exploration of transparent washes. The staining of the canvas through more diluted colour increased the potential for visible layering and in doing so documented the progress. The blowing of the liquid paint had the effect of pushing colour out to the edges of the pooled paint where it settled and defined more clearly the shapes that had been created.



fig 9. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2006, mixed media on canvas.

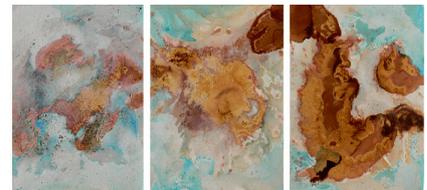


fig10. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 102 x 246 cm.

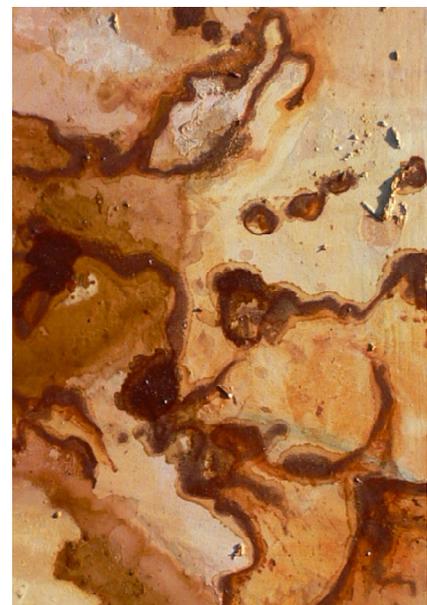


fig 11. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2006, mixed media on canvas.



fig 12. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 102 x 246 cm.

The liquid paint was allowed to run off the edges of the support (see fig16) to suggest the possibility of continuation. As a result of these paintings, my interest in the notion of the sublime assumed a stronger sense of importance as I began to explore the idea of a “boundless infinite space”(Auping, 1987, p. 146), a notion that is present in the paintings of Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman. The paintings appeared to have no obvious beginning or ending and invited the viewer to contemplate. The illusion of space becomes a temporal activity in which the viewer participates.

Rothko (see fig17, p. 15) limited his forms and restricted colour in order to reduce the expressive possibilities of painting. Nevertheless, this did not reduce the multiple levels of meaning. His non-representational paintings suggest constant motion as the colours project and recede on the picture plane. His luminous rectangles, which appear to float on a stained field, are transparent, revealing the underneath colour. The painting evokes a sense of infinite space and allows the viewer to experience a sense of the sublime. Gilbert-Rolfe (1999) maintains the sublime is the result of a reaction of some kind. The paintings appeared to have no obvious beginning or ending and invited the viewer to contemplate. The illusion of space becomes a temporal activity in which the viewer is a participant. Although the paintings of Rothko and Newman are quite different in appearance, it is their capacity to create uncertainty and imponderability, and a sense of change that is linked to notions of time, that have connections with my own painting.

Newman’s painting (see fig18, p. 15) presents colour without form, suggesting formlessness. The vertical line, created by removing tape at the end of the process to reveal the ground, shows the process of accumulation which relates to time and the continuous nature of painting. His use of red, which neither advances nor recedes, can create an uncertainty in the viewer’s perception. This imponderability of the work, which invites contemplation from the viewer, links to the sublime.



fig 13. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm.



fig 14. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm.



fig 15. Grant Thompson, 2006, mixed media on canvas, 76 x 102 cm.



fig 16. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2006.

Although the illusion of distance from foreground to background is not extreme, there is a sense of movement back and forth. The stripes “function spatially as fields of colour”(Gilbert-Rolfe, 1999, p. 53) and there is a sense of the colour fields suspended or superimposed, suggesting voids. These voids are atmospheric, engulfing and potentially limitless. His suggestion of an unfilled space or void offers the spectator, should they engage with the work, an opportunity for a sublime experience. It is my intention to explore this aspect in my own work.

The Sublime

The sublime experience can, and has been, applied to art. The sublime was an eighteenth century concept where the paintings of nature were far removed in appearance from the American Abstract Expressionist paintings of the late 1940s and 1950s. The paintings of Rothko and Newman explore what could be referred to as the ‘abstract sublime’ (Ross, 1990, p. 275), a term coined by Robert Rosenblum. This refers to a non-representational painting having the capacity to provide the viewer with a sublime experience.

This experience requires contemplation and distance. The idea of distance refers to the freeing of oneself from the materiality of the painting in order that one can contemplate it. Distancing oneself in this way can assist temporal activity to make meaning of an experience. The abstract sublime differs from the nineteenth century paintings of Joseph Turner (1775 -1851), which were a response to the visible world, in that it does not use literal references to the physical world. Turner’s subjects were taken from life and were intended to be a record of nature. His expression of nature’s vastness and grandeur provided a sense of the sublime. The non-objective nature of some abstract expressionist painting can leave the viewer with a sense of awe, wonderment and the desire to contemplate. Through the use of light mediating materials, unavailable or unused in eighteenth century painting or by the abstract expressionist painters of the 1950s, my painting explores these aspects of the sublime.

fig 17. Mark Rothko, *Orange and Yellow*, 1956, oil on canvas, 180.3 x 231 cm.

fig 18. Barnett Newman, *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, 1950-51, oil on canvas, 241.5 x 541 cm.

Practical Research 2007 - 2008

Fig 19 and fig 20 mark a shift from the canvas support to customwood and plastic. One reason for this was to use a surface that was smoother than canvas, allowing the paint to move more freely across the surface. I wanted to explore the effect of a more fluid appearance to see if it referenced constant change and transformation. I also wanted to investigate the effect of a 'shaped' painting to see if it could still support abstraction and notions of the sublime, as well as limit any reference to the physical world. I used a jigsaw cutter and Dremel tool to produce 'cut outs' and constructed a number of opaque layers mounted a few centimetres above the other. Whilst there are references to abstract expressionism through expressive gesture, I had some concerns with the content of the work. There was an added complexity and the painting appeared to be carrying the illusion of the narrative kind because of the suggestion of recognisable forms, and this was something I was trying to avoid. Another problem I had with this series were the edges. Each piece, no matter how large, seemed to be contained within its own unique border and the sense of extending beyond this appeared to be abruptly halted and contained. The sense of the work extending beyond the frame, an effect that was important to provide a sense of the infinite, was not being achieved in this series.

At this point in my project, tacit knowledge contributed to innovation as I investigated alternative approaches to working with transparent plastic that mediated light. Passing light through a variety of materials such as plastic, glass and paper gave me the opportunity to explore how light can be used to modify my approach to painting.

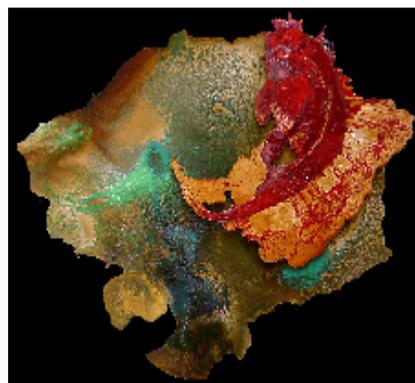


fig 19. Grant Thompson, 2007, mixed media on MDF, 110 x 110 cm.



fig 20. Grant Thompson, 2007, mixed media on MDF, 110 x 110 cm.



fig 21. Grant Thompson, 2007, acrylic sheet on mixed media, 20 x 20 cm.



fig 22. Grant Thompson, 2007, acrylic sheet on mixed media, 20 x 20 cm.

It provided an opportunity for me to step outside my existing prescribed knowledge of painting, find new information and move forward. Fig 21 and fig 22, p.16, are examples of an investigation into the containment of paint and its reactions to various liquids under a layer of acrylic sheet. Containment was to become a way of imposing physical limits, but it needed to be tested to ensure that it still suggested limitlessness. The borders and edges of the work literally frame the work, but it was important for the work to extend beyond the frame, metaphorically speaking, from the finite to the infinite. As an alternative to using air pressure to move the paint about on the support, I decided to use the pressure of a 5mm plastic sheet pushed down on the paint. The transparent plastic allowed me to observe what was happening and to some extent have an element of control. I experimented with adding liquid acrylic to a variety of materials, including clear acrylic gels and modelling compound. I then applied varying degrees of pressure to produce a range of effects that explored a technique I had not previously used.

Further exploration of air pressure as a technique for moving paint about on the surface by using a high pressure air gun was required. The first time I used this technique was on a painted customwood surface (see fig 23). The liquid acrylic lacked slip because of the friction of the unsanded undercoat, and so I used clear acrylic sheets.

Fig 24 shows the combination of these two processes. The smooth plastic surface provided an ideal surface to work on, as well as offering the possibility of layering a number of sheets on top of each other. These three examples (fig 25) are made up of two and three separate sheets of acetate that are illuminated from the back with artificial light.



fig 23. Grant Thompson, 2007, liquid acrylic on MDF, 30 x 30 cm.



fig 24. Grant Thompson, 2007, liquid acrylic on MDF and plastic, 30 x 30 cm.



fig 25. Grant Thompson, 2007, liquid acrylic on acetate, 15 x 30 cm.

Dale Frank's painting (fig 28) illustrates the reactive effects of certain paints, a technique not dissimilar to my earlier work. Apart from the chemical reaction that occurs over days, sometimes weeks, his work is also dependent on moving and tilting the work. The nature of the supports, and the high pressure air gun used in my paintings (fig 29 and 30) have created a luminosity more dependent on light than hue. This investigation into the effect of light continues to be important to my project. Rather than emulating light, which has been the concern of many artists over the centuries, I wanted to use the qualities of light to intensify the sensation of colour and space. Multiple paintings would require some consideration of the support that was used and the nature of their illumination in order that all layers were visible. The exploration of multiple layers of transparent colour initiated by these works was to become a recurring topic of investigation in my work.

The absorption and refraction of light as it passes through transparent material is connected to change and temporality. The material alters the energy of the wavelengths which according to Pritchard (1969) produces the sensation of different colours in the brain. The process of energy transfer Pritchard (1969) refers to, and the viewer's response, relate to this change. In fig 26, 3mm acrylic sheets were spaced 10mm apart to test the effect of natural light to illuminate the underlying layer. Fig 27 is made up of two layers of painted plastic framed with white translucent acrylic. This proved to be a satisfactory way of illuminating a number of layers of acrylic sheet and was the result I was seeking.

Transparency and the effect of light continues to play an important part in my work as it contributes to the



fig 26. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2007, liquid acrylic on perspex (two layers).



fig 27. Grant Thompson, (detail) 2007, view from above through two layers of plastic.

fig 28. Dale Frank, *The unattended funeral where you should be glad what's in my head stays in my head*, 2007, varnish on canvas, 200 x 300 cm.



fig 29. Grant Thompson, 2007, liquid acrylic on perspex, 30 x 30 cm.



fig 30. Grant Thompson, 2007, liquid acrylic on perspex, 120 x 80 cm.

illusion of space and the infinite, which in turn increases the potential for exploring the sublime. Pillow (2000) refers to attempting to explore the sublime content as sublime reflection. The endless nature of this explanation Pillow (2000) suggests, makes for a response that is sublime in itself.

Glass was a transparent material I had not used and the next series of works explored the use of lighting through glass and translucent material. The glass dishes (fig 31, p. 19) and plastic cups became a source of experiments testing the effects of light passing through glass, its reflection, refraction and absorption. Moving from glass back to plastic, I decided to test very thin plastic in the form of plastic bags. The resealable plastic bags (fig 32) reference the earlier concept of containment. These light mediated effects proved helpful in furthering my understanding of the potential for both natural and artificial light to transform the work.

At this stage of my project I began painting on acetate and producing a series of 35mm slides (see fig 33 and 34). This was a rapid way of testing the use of multiple layers. I also projected the slides onto surfaces that were not flat in order to observe the nature of distortion. The painting was retained but reconfigured. It was changed through a change in scale and through a distortion that occurred when it was projected onto a three dimensional surface. My aim was to increase the scale of the work and thereby envelope the viewer's field of vision. As Rothko said, "I paint very large pictures...to paint a small picture is to place yourself outside your experience" (Waldman, 1978, p. 62). I decided to explore ways of giving the projected image a sense of motion but also retain the quality of the painting. Distortion of the projected image occurred on surfaces that were not flat (see fig 36), but I became more interested in what happened when the surface began to move.



fig 31. Grant Thompson, 2007, glass and plastic with liquid acrylic and shellac.



fig 32. Grant Thompson, 2007, resealable plastic bags and liquid acrylic.

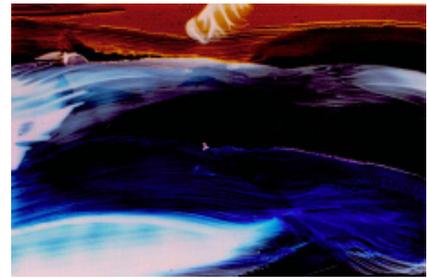


fig 33. Grant Thompson, 2007, 35mm slide.

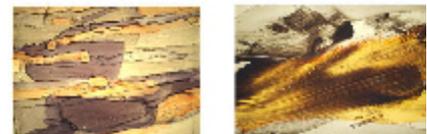


fig 34. Grant Thompson, 2007, four 35mm slide paintings.

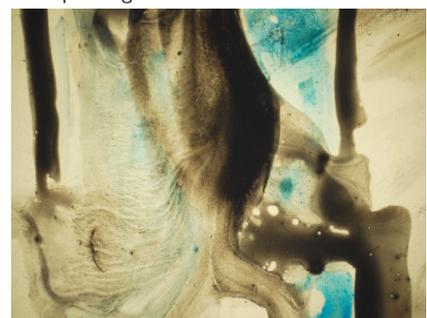


fig 35. Grant Thompson, 2007, 35mm slide painting.



fig 36. Grant Thompson, slides projected on to rotating 3D surface. Foam and modelling compound, 30 cm diameter disc.

It appeared to physically activate the work and provide a sense of motion that was not an illusion. I was interested in adding to the complexity of the work by increasing the potential for continual transformation through constant change. The slowly changing image is something I returned to towards the end of this project.

In Grosse's *Medium Disc* (fig 37) she has used similar materials and a circular format to paint on, but her disc does not rotate as my example does (see fig 36, p. 19). I experimented projecting the image onto balloons because I had been working with containment and occupying space. Grosse's site specific installation with balloons has the potential, as Were (2007) suggests, to provide the viewer with the opportunity to see something that is not actually there through both experiencing the object and the illusion of the object. This was also my intention, but I was not convinced that this approach would achieve the result I was after.

Making the invisible 'visible' in my work operates on a conceptual level as well. The white balloons (fig 38) are contained in a school science glass case and the slides are projected onto them. The projected image (fig 39) was transferred to a smooth sphere, and because of this, distorted the image as it enveloped it. The balloons had a narrative in that they suggested planets, a quality that did not fit well with my overall concept where lack of literal references was important.

The next series of works showed a return to painting on acrylic sheet (see fig 40) with shellac. Although I did not realise it at the time, the work was to play an important part in my present work. The use of light through the cube, and the slow turning of the shaped pieces of hung plastic, combined to provide the basis for my next investigations.

fig 37. Katharina Grosse, *Untitled (medium disc)*, (2007), acrylic on polystyrene, 150 x 150 x 50cm.



fig 38. Grant Thompson, 2007, balloons in glass case.



fig 39. Grant Thompson, 2007, 35mm slide projected onto balloons in glass case.



fig 40. Grant Thompson, 2007, shellac on plastic 30 X 30 cm.

Fig 41 and 42 are examples of painted shaped acrylic. The plastic is cut and shaped using a jigsaw cutter and heat gun. Painting using an air gun follows this preparatory stage. The surface of the paintings are static, but retain a sense of movement in the action or reaction that has taken place is visible. In fig 43, p. 21, I repeated the test with similar shapes using MDF, a non-transparent material. The nature of the material cast interesting shadows but did not have the light mediating properties of the acrylic. The ability to reshape the support, combined with my exploration of the filmic image in the previous work, becomes the catalyst for the final exhibition work.

The sensations of different colours and the changes in the intensity or saturation of colour can be attributed to the inner experiences of consciousness (Guerlac, 2006). Bergson maintains consciousness is tied to affective sensation, the work's colour being the experience of the stimulus. It is the brain that interprets the light stimulus as colour (Pritchard, 1969), as it is the viewer's response. All colours can be found in nature, but combinations of some will relate least to it and this is considered when I make my colour choices.

Fig 44 uses six pieces of acrylic sheet that have been heated, bent and painted. The purpose of this painting was to test the effect of a sequence of similar shapes to consider the transition from one work to another. In order to explore this concept further I decided to use film to seamlessly link a painting that could not be seen at a glance. The work rotated while being filmed.



fig 41. Grant Thompson, 2007, shellac on



fig 42. Grant Thompson, 2007, three shaped acrylic pieces, 30 X 30 cm.



fig 43. Grant Thompson, 2007, two shaped mdf pieces, 30 X 30 cm.



fig 44. G.Thompson, 2008, lliquid acrylic on perspex, 60 x 30 cm.

Final Exhibition

The final exhibition consisted of two overlapping projections that explored the idea of the sublime, limitlessness and the formless. The viewing environment was a semi darkened, windowless, rectangular gallery space forty-five square metres in size.

Two projectors were located at the back of the room on separate plinths (figs 47 and 48). Each projector was connected to a DVD player. The projections were displayed continuously on one wall of this space. The lenses of the projectors were partially covered to soften the edge of the frame of one, and alter the format of the other. The softened edge of the frame was reminiscent of early movies, distancing it from the 'screen saver' appearance of a high tech multi media installation.

Perspex domes were used as the support for the paintings. The shape, surface and transparency of the perspex allowed for painting that drew on earlier research. The domes were painted using a high pressure air gun to move the paint around the inside of the dome. Layers of thin liquid acrylic paint were used to build up the surface of the painting. The two dome paintings were filmed individually rotating slowly on their axis, each in different directions. The film was then transferred to DVD. When projected on to the entire wall of the room, the image was intensified in terms of brightness and scale.

The viewer was drawn into the work on the wall and encouraged to engage through curiosity, and the unpredictability, of the forthcoming images. The lighting was subdued, sufficient for the viewer to feel comfortable negotiating the space freely, but also dark enough to give the projected image a presence in the room.



fig 45. G.Thompson, 2008, lliquid acrylic on 50 cm diameter perspex dome.

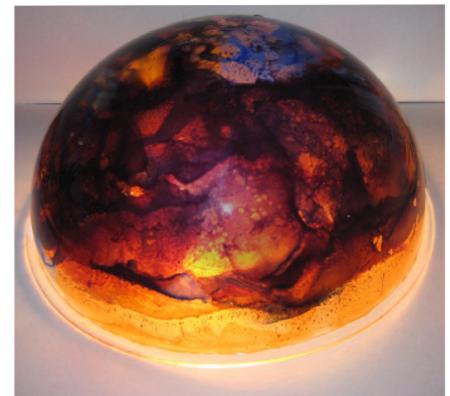


fig 46. G.Thompson, 2008, lliquid acrylic on 50cm diameter perspex dome.

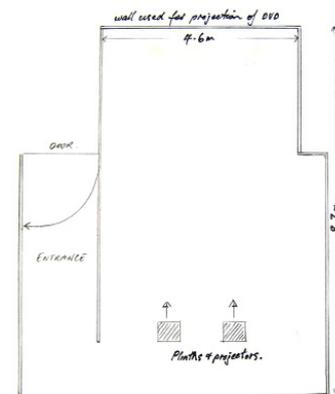


fig 47. Grant Thompson, 2008, floor plan of the gallery space for the final exhibition.



fig 48. Grant Thompson, 2008, gallery space with projector.

The nature and intensity of the experience and its subsequent effect on the spectator's objective and subjective experience was reliant on their receptiveness to the image.

The painting functioned as the stimulus for the 'affective consciousness' (Sarte, 1905). The continuous transformation and creation of the projected image allowed the viewer to explore the feeling of uncertainty and the sensation of wonderment. The transforming of finite experiences in order to encourage through contemplation experiences that lead towards the infinite and the sublime were offered to the viewer within this continuously changing viewing environment.

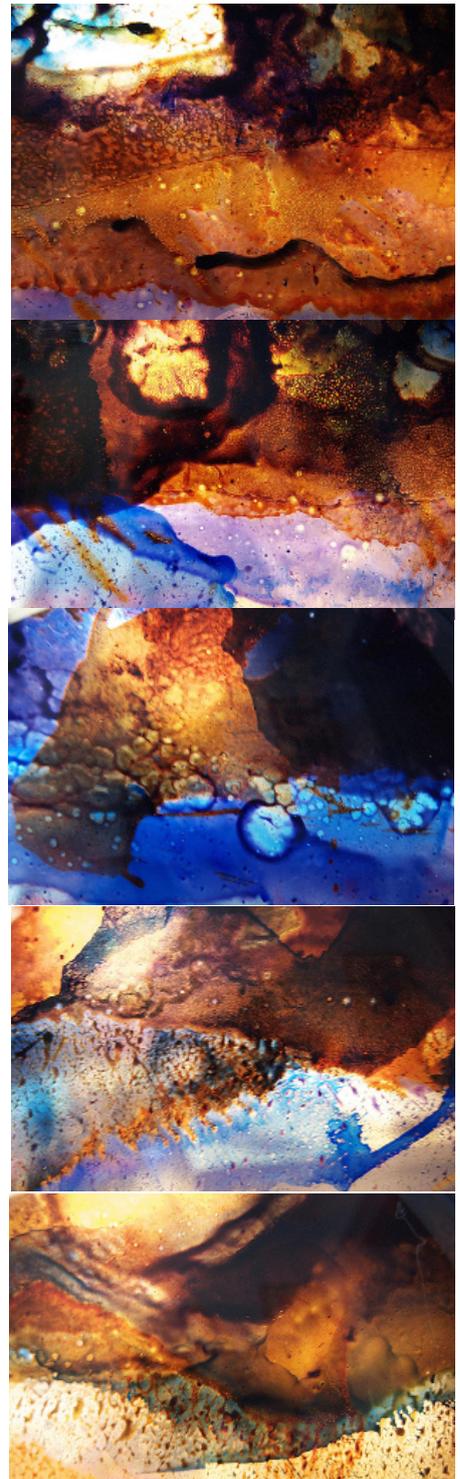


fig 49. Grant Thompson, 2008, five frames taken at different intervals of filmed rotating paintings.



fig 50. Grant Thompson, 2008, projected image in darkened gallery space.

Chapter 6

Concluding Commentary

My project has explored the basic tenets of Abstract Expressionism with specific reference to notions of the sublime. Through a heuristic approach to my research, I have discovered an approach to non-representational painting that has allowed me to explore the hypotheses posited in my abstract. Light mediated effects have been explored through painting and the sensations they evoke have been used to expand the viewer's understanding of notions of the sublime and the idea of limitlessness. The contemporary location of the sublime and its link to contemporary life has been considered through the intensification of the object through film. Re-presenting painting through light mediated changes has made the invisible 'visible' and left the spectators contemplating their relationship to the outside world.

The work has investigated the concept of change in relation to notions of temporality, the transient states of experience and the idea of limitlessness. Through what has been represented in the painting the continuous process of interpretation has taken place on the part of the viewer, which is an integral part in transforming and creating. The spectator has been encouraged through contemplation to transform their experiences of the finite in order to approach the infinite and the sublime.

When I reflect on my practical work over the year, the concept of change and the transient states of experience explored through painting have led my investigations into the effects of light. Through further work I intend to explore this aspect combining the tradition of painting with technology.

My work can be extended further from a projected filmic image to a virtual environment, where the spectator no longer engages in the mere act of viewing, but has the opportunity to become an active participant and creator. The viewer would be in an environment where a variety of multisensory interactions, of both a visual-spatial and audio-spatial nature, were presented. The spectators would become perceptual collaborators and, through engagement with the work, the boundaries of painting could be further extended, the limitations of which are limitless.

References

- Ascott, R. (1999). *Reframing consciousness*. USA: Intellect Books.
- Auping, M. (1987). *Abstract expressionism*. New York: Abrams.
- Benjamin, A. (1994). *Object: painting*. Great Britain: Academy Editions.
- Cassiman, B. (1993). *The sublime void*. Antwerp: Ludion.
- Cumming, R. (1965). *The philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre*. USA: Random House.
- Emmerling, L. (2003). *Pollock*. USA: Taschen.
- Friedman, B. (1972). *Jackson Pollock*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gilbert-Rolfe, J. (1999). *Beauty and the contemporary sublime*. New York: Allworth Press.
- Goldsmith, M. (1999). *The future of art*. USA: State University of New York Press.
- Graham, G. (1997). *Philosophy of the arts*. USA: Routledge.
- Gubser, M. (2006). *Time's visible surface*. USA: Wayne State University Press.
- Guerlac, S. (2006). *Thinking in time: an introduction to henri bergson*. USA: Cornell University Press.
- Kalina, R. (2006). *Imagining the present*. USA: Routledge.
- Kant, I. (2003). *Critique of pure reason*. USA: Dover Publications.
- Lawlor, L. (2003). *The challenge of bergsonism*. London: Biddles Ltd.
- Leja, M. (1993). *Reframing abstract expressionism*. USA: Yale University Press.
- MacLeod, K., & Holridge, L. (2006). *Thinking through art: reflections on art as research*. New York: Routledge.
- Mitchell, M. (2006). *Michael Polanyi*. USA: ISI Books.
- Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic research: design, methodology, and applications*. USA: Sage Publications.
- Pillow, K. (2000). *Sublime understanding: reflection in Kant and Hegel*. USA: MIT Press.
- Pipes, A. (2003). *Foundations of art and design*. London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.
- Polcari, S. (1991). *Abstract expressionism and the modern experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pritchard, D. (1969). *Environmental physics: lighting*. London: Longman Group Ltd.

Rosenburg, T. (2000). "The reservoir": towards a poetic model of research in design. *Working Papers in Art and Design*, vol1, 1-10.

Ross, C. (1990). *Abstract expressionism: creators and critics*. New York: Abrams.

Shevell, S. (2003). *The science of colour*. New York: Elsevier.

Waldman, D. (1978). *Mark Rothko*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd.

Were, V. (2007). *Artnews*. Auckland: Matrix Publishing.

Zollinger, H. (1999). *Colour: a multidisciplinary approach*. Germany: Wiley-VCH, Weinheim.

Images

Jackson Pollock, (1950). *Lavender mist*. Washington, National Gallery of Art. www.nga.gov/feature/pollock. 4 May, 2008.

Paul Jenkins (2003). *Phenomena Prime Meridian*. Milan, Private Collection. www.pauljenkins.net/works/pain.html. 4 May, 2008.

Mark Rothko (1956). *Orange and Yellow*.

Barnett Newman (1950-51). *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*. San Francisco, Museum of Modern Art. http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=79250. 4 May, 2008.

Dale Frank (2007). *The unattended funeral where you should be glad what's in my head stays in my head*. http://www.roslynexley9.com.au/artists/13/Dale_Frank. 4 May, 2008.

Katharina Grosse (2007). *Untitled (medium disc)*. <http://www.gowlangsfordgallery.co.nz/artists/katharinagrosse/default.asp?artwork=644>. 4 May, 2008.