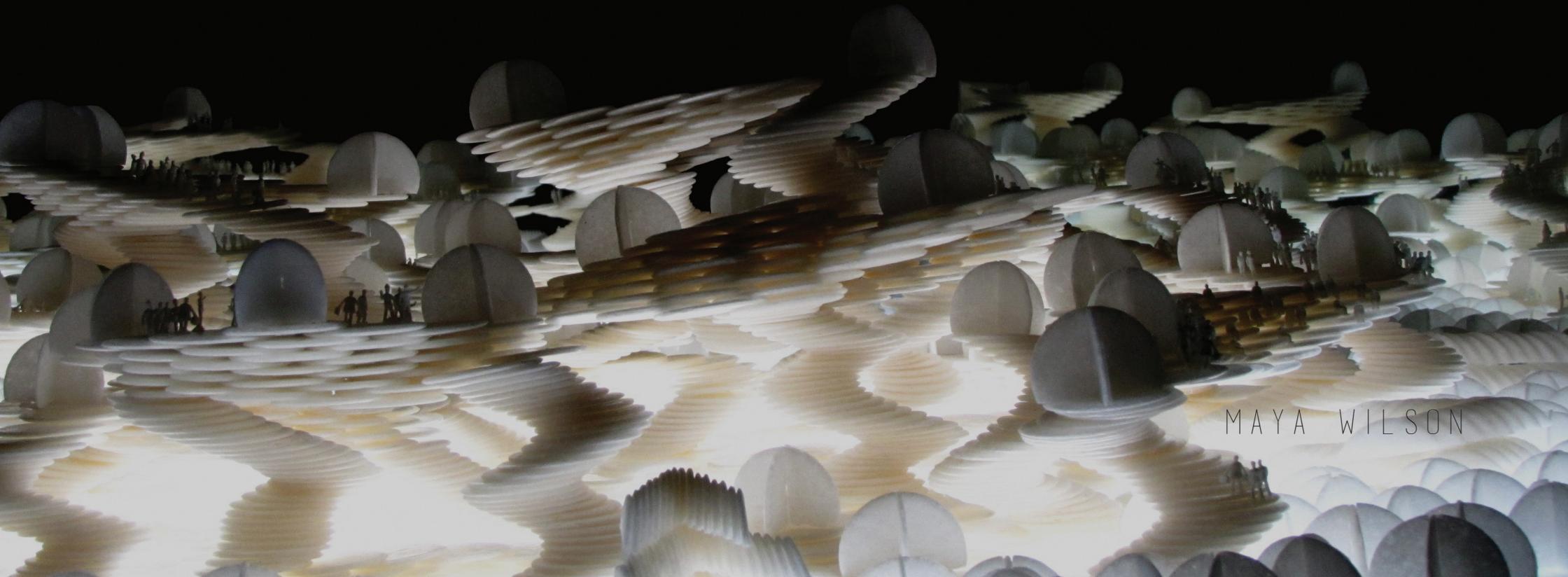


SPATIAL PROVOCATIONS

Activating a Critique of the Alliance of God and Mammon Within the Evangelical Protestant Right



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An exegesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art and Design.

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Alliance of God and Mammon
Within the Evangelical
Protestant Right.

ABSTRACT

SPATIAL PROVOCATIONS | Activating a Critique of the Alliance of God and Mammon Within the Evangelical Protestant Right.

Research Question | How can design research understand and respond to alliances between neoliberalism and Evangelical populism?

This work documents an investigation into how installations and spatial artefacts might be designed for the purpose of activating a critique examining the relationship between neoliberalism and Evangelical populism. A critique will be developed through the analysis of concepts, tactical spatial configurations and affective spatial devices present in subversive works of art and in the spatial archetypes of the Evangelical Protestant right. The potential use of spatial artifices in the design of subversive spaces will be explored. Used in this way, spatial artifices may aid in the transmission of cultural replicators. The work of subversive practitioners who operate in the field of art, architecture and literature, is surveyed for the potential visual translation of ideas and tactics for activating subversive spaces and artefacts that question the neoliberalism of the Evangelical Protestant right.

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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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. A.', written over a horizontal line.

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PROLOGUE

The foundations on which the making process has built upon are examined in this introduction. The methodology employed in this project will be outlined, followed by a review of the Evangelical right and the spaces in which they operate. Influential subversive practitioners and some of their key precedent works are discussed in order to situate and foreground all that has emerged from this project.

Methodology

This research project has been undertaken employing a subversive methodology in conjunction with a heuristic method of inquiry.

The ruination of an ideology, institution, object, rule, system, condition or character is the objective of subversion. This is achieved through uprooting, overturning, overthrowing or perverting it, exposing what is otherwise hidden from view, the underneath, and the interior mechanisms which sustain and legitimise it. To subvert is to probe beneath the exterior veneer of that which appears immutable or divinely ordained to reveal its foundations.¹

Practitioners over generations of the avant-garde have employed what could be referred to as a subversive methodology, without actually acknowledging a subversive methodology as their means of arriving on a work or idea.

¹ Witts, Richard. "Subversions & Post-modern Methodology: Introduction" Jan 2002. Web. <http://www.richardwitts.com/pdf/Gold_CMS_Subversions_intro.pdf> Accessed 27 Apr. 2010.

The Situationists² have arguably implemented one in their subversion of capitalist consumer culture; in their détournement³ of media icons and the construction of "situations" or environments in which people could fulfil their authentic desires. One of the Situationist's core concerns was the detrimental effect that the spectacle of advanced consumer capitalism, facilitated by mass-media and advertising, had on the authenticity, passions and desires of people in everyday life; this has resulted, says Situationist Guy Debord, into a regression from authentic being, into a mere labour commodity and representation of being.⁴

Subversive methodology has been defined by academic Richard Witts under three sub-categories:

1. Binary antithesis⁵: Derived from the Hegelian dialectic concept of the triad: thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Every thesis (idea) must necessarily have an opposite or antithesis, hence both sides are a dual thesis and antithesis at once, depending on your approach. Specific to this research project: credulity - incredulity, consecration - desecration, sacred - profane, poverty - wealth, equality - inequality,

² The Situationist International was an organisation of avant-garde artists and revolutionaries, inspired by Situationism: "The theory that the views and behaviour of a person are determined by a false representation of the surrounding circumstances rather than personal attributes or qualities. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary: Fifth Edition*. Oxford University Press, 2002

³ Détournement: is the de-railing and redirecting of popular media images, away from the originally intended message. Minor détournements involve the re-contextualisation of everyday media elements. Deceptive détournements entail the mimicry and parodying of renowned works art and literature.

⁴ Debord, Guy. *Society of the Spectacle*. Zone Books, New York. 1994. P 16.

⁵ Binary Antithesis: "conformity - nonconformity; solemnity - humour; order - disorder; perfection - defection; permanence - volatility; eternal - transient; presence - absence; exclusivity - inclusivity; emplacement - displacement; symmetry - asymmetry; finality (consummation) - irresolution; regularity - irregularity; concord - discord;" Witts, Richard. "Subversions & Post-modern Methodology: Introduction". Ibid.

authority - subordinate, power - incapacity, freedom - subjection. Scholar Meg Mumford paraphrases the political theorist, philosopher and social scientist Friedrich Engel's idea that "everything in existence is an unstable unity of two mutually incompatible but indispensable parts and hence capable of movement and change."⁶ Since inculcating change is the primary objective of subversive works, binary antithesis is pivotal in a subversive methodology.

2. Re-contextualisation: Reinterpreting an idea or image within a different context, contrary to where it is commonly expected to belong. Re-situating or localising historical images within an incongruous context, disparaging what is allegedly universal; Un-weaving the contextualising factors, to expose the idea or image to tougher scrutiny of its historical claims and supporting facts; undermining the foundational elements.⁷

3. Strategic Technique: The conscious implementation of irony and paradox. Paradox, a tenet or proposition that is contrary to common, universal opinion or established truth. A Statement that is absurd, fantastical, self-contradictory or strongly counter-intuitive. An apparent paradox is seemingly a paradox, which under closer scrutiny, may nonetheless prove to be well-founded or true.⁸

French Scholar Michel de Certeau wrote of the importance of even the smallest strategic and tactical subversions, employed by the individual to create a consistency in one's every-day life, permitting the possibility of "the plural mobility of goals and desires- an art of manipulating and enjoying."⁹ These minor subversions are a means to allow a person, a method to pronounce their

⁶ Friedrich Engel cited in: Mumford, Meg. *Bertolt Brecht*. Routledge Performance Practitioners, 2009. P.170

⁷ Witts, Richard. "Subversions & Post-modern Methodology: Introduction". Ibid.

⁸ *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary: Fifth Edition*. Oxford University Press, 2002

⁹ De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press. 1988. P. 22.

sense of autonomy within imposed political, cultural and religious systems.

Subversive Practitioners

The practitioners with whom I situate my practice and whose work is by some means aligned or influential, range from fine art, art activism and architecture. The work of artists and art activists which involve subversive techniques, particularly those combining the sacred with the profane to activate a provocative critique or subversive intention, have been explored to garner a comprehension of the well established terrain into which this project fits. Two examples of fine artists' work which broadly relates to the critique are Gregor Schneider's *21 Beach Cells* and

1.



Protest in reaction to Tania Kovats' *Virgin in a Condom*, Te Papa, Wellington. Photograph taken by John Nicholson [ca 9 Mar 1998] The Dominion Post Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library. Web. <<http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/image/?imageId=images-70134&profile=access.>> Accessed 14 October 2015.

Tania Kovats' *Virgin In a Condom*.

The artful desecration of objects and images held sacrosanct to religious believers, through suffocating, anointing or depicting them with visceral bodily fluids or enmeshed with carnal objects or images are of particular relevance to this body of work. Objects and images combining the sacred and profane bear potent ingredients to illicit emotive response, ranging from the humour and intrigue, to despair, disgust or outrage; depending on the scale of viewers religious propensities. British artist Tania Kovat's *Virgin in a Condom* (1994) provoked public protest when on display at Te Papa in 1998 (Fig.1), where it was later stolen. According to curator Mark Sladen *Virgin in a Condom* symbolises dichotomies of protection/suffocation, virgin/whore, whilst alluding to the Pope's

2.



Gregor Schneider, *21 Beach Cells*, 2007, Bondi Beach, Sydney. 'Art and Agenda' Ed. Robert Klanten et al. Gestalten, Berlin 2011. P 141.

ban on prophylactic use, which perpetuates the subjugation of women.¹⁰ Kovats' use of paradox, irony and iconoclasm in achieving subversive intent is explicit, and perhaps on a more cynical note, manipulated for publicity of the exhibition, as it generally encouraged impassioned and reactionary responses rather than rational discussion about the issues raised within it.

German artist Gregor Schneider is known for his construction of deeply affective environments that bear themes of fear, isolation, death and terror. In Schneider's public artwork on Sydney's Bondi Beach *21 Beach Cells* (Fig.2) beachgoers were allowed to occupy the cells of their own volition. Each 4x4m cell was provisioned with the basic comforts of a beach umbrella, a lilo and a black rubbish bag.

In the following chapters further precedent influences will be discussed where there is a direct correlation between elements of a practitioner's work and the work which I have produced. During this research project the mimicry of the textual, spatial and visual cues present in the hybrid territory of the Evangelical right and neo-liberalism has been explored and strategically employed within the works.

Spotlight on the Evangelical Right

For the purpose of this research the critique is specifically focussed on the socially conservative Evangelical Protestant, Pentecostal, Charismatic and Born Again sects, popular in the United States, which have been gaining significant traction in New Zealand.¹¹ The neo-liberal trend that emerged in the US during

¹⁰ Sladen, Mark. "Tania Kovats." Frieze Magazine. Issue 25, 1995. Web. <https://www.frieze.com/issue/review/tania_kovats1/> Accessed June 2010.

¹¹ Academic Peter Lineham states "The Pentecostals, whose figures are showing that those churches who have adjusted to a new style of commercialised religion, have

Reagan era of the 1970s, according to academic Andrew Bradstock, essentially privatizes faith, framing it in terms of the salvation and piety of the individual.¹²

Many scholars have examined the interconnections between Capitalism and Christianity; among them economist and sociologist Max Weber, in his early 20th century text *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, defined the spirit of modern capitalism: “Man is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life. Economic acquisition is no longer subordinated to man as the means for the satisfaction of his material needs.”¹³ Weber introduces the concept of “the calling” which came about during the Protestant reformation; projecting a sanctified imperative onto the banal routine of earning a living, asserting that one’s utmost moral obligation is to perform their divine purpose of labouring at a pre-destined profession.

According to academic Micheal Kearn, after the industrial revolution, due to the loss of individual control over production, there was a shift toward seeking meaning, ritual and transcendence, through the consumption of material goods, since the working class could scarcely continue to attribute sanctity to the suffering and boredom of their daily repetitive labouring. It is important to recognise this historical interconnectedness between the ideologies of Christianity and Capitalism as they are commonly spoken of as realms distinct from one another, the spiritual and the secular, when they could be recognised

recruited from areas of old Christian strength ie. Pacifica congregations.” *Peter Lineham: The changing face of Auckland religion*. Nine to Noon. Radio New Zealand National. 2 Oct 2012.

¹² Bradstock, Andrew. “In Search of the Good Society: Theology, Secularism and the Importance of Vision.” Web. <<http://www.otago.ac.nz/prodcons/groups/public/@theologypublicissues/documents/webcontent/otago035324.pdf>>. Accessed Oct 2013.

¹³ Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1976. Pg53

as allied and interdependent ideological systems, as is reflected in the crossovers and hybridisations of the spaces of church and commerce.

Over the course of this research I have explored various ways in which the ironic nature of this ideological symbiosis can be represented in space through the use of discordant and provocative combinations of representations of the sacred and profane.

The motivation for this research project and the specific socio-political grounds for critique will be established; this critical grounding will then be shown to be reflected through the ironic switching of sacred spatial tropes into commercial secular space as seen in the interchange between cathedral and shopping mall, and the translation of commercial secular spatial tropes into the contemporary spaces which evangelicals engage with under the aegis of neoliberalism.

3.



The Adoration of the Cage-Fighters, Grayson Perry, 2011 (Web) http://www.artfund.org/assets/what-to-see/exhibitions/2012/07/GP358_The-Adoration-of-the-Cage-Fighters_2012-FULL.jpg. Accessed 23 July 2015.

Taking up Ariadne's Thread

The formative stage of the project is discussed in this chapter. Various approaches to the visual translation of the critical position examining the relationship between neoliberalism and evangelical populism are tested and analysed. The works discussed are *Prosperity Sampler Series*, *Parachute Poster Series*, *Workbook Sketches*, *Silken Labyrinth* and the *Blind Labyrinth*. These early explorations employ a variety of mediums from pencil, pen and ink sketch book drawings and embroidery, to assembly of ready-made objects to form sculptural maquettes. Second hand shops were foraged through for items which bore potential to be recycled into spatial artefacts. The labyrinth form begins to emerge as a potent archetype to advance the critique, loaded with symbolism and historical precedents of its function as a sacred space, to its contemporary precedents in consumer space.

The Vanity of Small Differences (Fig.3) is a series of six digitally produced tapestries by artist Grayson Perry, an exposition traversing the cultural signifiers, patterns of consumption and tastes that indicate class distinction in current day neo-liberal Britain. The series features the aspirational working classes, the angst ridden middle classes and the dusty old upper class in their respective environs, surrounded by the *accoutrements du jour*. The scenes are played out in a combination of domestic, suburban, urban and parklike estate settings and create a depth of field with richly coloured, distorted perspectives with multiple viewpoints, the series reference iconic scenes from religious artworks. The series draws on William Hogarth's 18th century work *A Rake's Progress*, which similarly documents the classes of the UK, intimately and in detail. The ironic reframing of representations of the everyday which formally allude to notable religious scenes, has the effect of appropriating and transferring some of the sacrosanct and historic gravitas of the religious artwork onto Perry's

Contemporary work.

Perry has suggested that “detached irony has become the kind of default mode of our time in the art world,”¹⁴ and that the so-called creative rebel, rather than sticking it to the man is ironically contributing to capitalism which thrives on their new ideas. Academic Rod Martin writes “By poking fun at the ineptness and stupidity of oppressors, gallows humor can be a subversive activity that allows one to gain a sense of freedom from their power, a refusal to be completely subjugated by them, despite their apparent domination.”¹⁵ perhaps the default mode of detached irony and cynicism of which Perry seems adverse to is equivalent to the gallows laugh, one of the few weapons the powerless can wield against the powerful. Martin quotes Scholar Israel Knox defining humour as ““playful chaos in a serious world,” He continues “humor is a species of liberation, and it is the liberation that comes to us as we experience the singular delight of beholding chaos that is playful and make-believe in a world that is serious and coercive”¹⁶ This reasoning behind the subversive power of humour, establishes the framework on which this body of work is situated. A position of irreverence in the face of authority and dogma is where I embark on my making process.

Prosperity Sampler Series

The *Prosperity Sampler Series* (Fig.4&5) was my launching point into an often discursive process of ruminating over and honing in on the subversive

¹⁴ Grayson Perry, *Lecture 3, Nice Rebellion: Welcome in*. Reith Lectures: Playing to the Gallery 2013. BBC Radio 4. The Guildhall, Londonderry. 29 Oct 2013.

¹⁵ Martin, Rod A. *The psychology of humor an integrative approach*. Elsevier Academic Press 2007. P68

¹⁶ Israel Knox cited in: Martin, Rod A. *The psychology of humor an integrative approach*. Ibid. P68.

4.



1/4, Prosperity Sampler Series, 2010

ideas which emerge out of the making and curation of artifacts. The medium of traditional, quaint handicrafts resembling the sampler or cottage embroideries, bearing faith fortifying messages like “As for me and my house, we serve the Lord,” if not direct bible quotations are used as a vehicle to advance the critique. In the ironically revised version of this domestic handicraft, traditional bible quotations have been substituted with prosperity gospel assertions quoted from well known televangelists, the likes of Tammy Faye Bakker Messner and faith healer Benny Hynn. It is the reversal of the evangelical right’s adoption

5.



2/4, Prosperity Sampler Series, 2010

of spatial tropes of commerce, by re-contextualising the sentiments of the Prosperity Gospel Televangelists into a low-tech, handmade domestic craft and vice versa, by incorporating hi-tech mass production with traditional Christian symbolism creates a disjuncture in the continuum, allowing cracks to open up for interrogation.

The industrially embroidered place mats were sourced from a Christian charity shop and form the decorative border which encircled my own hand stitched quotations, the effect is *reductio ad absurdum*.

Parachute Poster Series

In preparation for an expedition to Parachute Christian music festival to observe the consumption of Christian popular culture, I made a poster series with eleven quotations from various atheist thinkers (Fig.6). The non-confrontational imagery framed some more confrontational statements from the likes of Nietzsche, Sagan, Einstein, Stephen Hawking and Benjamin Franklin, citing them similarly to a bible passage and employing a visual typology reminiscent of traditional faith affirming embroidery samplers.

During the festival the posters were stealthily attached to the inside of the toilet stall doors in a central toilet block at festival, taking advantage of a captive audience. I wanted to gauge and document the response to the posters but even though they were installed in a space which forced the occupier to view them, they must have been so non-threatening that nobody seemed to take the slightest interest, though two hours later all the posters had been neatly taken down

Parachute was an expedition to better understand how Christian youth culture has adapted to assimilate into popular consumer culture and also adapted to fit with the trends, albeit sterilized, of counter-cultural come popular movements known as “hipster Christianity,”¹⁷ by immersion in and documentation of the visual language and spatial typologies that they engage with.

Labyrinth Sketches

Early *Workbook Sketches* (Fig.7&8) evidence my implementation of drawing to ruminate on ideas, weaving thoughts together, exploring the visual

¹⁷ McCracken, Brett. “The Perils of ‘Wannabe Cool’ Christianity.” *The Wall Street Journal*. Aug. 13, 2010. Web. <<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704111704575355311122648100>>

interconnections between the labyrinth form as literary space, the labyrinth in architectural theory and the Christian conception of the labyrinth.

An influential literary work during my early concept generation was George Orwell's *1984* which can be seen as an alarmingly prophetic dystopian novel, in which the elusive, omniscient and ever present Big Brother can be interpreted as various forms of totalitarian control. The pyramidal ministries conceived by Orwell, which house the high ranking bureaucrats and middling functionaries of the regime are surrounded by sprawling labyrinthine streets, the outer reaches of which are inhabited by the lowly, enslaved proletariat. Inside the labyrinth ones senses are heightened, though the knowledge of how to extricate oneself from the interior is impossible without seeing the plan view. Likewise a complete sensory experience in the labyrinth is negated by reason.

The labyrinth form is often alluded to within *1984* and bears particular relevance to my design investigation as the labyrinth is a form that has been appropriated into the sacred spaces of Christianity from those of the ancient civilisations of Egypt and Greece. According to Author Jürgen Hohmuth, the inclusion of the Greek labyrinth myth into the literature of early Greek and Roman authors was responsible for the later emergence of the labyrinth symbol in Europe. Hohmuth states, "The widespread recognition of Christianity throughout Roman territories, following the conversion of the Emperor Constantine... (325AD) allowed the symbol to be absorbed into later Christian symbolism, philosophy and architecture,"¹⁸ and can be found as a floor tiling pattern in the naves of gothic cathedrals in Central Europe. In the Great cathedrals of Europe, there are examples of ordered, geometric flag-stone labyrinths in the nave floors, notably the French cathedrals of Chartres and Rheims. These two-dimensional

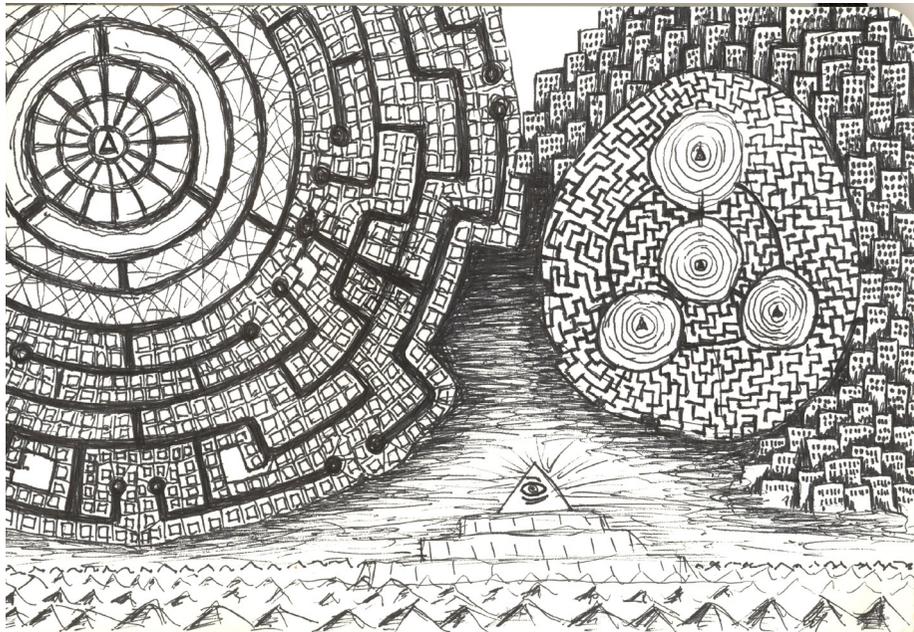
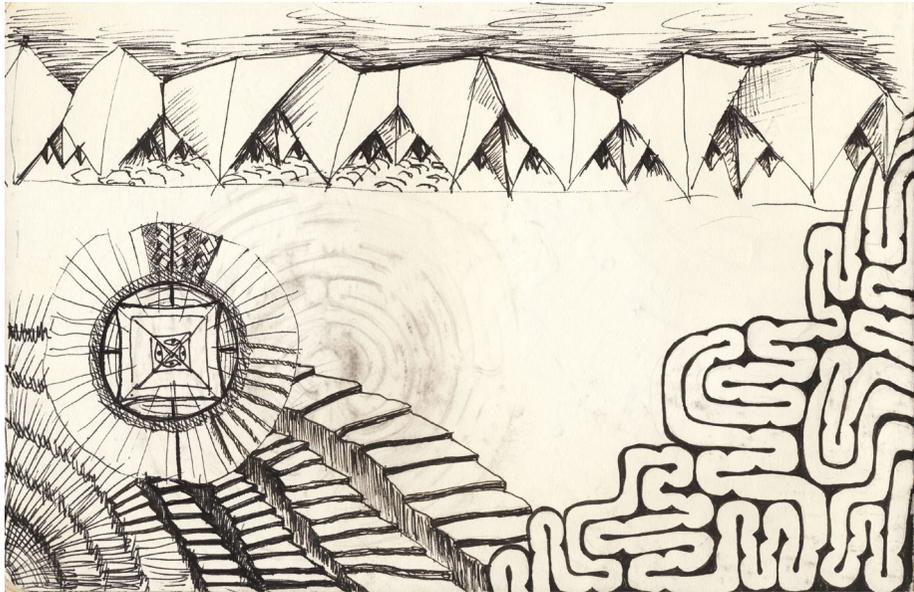
¹⁸ Hohmuth, Jürgen. *Labyrinths & Mazes*. Prestel. 2003. P55

6.



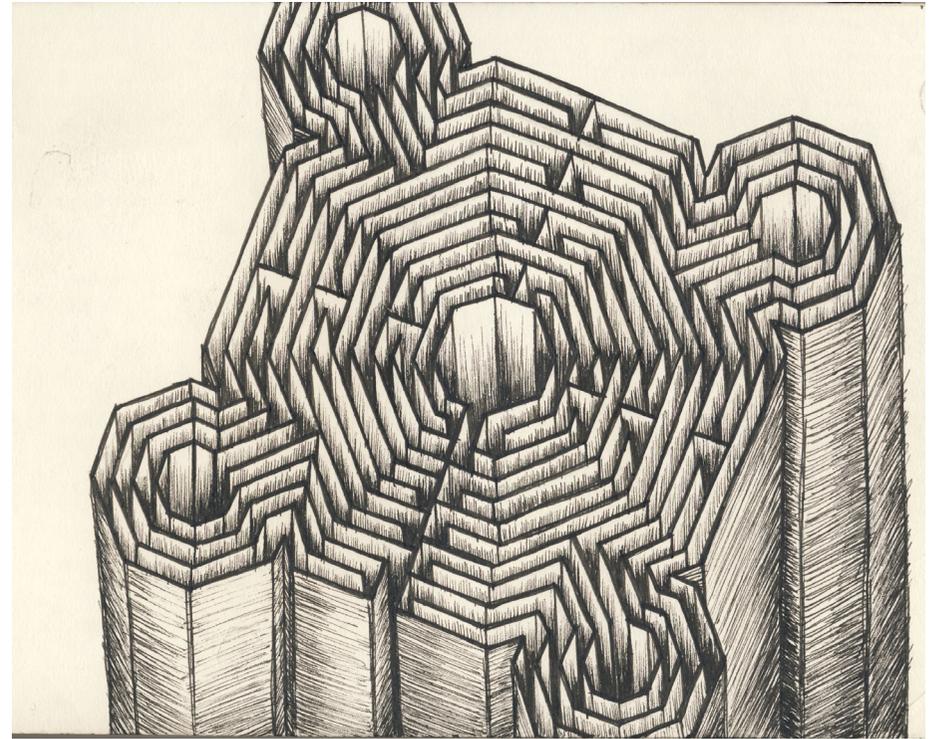
1/11, Parachute Portaloo Series, 2010

7.



Workbook Sketches, 2010

8.



Rheims Labyrinth Axonometric, 2010

decorative labyrinths served as a meditational prayer and sacrament space. Cathedral labyrinths are harmoniously symmetrical, following the conception of divine cosmic order through the implementation of sacred geometry, and symbolise transformation and the path to faith. “Only by passing through the labyrinth of the world can one reach the temple, the cut-out space in which, according to the Hiedeggerian etymon, there reigns another temple, another temporality. The labyrinth is a place of loss, and only beyond it can one find

salvation.”¹⁹ A pilgrim’s progress stems from the idea of “destiny” or divine plan, which is said to reveal itself along the meandering, though sure and singular trajectory towards one ultimate destination.

The loose ink pen sketches are a generative exploration of some of the myriad of possibilities of the labyrinthine form and symbolism, communicated in plan, axonometric and perspectival views. These small workbook drawings led to further three dimensional explorations.

Silken Labyrinth

The *Silken Labyrinth* (Fig.9) was an exploration into creating an impression of the defiance of gravity by applying resin to a carefully arranged, mono-trajectory labyrinth of suspended silk; then inverting the solidified object. I observed a similar method used in the model for Gaudi’s scale model for La Sagrada Familia Cathedral in Barcelona, which is likewise inverted and weighted with miniature sandbags to form a visual pull towards the heavens when righted; contributing to the overall transcendental affect of the architecture.

Blind Labyrinth

An early three dimensional exploration of the labyrinth form in my work, *Blind Labyrinth* (Fig.10) employed ready-made concertina blinds from the Salvation Army opportunity shop. Fossicking for second-hand-shop relics and recycling of discarded consumer detritus is central to my making practice. To contribute to the consumption of new items could be seen as hypocritical given the premise of the critique, instead political economy of objects in a climate of built in obselecence, over-packaging and throwaway mentality, lends itself to the

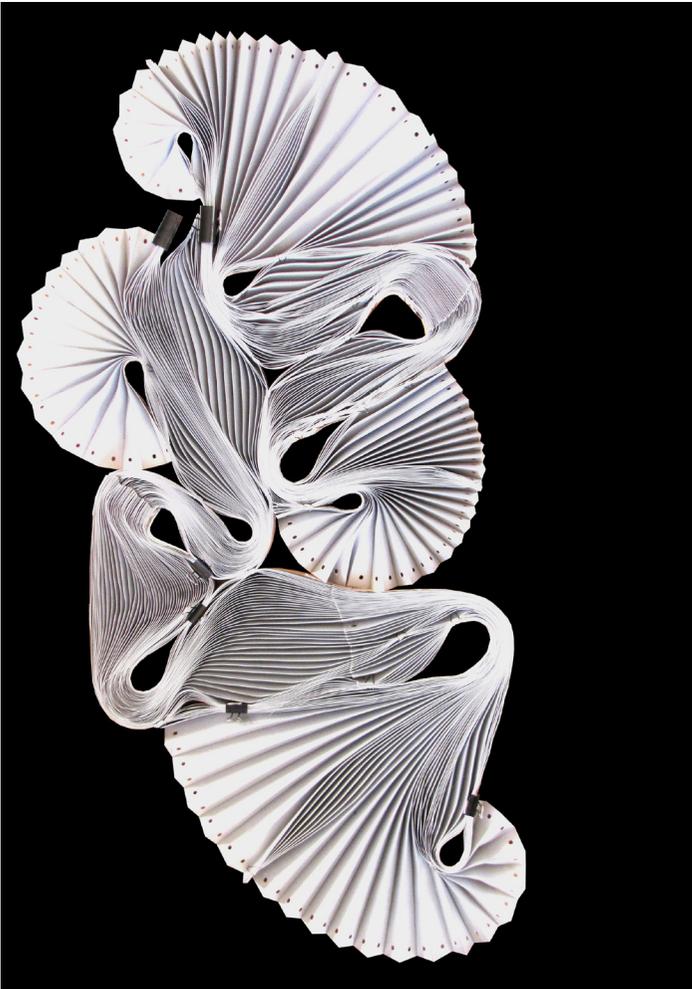
¹⁹ Chartres Cathedral: Rella, Franco. “Eros and Polemos: The Poetics of the Labyrinth.” *Assemblage*, No. 3 (Jul., 1987) The MIT Press. P.34. Web. Accessed 6 Nov. 2012.

9.



Silken Labyrinth, 2010

10.



Blind Labyrinth, 2010

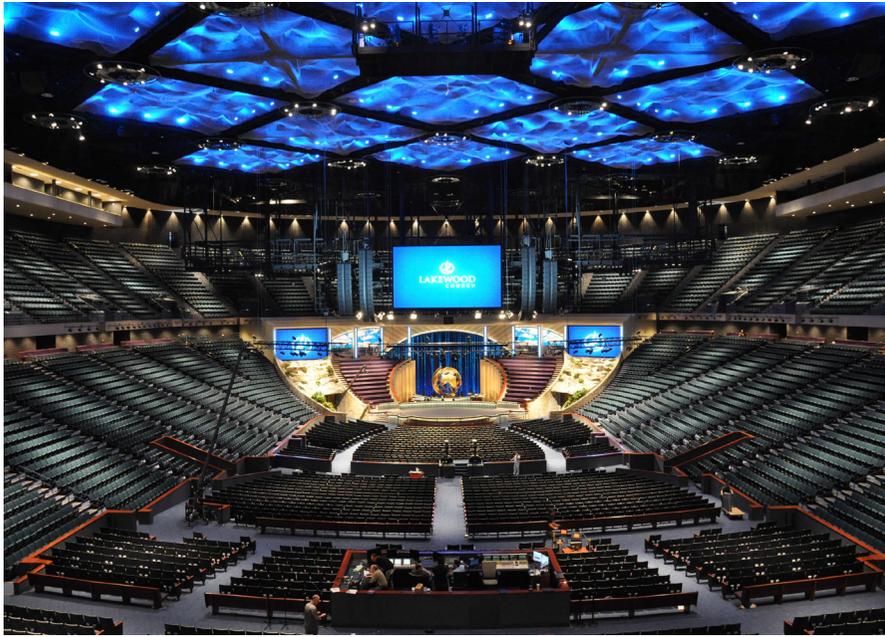
adaptive re-use of discarded objects.

The form is antithetical to the divinely ordered, singular trajectory Christian labyrinth archetype that can be found in European cathedrals. It was an attempt at hinting at evolutionary evidence to contest the claims of biblical ‘literalists’, in an ironic nod to Charles Darwin the forms echoed the curvilinear structures of pre-cambrian stromatolite fossils, which are some of the earliest evidence of life forms on earth, vastly pre-dating the age which the “Young Earth” theology of the Creation Museum²⁰, proclaims the Earth to be. Though the labyrinths generated in experimenting with this material had interesting formal qualities, the subversive intent is inconspicuous and deviates from the specific object of critique.

This chapter has documented and discussed the first explorations into activating a critique of the relationship between neoliberalism and right-wing evangelical populism. From a wide ranging exploration I begin to hone in on the the more luminous threads to follow through to the next stage of making and development. The labyrinth form emerges as a the most interesting and significant avenue to pursue in order to advance the critique. Further enquiry into the potential depth of associations and form of the labyrinth as a subversive tool is continued in chapter two in the work *Sweet Jesus Labyrinth*, in chapter three in the work *INCORPUS CHRISTI Labyrinth* and the development of the final installation work.

²⁰ An evangelical theme park in Petersburg, Kentucky, developed to undermine established scientific theories by reframing Christian doctrine to explain them. Answers in Genesis. “About Answers in Genesis.” Web. <<http://www.answersingenesis.org/about>> Accessed Aug. 2010.

11.



USA's largest megachurch, ex Houston Rockets stadium, Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas. Web. <<http://www.jblpro.com/press/Sept12/lakewood.jpg>> Accessed 14 June 2015

12.



Destiny Church Pulpit Hamilton. Web. <<https://twitter.com/BishopTamaki/media>> Accessed 18 July 2015.

CHAPTER 2

Fleecing the Flock

This chapter details a series of works which developed from a focus around the threads of brand evangelising, hyperconsumption and anthropomorphic symbolism. In addition to further exploration of the labyrinth form, the works *Brand Evangel*, *Sweet Jesus Labyrinth*, and *Lamb of God and Mammon* begin to tease out the notions of sacred and profane, sacred consumption and the commodification of religious holidays. In the artefact *Lamb of God and Mammon* the semiotic significance of the lamb enters the fray as a historically potent symbol to activate the critique of the Alliance of God and Mammon Within the Evangelical Protestant Right.

Consuming Sacred Space

Megachurches are a significant spatial typology of the Evangelicals, they started to appear during the 1970s amongst a tide of political and social change, their purpose was “to evangelise the baby boomers.”²¹ Megachurches are big business, operating under secular business models; employing market researchers and fundraising consultants, though their main income is derived from tithing.

These developments provide their customers with the pre-packaged convenience that one would find in a mall. Like big box shopping centres and malls, megachurches are often located on the edges of suburbia surrounded by large expanses of parking. Not only do megachurches mimic the architecture of the shopping mall, many are becoming self-contained communities offering all of the requirements of daily suburban life. Cafes, shops, banks, gymnasiums, fast-food franchises, schools, universities, amusement parks, hotels, convention centres, Christian social networking, and housing, all surround a central sanctuary hub.

²¹ Neilson, Louis P. “Review: From Meetinghouse to Megachurch: A Material and Cultural History.” *The Journal of Religion*. The University of Chicago Press. Oct 2004.

The Evangelical right, as a result of their hybridisation with popular consumer culture, have increasingly adopted the post-modern spatial types peculiar to neo-liberal capitalist society, architecture which facilitates mass consumption of products and entertainment. In the process of hybridisation, the distinction between the space of the sacred and the profane has effectively been dissolved. According to academic Louis Nelson, the megachurch has adopted the architectural tropes of quotidian American life: the corporate headquarters, the sporting arena (Fig.11) and the shopping mall. According to Nelson secular architecture possesses an evangelical utility, in its ability to appeal to the non-churched by seamlessly blending into the sprawl of suburbia.²² The spaces, as well as the methods of cultural delivery adopted by the Evangelical right, are geared towards ‘selling’ their ecclesiastic doctrine and operating in a similar method to a corporation growing its brand.

Paradoxically, spaces which facilitate consumption, like the ubiquitous shopping mall, have adopted the emotion rousing spatial tropes of sacred space. Academic Michael Kearn gives the example of the vertiginous ceiling heights of Gothic Cathedrals, meant to inspire awe, wealth and power being adopted into vast mall piazzas.²³ In the Trafford Centre shopping mall of Greater Manchester, UK, domed atria reference the domed ceilings of Basilican style Cathedrals. Many malls including the Trafford Centre and Bluewater mall in the UK mimic the barrel vaulted ceilings of cathedral naves over their vast piazzas, though articulated in glass rather than plaster to take full advantage of the sun. The use of natural light, and light filtered through tinted glass in traditional cathedrals, has instead been employed in the grand, climate controlled open spaces of malls,

²² Nelson, Louis P. “Placing the Sacred: Reflections on Contemporary American Church Architecture.” *Colloquium Journal*, Vol 4, Autumn 2007, Yale Institute of Sacred Music. Web. <www.yale.edu/ism/colloq_journal/vol4/nelson4.html> Accessed 17 Sept. 2013.

²³ Kearn, Michael C. “Temples of Consumption: Shopping Malls as Secular Cathedrals.” Web. <www.trinity.edu/mkearn/temples.html> Accessed Oct. 7 2013

creating predictably comfortable environments, where natural sunlight positively affects the mood of the shoppers.

Megachurches are largely informed by the impervious, inward-looking and industrially clad exterior of the mall, which functions as a fixing substrate for branding and advertising; and is aiming too, at the similar objective of creating a private version of a town centre. Converse to malls, megachurches tend towards replacing any hint at the enduring permanence of art and monument, with the immediacy and flexibility of entertainment and the emotion rousing spectacle. (Fig.12)

It could be said that megachurches are testament to the popular success of the celebrity Evangelical preachers who commission them. Hour of Power televangelist Rev Robert Schuller, whose *Crystal Cathedral*²⁴ (1980), designed to accommodate three thousand people of Garden Grove Community Church, takes the plan form of a sharp cornered star. It is a monumental reflective glass construction, glinting in the California sun, which performs as a fantastical beacon to secular Americans. (Fig.13&14) The Crystal Cathedral, however appears to have been a fleeting experiment in megachurch architecture, instead the trend has striven towards blending with the homogenous forms and materials of the stereotypical corporate office park, rather than acting as a grand monument, set apart from the ordinary.

Light in the ‘black box’ auditorium (Fig.15) of contemporary megachurch is manufactured and consumed. The ‘black box’ model, like a cinema or theatre space eliminates the interference of natural sunlight with multi-media

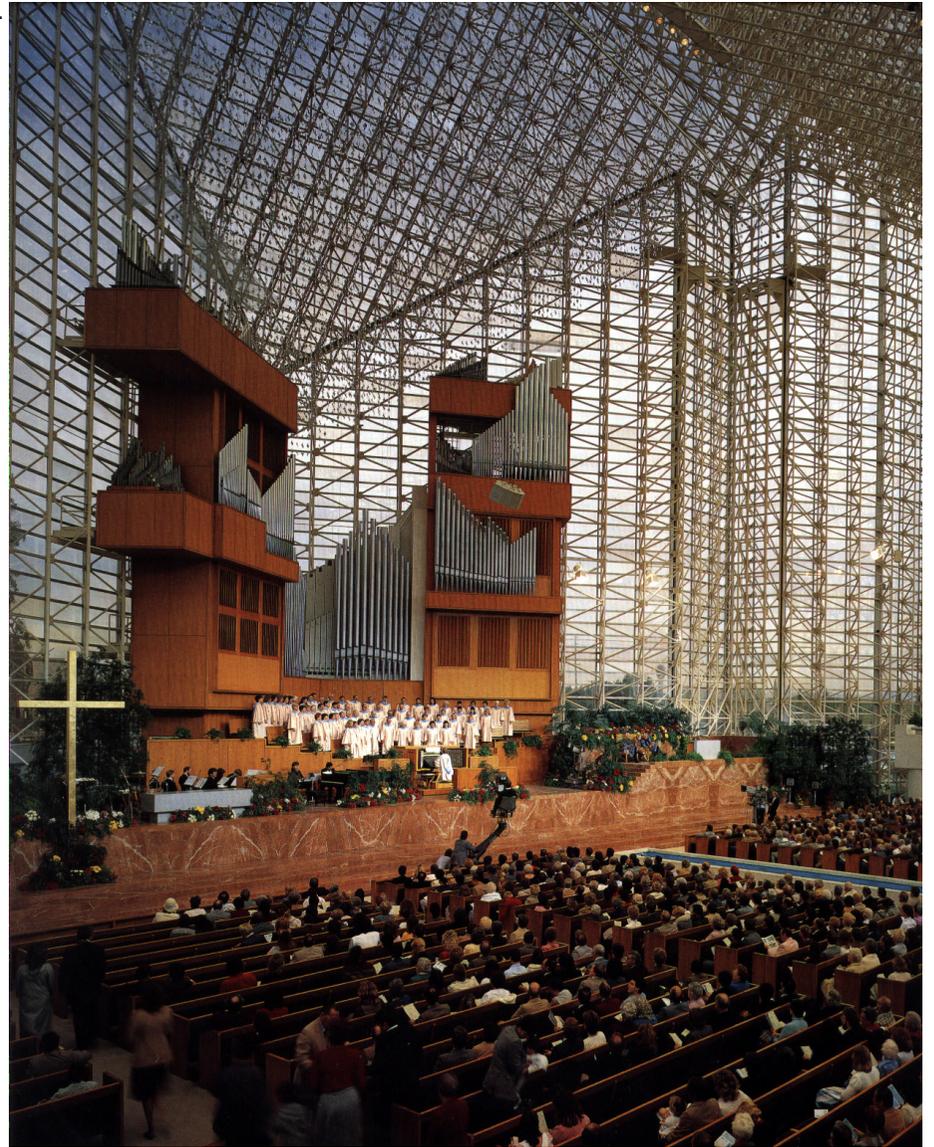
²⁴ The Crystal Cathedral was conceived by pre-eminent, gay postmodern US Architect Philip Johnson of Johnson/Burgee, who were responsible for several notable corporate office towers of that period.

13.



Philip Johnson, *Crystal Cathedral*, Garden Grove, California. (photographer) Dr. Richard Payne. *The Architecture of Philip Johnson*, Anchorage Press 2002, Pg201

14.



Philip Johnson, *Crystal Cathedral*, Garden Grove, California. (photographer) Dr. Richard Payne. *The Architecture of Philip Johnson*, Anchorage Press 2002, Pg200

projections and concert style lighting. Black box auditoriums are utilitarian in their acoustic tile cladding, their shadowy ceilings are crisscrossed with air-conditioning ducts and pipes and hung with scaffolds of concert lighting and digital media projectors, made invisible to the audience with a carefully contrived illusory wall of lighting, which draws the eye to the spectacle rather than the transformable impermanence and sparse geometric volume of the space. The theatrical spectacle in the megachurch sanctuary is enhanced through the use of the latest technology sound systems, rock concert lighting; multiple, large scale multimedia projector screens flashing close ups of the preacher.

Popular, 'branded' US Evangelical preachers like Lakewood Church's founder Joel Osteen, have their megachurch sermons streamed live to satellite video venues in high definition 3D. In the documentary *Marjoe* childhood preacher Marjoe Gortner shows the techniques Evangelists use to work their audiences into a donating frenzy, making a spectacle out of tithe collection. It is implied by the preachers of Prosperity Gospel that the faithful will not be blessed with Gods riches if they don't 'give till it hurts'. Destiny Church's Bishop Brian Tamaki, an avid proponent of Prosperity Theology, has been quoted saying "you're never too poor to give."²⁵ Some US churches even provide ATM like "giving kiosks" (Fig.15) that allow worshippers to donate by swiping debit or credit cards on their way into church—charge your donation and earn bonus air miles!²⁶

Brand Evangel Series

The *Brand Evangel Series* (Fig 16,17&18) was an examination of the confluence of two closely aligned forms of brand evangelising. Hanna Rosin of Slate magazine, writes "Evangelizing and commercializing have much in common. In

²⁵ Tamaki, Brian. *Bishop Brian Tamaki : More Than Meets The Eye*. Tamaki Publications, Destiny Churches New Zealand. 2006.

²⁶ Santella, Andrew. "Are Christians Stingy? When believers don't believe in giving." Rev. *Passing The Plate*. Christian Smith et al. Oxford University Press. 2008.

the "spiritual marketplace" (as it's called), Christianity is a brand that seeks to dominate. Like Coke, it wants to hold onto its followers and also win over new converts."²⁷ The series of images parodies the relationship between religious

²⁷ Rosin, Hanna. "Pop Goes Christianity: the deep contradictions of Christian popular culture." Slate Magazine. May 5 2008. Web. <<http://www.slate.com/id/2190482/>> ac-

15 .



Destiny Church, 'Black Box' Auditorium. Web. <<https://twitter.com/BishopTamaki/media>>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2012>.

16.



Sleepyhead Jesus, Brand Evangel Series 2011

brand evangelising and corporate brand evangelising, by recontextualising biblical images from the Jehovahs witness Awake magazine. The religious imagery has been collaged into chain-store junk mail, creating a hybridized bible which encapsulates the prosperity gospel values of the Evangelical right, with particular emphasis on the moral imperative to be a dedicated consumer of products.

Daniel Radosh cites academic Peter Thuesen “Different kinds of packaging can always be seen by true believers as having an evangelical utility. If it helps reach people with the Word, then it’s not bad. You can consecrate the market.”²⁸ Carté Engel suggests the Church is eternally adaptable, re-contextualising itself in any cultural environment; adapting the tropes of that cultural environment to fit its own agenda.²⁹

Sweet Jesus Labyrinth

During the Easter break I began painting a labyrinth in the medium of dark, dairymilk and white chocolate. As is common practice, Easter advertising and displays were encroaching onto every available inch of consumer real estate, in a ritualized convergence of Christianity and commerce. The form of *Sweet Jesus Labyrinth* (Fig. 19) references the labyrinths of earlier works, particularly the axonometric projection of the two dimensional Rheims Cathedral Labyrinth (Fig.8) The chocolate is painted onto a re-purposed brass framed pane of glass. The work references traditional stained glass windows of sacred spaces, though

cessed Aug 1st 2011

²⁸ Peter Thuesen cited in: Radosh, Daniel. “The Good Book Business: Why Publishers Love the Bible.” *The New Yorker*, 18 Dec, 2006. Web. <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2006/12/18/the-good-book-business>>

²⁹ Carté Engel, Katherine. *Religion and Profit: Moravians in Early America*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

17.

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Lazarus of the Top Loader, Brand Evangel Series 2011

18.

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Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition, Brand Evangel Series 2011

when suspended as fenestration, away from the contrasting white background it resembles a particularly filthy window. The visceral implication of the apparent dripping expulsive medium evokes the binary antithesis of the sacred and profane. End of aisle and checkout display positions are prime territory for confectionary corporates aiming to maximise their profit margins. *Sweet Jesus Labyrinth* has developed a rather rancid stench over time, contributing to the profanity of the piece by adding an olfactory dimension to the overall repelling affective potential.³⁰ A study by researchers Adriana V. Madzharov et al showed that “ambient scents affect consumers’ spatial perceptions in retail environments, which in turn influence customers’ feelings of power”³¹ The Madzharov et al study found that warm scents such as vanilla and cinnamon generated a perception of being in a more crowded space, leading people to feel less powerful, which in turn created a drive to purchase luxury brands and products in an attempt to compensate for their lack of power.³² The implementation of carefully selected olfactory stimuli has the potential to augment the affective impact of a specific artefact or space.

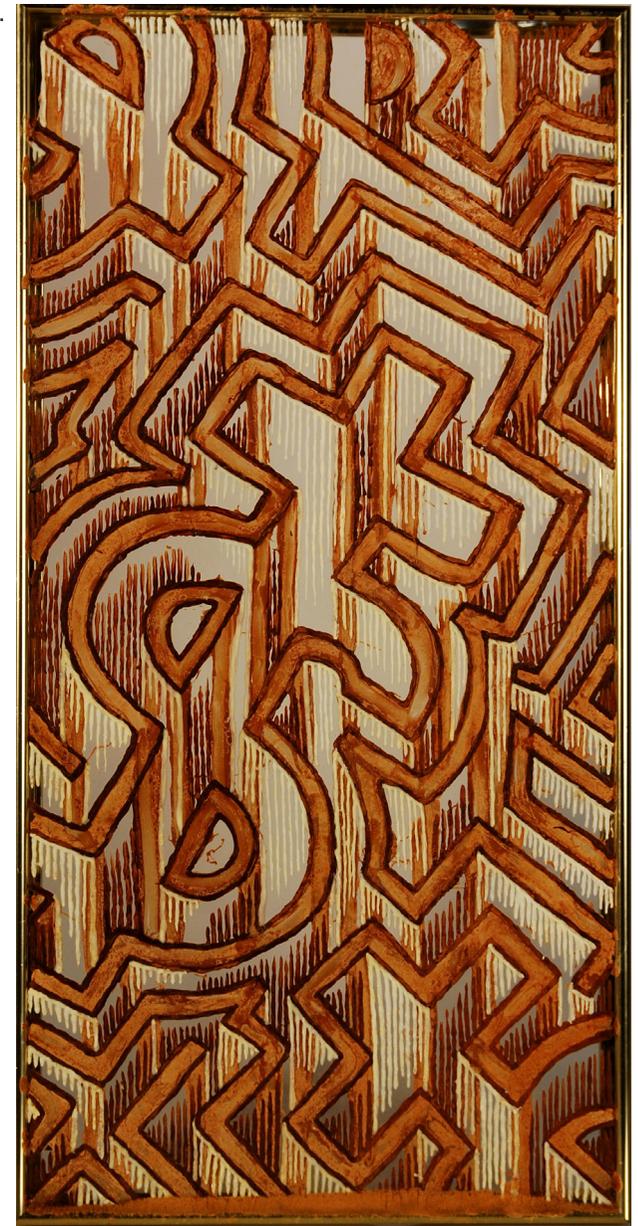
As is consistent with my making practice, the materiality of the artefact lends weight of associations to the object and cannot be compromised for the sake of

³⁰ “They found that the scents of citrus and mint categories were evaluated as more pleasant and arousing than other fragrances... The sweaty odour of valeric acid at 1 part per trillion – triggers a negative response to a face, while the fresh lemon scent of citral at 1 part per trillion – triggers a positive response to a face.” Graves, Philip. *Consumerology: The Market Research Myth, the Truth About Consumers, and the Psychology of Shopping*. 2010. Nicholas Brealey Publishing (Web) Accessed 26 June 2013. Pg 56.

³¹ Madzharov, Adriana V. et al (2015) The Cool Scent of Power: Effects of Ambient Scent on Consumer Preferences and Choice Behavior. *Journal of Marketing*. January 2015, Vol. 79, No. 1. P. 83-96.

³² The converse effect was found with cool scents like citrus and mint which made the environment feel less socially dense. Madzharov, Adriana V. et al (2015) The Cool Scent of Power: Effects of Ambient Scent on Consumer Preferences and Choice Behavior. *Ibid.*

19.



Sweet Jesus Labyrinth, 2011

20.



The Lamb of God (detail) Hubert and Jan van Eyck, 15th century. Web. <http://static.artbible.info/large/lam_gods.jpg> Accessed 29 July 2015.

21.



Lamb's Head, 2011

ease. Just as marketing and advertising relies heavily on drawing connections between ideas, emotions and values, and an unrelated product or brand; the gravitas of a satirical work can hinge on the associations evoked through its materiality.

Chocolate as a medium fits well to activate a critique on the commodification of religious holidays and the ritualisation of hyper consumption. The material irony is particularly potent in using Cadbury Chocolate, as Cadbury was initiated by British Quakers in an attempt to quell the consumption of alcohol by introducing hot chocolate as a moral, desirable replacement.³³ In contrast to the Quaker's desire for a moral alternative, it could be said there is a relationship between chocolate and sins of the flesh through its traditional associations with an aphrodisiac affect. Further possibilities of chocolate as a medium are explored in the next work *Lamb of God and Mammon*.

Lamb of God and Mammon

The images of the bloodied lamb's head and the cross section of the lamb's skull (Fig.22&23) document steps in the process towards developing the chocolate artefact *Lamb of God and Mammon* (Fig 24&25) The lamb is a recurrently used symbol in Christian art and doctrine; a figurative device representing sacrifice, Christ, and his faithful flock. The altarpiece, "The Lamb of God" (Fig.21) by Hubert and Jan van Eyck depicts a lamb central to the cruciform division of perspectival space, set in a lush Eden-esque valley fringed in the distance by cathedral towers.

The severed head of a lamb (Fig.22) was the readymade sourced to develop

³³ Jackson, Peter. "How did Quakers conquer the British sweet shop?" BBC News. 20 January 2010. Web. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/8467833.stm>

22.



Lamb's Skull Cross Section, 2011

23.



Lamb of God and Mammon, White Chocolate 2011

the mould. The gruesome process of removing the eyes and tongue and bullet liquified brain was necessary to prepare the skull for the mould making process. The horrific slicing of muscle and gristle, gums and cartilage away from the bone was documented. To remove the remaining fats and proteins the stripped bare skull was boiled in clothes detergent and bleach. An oily acrid stench infiltrated and every square inch of atmosphere, which bore an emetic effect. Emetics have been used historically in spiritual rituals and can be administered to induce a severe physical abreaction, a technique shown to enhance suggestibility in religious and political conversion.³⁴ Author William Sargant writes “Abreaction is a time-worn physiological trick... used to soften up listeners’ minds and help them take on desired patterns of belief or behaviour.”³⁵ The process of developing the work *Lamb of God and Mammon* became a cathartic ritual in its own right.

To create a two-part mould the prepared skull was sawn in two. The interior chamber of the lamb’s skull (fig #) bears a vague resemblance to a cross section of the tower and spire of a gothic cathedral, with its verticality and the golden chiarascuro quality of the light on the bone cavities.

The artefacts resulting from this process are a hollow moulded chocolate parody of the mass produced Easter bunny, in dark, white and foil wrapped versions. The identical tone of Cadbury purple foil is difficult to source as it is apparently patented by Cadbury, so the closest colour had to be substituted.

³⁴ “Abreaction by drink- first beer, later wine - and wild rhythmic dancing, was also the object of the ancient rites in honour of Dionysus...catharsis or ‘cleansing’. Sargant, William. *Battle for the Mind: The Mechanics of Indoctrination, Brainwashing and Thought Control*. Pan Books Ltd, London. 1957. P.62

³⁵ Sargant, William. *Battle for the Mind: The Mechanics of Indoctrination, Brainwashing and Thought Control*. Ibid. P.62.

24.



Lamb of God and Mammon Pyramid, Chocolate and Foil 2011

25.



Maurizio Cattelan, *Untitled*, 2009. Taxidermied horse, glass, wood. Web. <https://static.perrotin.com/oeuvre/photo/Maurizio_Cattelan/maurizio-cattelan-19610_1.jpg> Accessed 31 August 2015.

The display in a pyramidal formation (Fig.25) references the Eye of Divine Providence which appears on the reverse side of the US Congressional seal. The pyramid formation is commonly employed in visual merchandising, in retail environments to draw the eye up to the most highly valued object at the apex. Hanna Rosen writes in ‘Did Christianity Cause the Crash?’ “There is one explanation that speaks to a lasting and fundamental shift in American culture—a shift in the American conception of divine Providence and its relationship to wealth.”³⁶ With its semiotic association with power and wealth, the pyramid could be seen to evoke this idea of divine providence. The possibilities for

³⁶ Rosen, Hanna. “Did Christianity Cause the Crash?” *Atlantic Magazine*. December 2009. Web. <<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/12/did-christianity-cause-the-crash/307764/>>

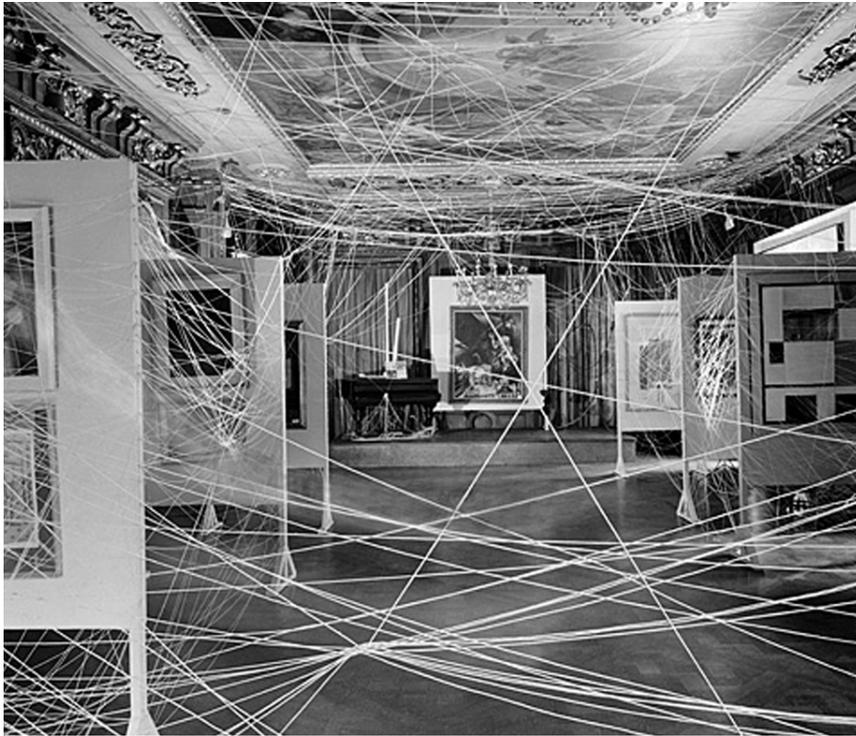
curating this work within in an exhibition setting will be further discussed in chapter three.

The most engaging works, to my mind, are not necessarily explicit in their agenda and do not preach didactically to the audience. The use of humour to pose a criticism is, I believe, a more penetrating way to interest, perplex, engage and in some instance shock the public. In his *Untitled* (Fig.26) work of 2009, artist Maurizio Cattelan employs a taxidermied, prostrate horse with a sign inscribed “INRI”³⁷ protruding from its belly. Perhaps inspired by the English expression “flogging a dead horse,” the work has been interpreted by some as a highly provocative criticism of the church.

This chapter has discussed a series of works which have continued in the exploration of the labyrinth form, and have interrogated notions of sacred and profane, sacred consumption and the commodification of religious holidays. In the work *Lamb of God and Mammon* the lamb as a figurative device was implemented to activate the critique and the groundwork was set to proceed with works which attempt to undermine the subjective and Christian doctrine based hierarchy between animal and human animal. The works which follow in chapter three continue to pursue the most luminous interrogative threads to emerge from the works I have discussed in this chapter, building towards the curation and installation of spatial artefacts in situ.

³⁷ The acronym of the Latin phrase, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum*, which directly translated to English is “Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews”. INRI has historically appeared in many religious artworks.

26.



Marcel Duchamp, *His Twine (Mile of String)*, *First Papers of Surrealism*, New York 1942, Photo: John D. Schiff. Web. <http://images.tate.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/duchamp_philadelphia_1.jpg> Accessed 1 September 2015.

CHAPTER 3

Consumer Cattleyards

A review of Marcel Duchamp's work *His Twine (Mile of String)* 1942 frames this stage of the project. The Auckland megachurch development by a prominent pentacostal church is discussed as an example of the spaces in which the Evangelical right operate. An artefact generated in response to the Pentecostal development is the *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*. The most recent and refined works to emerge from the development process are discussed in this chapter, *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*, and *Font of Prosperity* are artefacts developed to be integrated into a culminant installation within the context of a black box theatre. The preliminary development process of the installation work is documented in this chapter.

Duchamp's Mile of String

The labyrinth was a symbol variously adopted by the Surrealist movement, and represented displacement and the chaotic multiplicity of the subconscious. As confirmation of the symbolic importance of the labyrinth myth the Surrealist journal was titled *Minotaure*.³⁸ Duchamp's labyrinthine mile of string installation *His Twine* (Fig.27), in the collaborative exhibition *First Papers of Surrealism* in

³⁸ In reference to the beast who was immured in the labyrinth; the product of the unnatural coupling of the Greek goddess Pasiphaë and a white bull gifted to King Minos by Poseidon.

New York 1942, is considered to be inherently subversive and political. The 1942 installation created a dislocating and fragmentary space which challenged the conventions of the gallery as well as the Surrealist desire for homeliness or habitability, through interrupting the sense of perspective. Altering the perception of depth, through the chaotic composition of web-like barriers disabled viewers engagement with the Surrealist paintings.

The readymade is well established as a recurring subject and medium in the works of Duchamp. Discourse around dislocation and ready-mades reinforces the sense of disorganisation and disorientation evoked by this mile of string installation. Art critic and theorist Rosalind Krauss writes of the space which the ready-made inhabits, due to its itinerancy and disconnection with its contextual origin, it is she says “the space ... of sitelessness, or homelessness, an absolute loss of place.”³⁹ Given that the readymade in an art-historical context is imbued with such resonances of disconnection, dislocation and replication, a readymade selected not for its capacity to challenge the notions of art and the adoration of art, as in Duchamp’s work, but instead for its innate material and iconographic associations with the subject of critique, seems a potent medium to aid in the activation of that critique. A readymade material with a weight of associations was selected to activate the work *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*. It is discussed how this material stitches together the various angles of critique.

INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth.

The relationship between readymade and space is particularly relevant to the work *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*. (Fig.28) Communion wafers, sourced from the global marketplace constitute the building blocks of the labyrinth. The

³⁹ Demos.T. J. “Duchamp’s Labyrinth: “First Papers of Surrealism”, 1942.” October, Vol. 97 (Summer, 2001), pp. 91-119. The MIT Press. Web. Accessed 1 Nov. 2012 P117

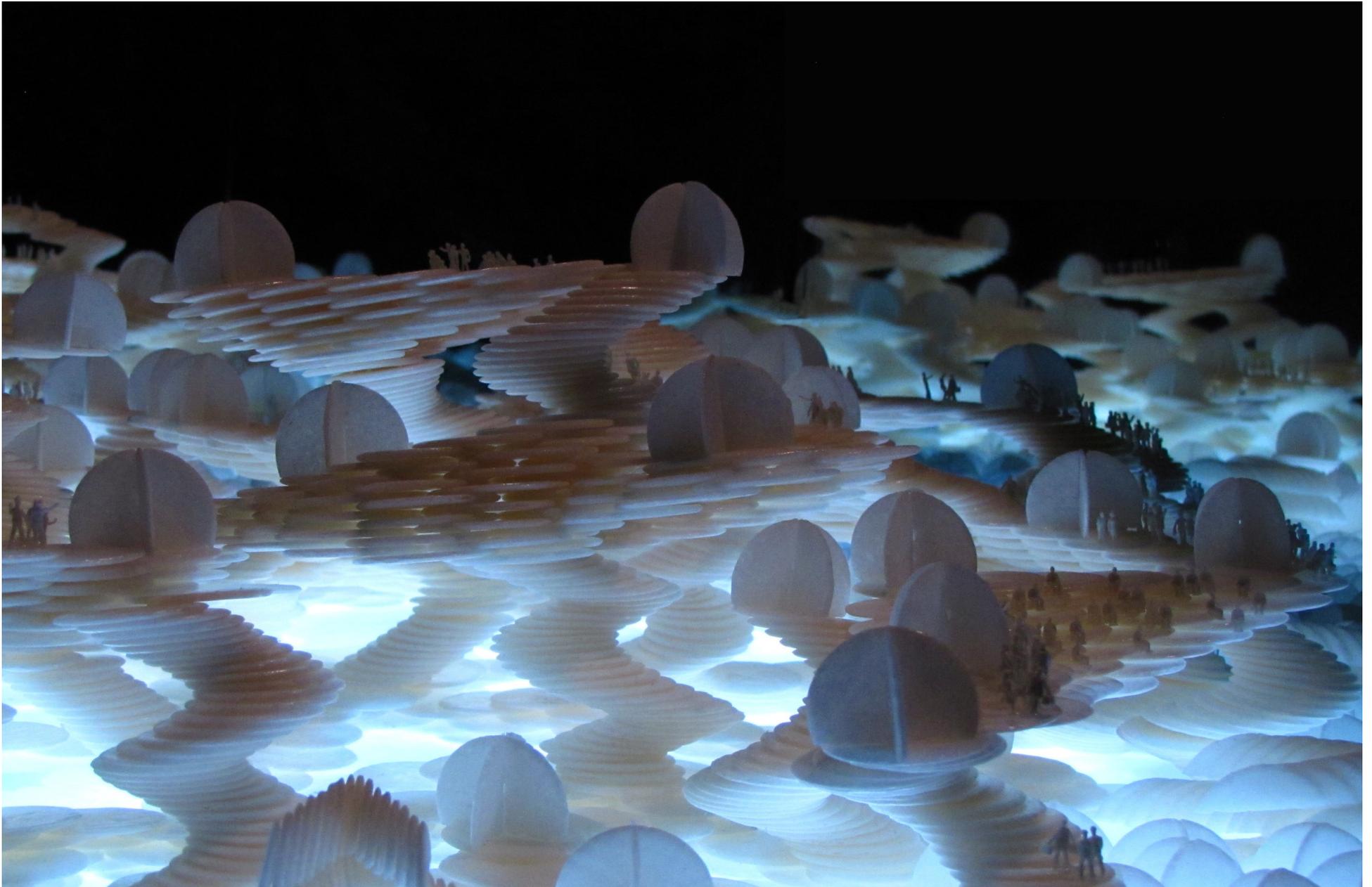
communion wafer otherwise known as “the host” in ecclesiastical terminology, is the consecrated bread or wafer in the Eucharist believed to be the sacrificial transubstantiated body of Christ. In the *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth* the wafer, due to its global displacement, mass produced quality and secular availability, is employed to allude to the hyper-consumption of consumer goods, intended to undermine its religious significance. The deviation in use from the wafers role in a sacred ritual, to the building blocks of a critical artefact could be considered as sacrilegious and iconoclastic.

Georges Bataille’s conception of the labyrinth contributed to the thinking behind the *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*, as Bataille’s labyrinth is Paradoxical to the highly structured, systematised and architectural Christian labyrinth. Dialectically the labyrinth, a symbol of the geo-political and socio-political dislocation and chaos; Bataille considered to be the antithesis of architecture; which stood for logic, state authority and formality of structure. Inside the labyrinth, where you are, can only be defined by where you are not. Dennis Hollier writes of Batailles musings on the labyrinth “Labyrinthine structure is acephalous: antihierarchical (anarchic); one never moves ahead, rather one loses one’s head there. Losing one’s head opens prisons.”⁴⁰ Acephalous bodies without comprehension of the self in relation to past or future, wander aimlessly through the *INCOrpus Christi Labyrinth*, driven by pure instinct, reacting to what is presently encountered without memory or reason, operating without the anxious prison of hierarchy, systems, rules and logic.

Through overturning the harmoniously symmetrical, divinely ordered Christian labyrinth typology (Fig.29) and adopting its antithesis the chaotic labyrinth

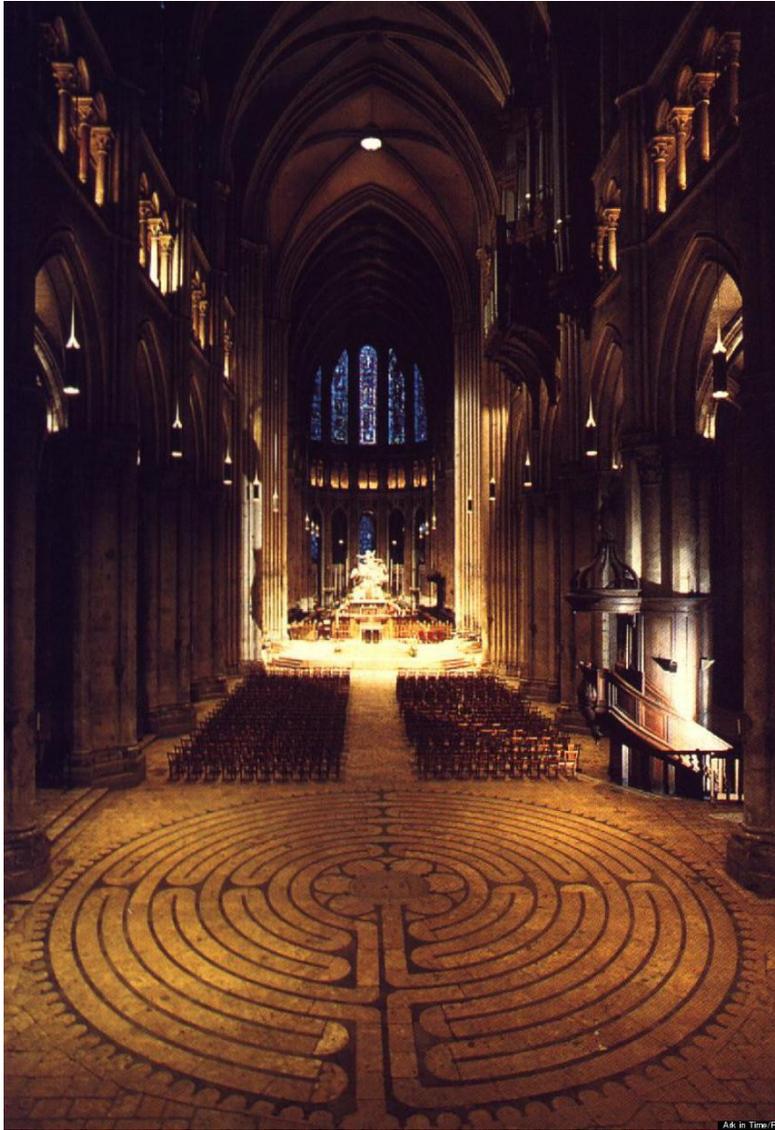
⁴⁰ Hollier, Dennis. *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*. The MIT Press, 1998. Pg 64.

27.



INCorpus Christi Labyrinth, 2012. Communion Wafers

28.



Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth, France. Web. Ark in Time/Flickr <http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1556668/thumbs/o-CHARTRES-LABYRINTH-900.jpg?5>.

Accessed 23 Oct. 2015

of Bataille; the veil of order is lifted to reveal the labyrinth of the Evangelical right. The tactic of establishing compositional chaos and the interruption of perspective is employed, there is no underlying grid or linear frame on which to apply a centring reference for the perception of depth. Forms acting as floors, columns, staircases, terraces and walls are amorphous, sprawling and curvilinear. Partitions are set at skewed angles to one and other, the frame on which to gauge perspective is the site boundary which is obscured by a reflection of the chaos it contains. One inhabits an indefinite location, along a meandering trajectory, between a start and an end point. In the *INCORPUS CHRISTI Labyrinth*, individuals and small flocks traverse the interior aimlessly, there is no apparent destination, entry or exit, there are no distinctive features to locate ones' self by. Walking the labyrinth is a continuum of consumption, spectacle, emotion and entertainment, blinding those inside to the reality of their predicament.

Font of Prosperity

The spatial artefact *Font of Prosperity* is a work currently in development to be integrated into the final installation. The precursor to this artefact was finding the readymade calf-feeding trough (Fig.30) from which a wax prototype was generated to be cast in recycled television glass. In keeping with my mode of working with a resource of economy, the recycled television glass was selected for its innate material associations with TV Evangelism and baptism into the culture of sacred consumption through advertising and media. The original galvanised metal frame has been adjusted from optimum calf suckling height, to suspend the glass font at an optimum baptising height, at approximate hip level. It's position within the installation will interrupt lines of sight in relation to the other objects. With the addition of dramatic spotlighting it will act as an activated fixture in a retail environment drawing the consumer to the furthestmost region of the store. This leads people to traverse as much retail real-estate as is possible, resulting in

an increase in the time spent exposed to products.⁴¹ Two Evangelical spatial archetypes that apparently take advantage of affective visual marketing strategies are the *Hell House* and *The Creation Museum*.

The Hell House and The Creation Museum

The *Hell House* (Fig.32) is another Evangelical space emerging from the theatrical, but on a much reduced scale from the vast megachurch auditorium. Bearing the makeshift impermanence and intimacy of a travelling theatre set, or fairground Haunted House the *Hell House* has a wholly Evangelical utility. Performances are held annually leading up to Halloween, mainly in America's Mid-west and bible-belt.⁴² Hell Houses were conceived as an evangelical strategy by the prominent US televangelist Jerry Falwell during the 1970s. Hell House Outreach kits were franchised during the 1990's by Pastor Keenan Roberts⁴³ enabling other churches to stage their own *Hell House* under the same model. The kit includes a detailed manual which covers set design and construction, lighting and special effects, casting and costuming.⁴⁴ *Hell House* design emulates the makeshift appearance of the haunted house fairground attraction. Far from the pure entertainment value of the traditional haunted house, the intention of the *Hell House* spectacle is to disturb its young audience into converting by depicting the consequences of the Christian right's politically contentious conception of sin.

⁴¹ Underhill, Paco. *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*. Simon and Schuster NY, 1999.

⁴² A descriptor of the area of south-central and south-eastern states of America.

⁴³ Smalec, Theresa. "Celebrate Like True Believers." : Performing Evangelical Christianity in Les Freres Corbusier's Hell House." Web. <<http://hemi.nyu.edu/hemi/en/e-misferica-41/smalec/>> Accessed 22 Aug 2010.

⁴⁴ New Destiny Christian Centre. Hell House Kit. Web.< http://www.godestiny.org/hell_house/HH_kitInclude.cfm> Accessed Oct. 1 2013.



Found Object, 2015. Calf Feeding Trough.



Exhibit at The Creation Museum, Petersburg, Kentucky. Web. <http://media.trb.com/http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e6/Creation_Museum_10.png>

Accessed 15 June 2015.

31.



Les Freres Corbusier, Hell House publicity postcard. Illustrated by Jason Ford. Web. < <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/e5/1b/64/e51b64f3f26dec750a1add27fc94ef62.jpg>.> Accessed 14 June 2015.

An Evangelical venue, which bears spatial similarities to both the megachurch and the Hell House is *The Creation Museum* (Fig.31) in Petersburg, Kentucky. Surrounded by expansive gardens housing topiary dinosaurs, it has been developed by the ministry Answers in Genesis who “seek to expose the bankruptcy of evolutionary ideas,”⁴⁵ and aim to equip believers with arguments to defend their faith, through “Christianizing” the ideas in science.⁴⁶ In an online virtual tour of the museum’s exhibits, you can walk through biblical history, where Adam and Eve coexist amiably with dinosaurs in the Garden of Eden, a scaled down section of a Noah’s Ark on a construction site, an archeological dig, and Palm Pizza, a pizzeria of ancient Jerusalem styling. Like the ‘intelligent design’ concept that underpins it, the museum portrays ideas from biblical scriptures and subversively packages them in a form that imitates the science that it sets out to ridicule. Whether the Evangelicals have tacitly or explicitly employed proven affective strategies for influencing people in their spaces is a point for debate, regardless of this visual merchandising remains a potent tool for behaviour manipulation.

Double-Plus Unfree

In the documentary *Human Resources* author Rebecca Lemov articulates, “during the twentieth Century in American Laboratories the maze was adopted as a symbol of hope that social life could be controlled in a very scientific manner- that social life could be re made on the basis of scientific principles.”⁴⁷ According to Lemov converting humans into obedient tools was the aim of early

⁴⁵ Answers in Genesis. “About Answers in Genesis.” Web. <<http://www.answersingenesis.org/about>> Accessed Aug. 2010.

⁴⁶ Stephens, Randall J and Karl W Gibberson. “Anti-Intellectual Populism and Evangelical Self-Understanding.” Web. Sept, 2011. Harvard University Press Blog.

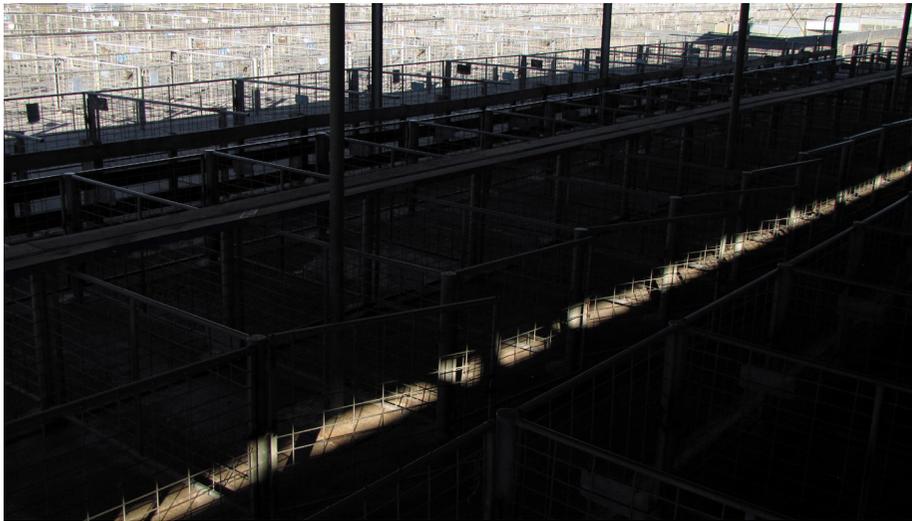
⁴⁷ *Human Resources*. Dir. Scott Noble. Metanoia Films. 2010.

32.



Sheep Pens, Te Rapa Stockyards. 2015.

33.



Sheltered Sheep Pens, Te Rapa Stockyards. 2015.

twentieth century social engineering, which recognised humans to be mostly predictable and therefore, behaviours were modifiable to serve the interests of the corporate elite. The objective of social engineering being to build complex systems of persuasion, prevention, adjustment and control which are concealed and near on unavoidable in the social-maze. The methods of human behaviour manipulation are not unlike teaching a lab-rat to navigate a maze, the learned behaviour, shortly becomes perfunctory routine. As with human animals in their everyday environments, lab animals inside the labyrinth are faced with a series of challenges, choice-points, blind alleysways and dead ends. (Fig.33&34)

An offshoot of Taylorism, the scientific management of industrial production processes, which concerned itself with the social engineering of the labour force, is the study of consumer behaviour; which involves the manipulation of “consumers,” as opposed to workers. Consumer research and shopping psychology are tasked with researching peoples’ shopping behaviour, in order to derive methods for facilitating the increased consumption of consumer goods and services. Employing the findings of this research is the spatial practice of visual merchandising, involving the strategical planning of affective consumer spaces, spaces where environmental stimuli are manipulated to appeal to the senses to generate an emotive response.⁴⁸ All the sensory devices in a space have the potential to affect the subconscious emotions and thus, the behaviour of people inhabiting that space. The visual merchandising considerations of planning, scale, proportion, site lines, mirroring, doubling, surface, lighting, auditory,

⁴⁸ Lemov quotes early twentieth century behavioral psychologist John Watson, “to make your consumer react, it is only necessary to confront him with either fundamental or conditioned emotional stimuli.” Lemov, Rebecca. *World as Laboratory: Experiments With Mice, Mazes and Men*. Hill and Wang, 2005. Pg 43.

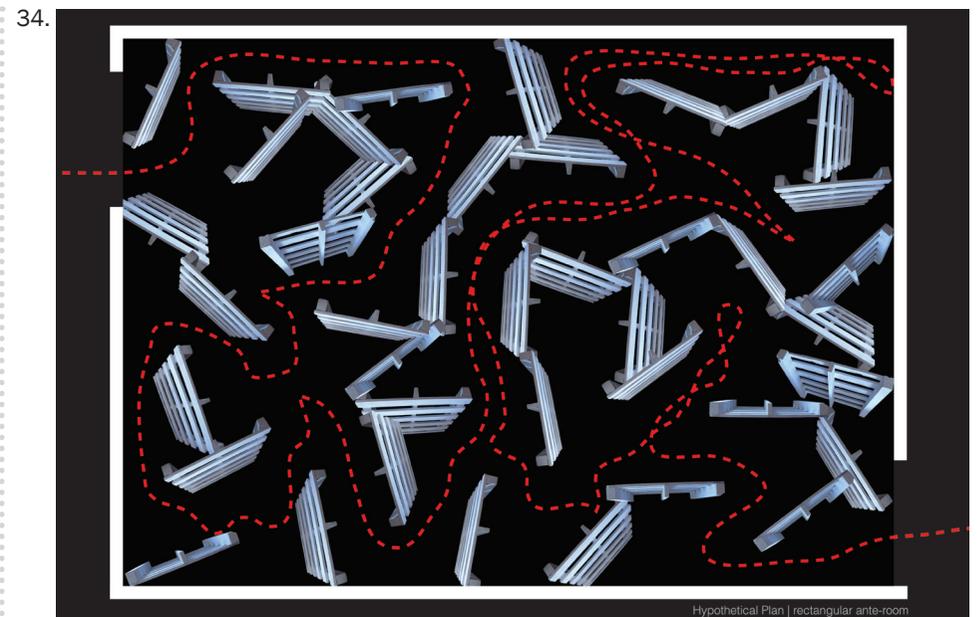
olfactory, tactility, gender specific targeting, signage, way-finding, ergonomics, adjacencies, activated displays, colour and temporality can all be orchestrated to contribute to the manipulation of the senses and emotions, which in turn leads the unsuspecting patron into a predictable pattern of shopping behavior.

Academic Russell Belk writes, “pursuing sacred consumption is generally societally approved. Just as Karl Marx once proclaimed that religion is the opium of the masses, sacred consumption also has the ability to channel consumer energies into a focus that may preclude revolutionary thought and action.”⁴⁹ The hybridizing of the two opiates: religion and sacred consumption, I argue, is an intensely heightened narcotic.

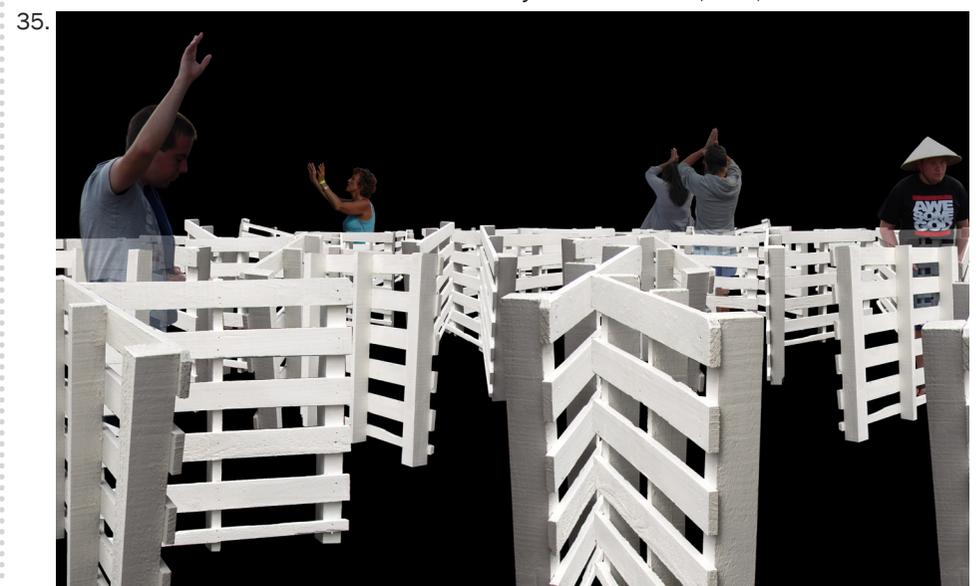
First Iteration of the Labyrinth Installation

In the first iteration of the labyrinth installation (Fig.35&36) I had not settled on a specific spatial context, only that the space would be an antechamber, signifying that the installation was perhaps not the crescendo. Potentially leading to an anticipation that something greater or transcendental may await just beyond the exit threshold or else to an infinite series of labrithine antechambers. The intention is to generate a disorienting and chaotic spatial arrangement, manipulating the environmental sensory devices in line with the guidelines advocated by consumer behaviour researchers in order to illicit a specific emotional response and behaviour. In this first iteration the conceptual (pyramid) is embedded in the ready-made building material, a stack of broken Pallets (painted white). Pallets are symbolic both as the detritus of the hyper-consumerism and they have similar formal qualities to the fencing of wool-shed races and pens, which are in direct reference to my previous works incorporating the symbology of ‘The Lamb of God.’

⁴⁹ Belk, Russell W., Melanie Wallendorf and John F. Sherry, Jr. “The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey.” *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Jun., 1989), The University of Chicago Press. Web. 11 Oct, 2012.

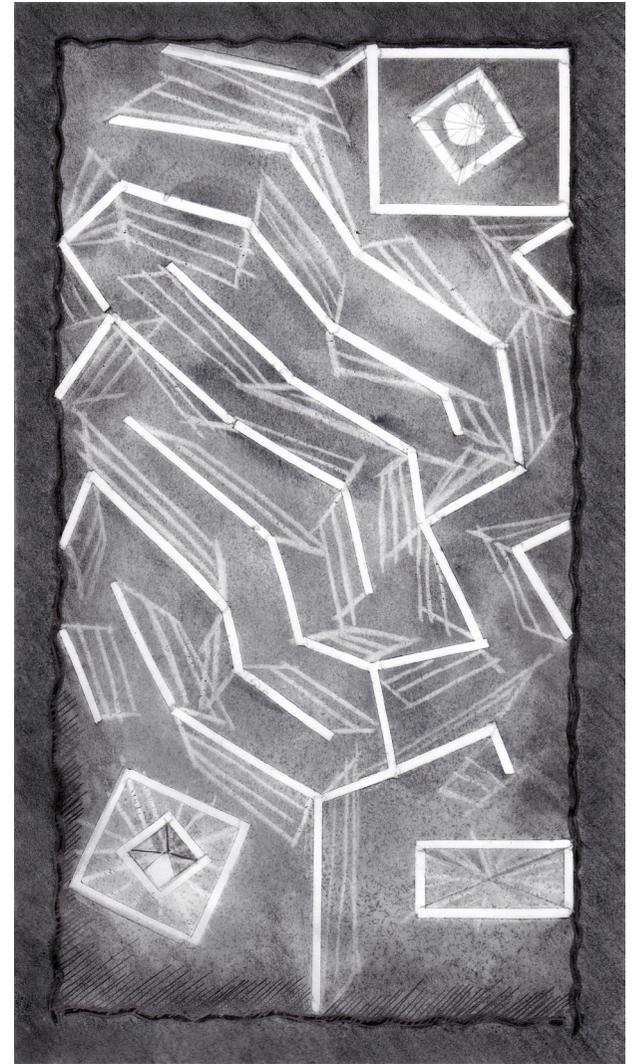
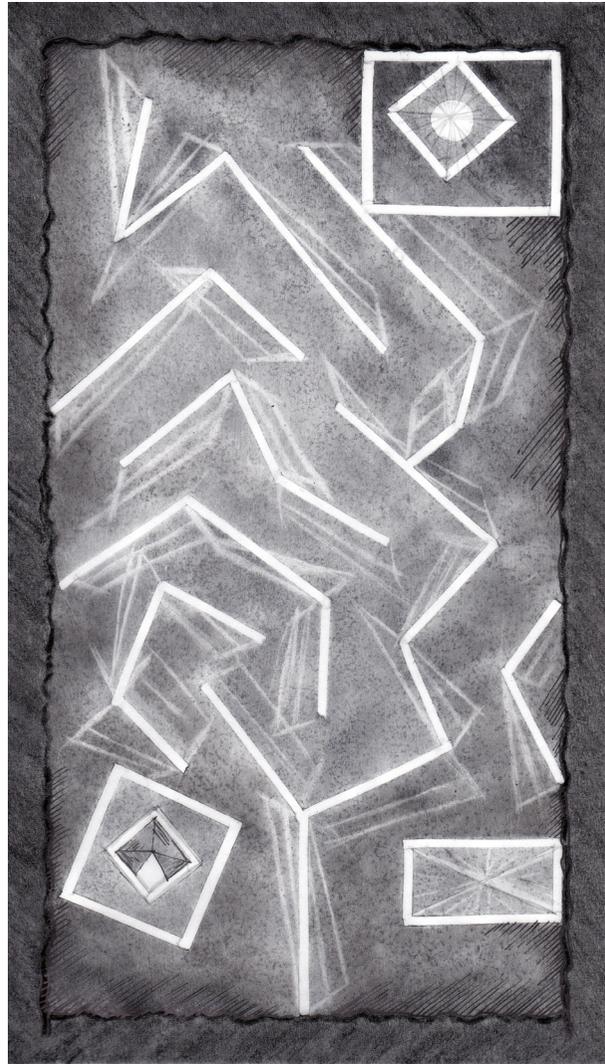
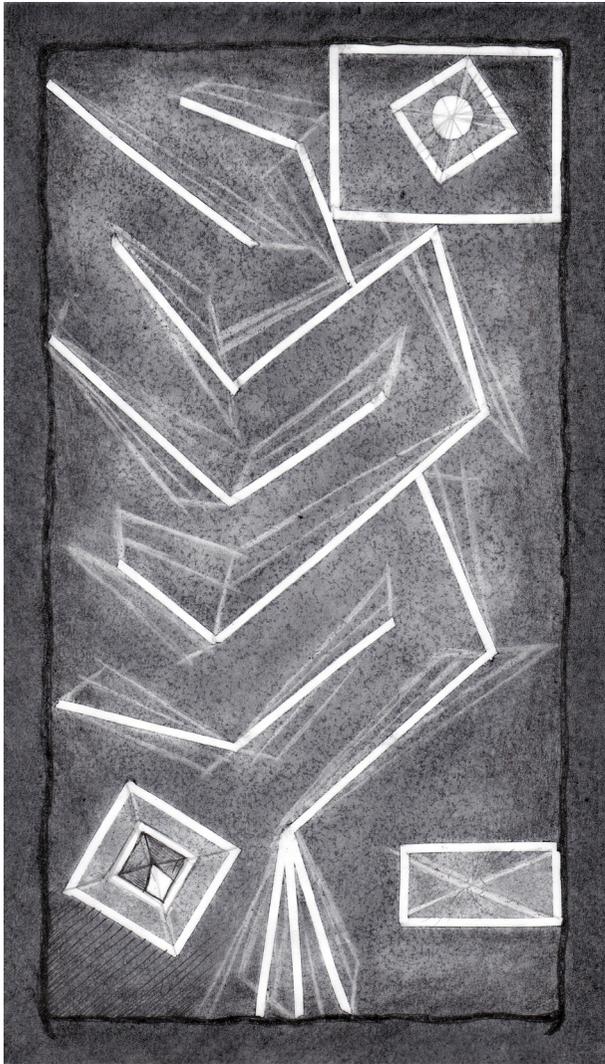


Anteroom Labyrinth Installation, Plan, first iteration. 2012.



Anteroom Labyrinth Installation, Perspectival Section, first iteration. 2012

36.



Second Installation Iteration, Three Plans. 2015. Charcoal and ink

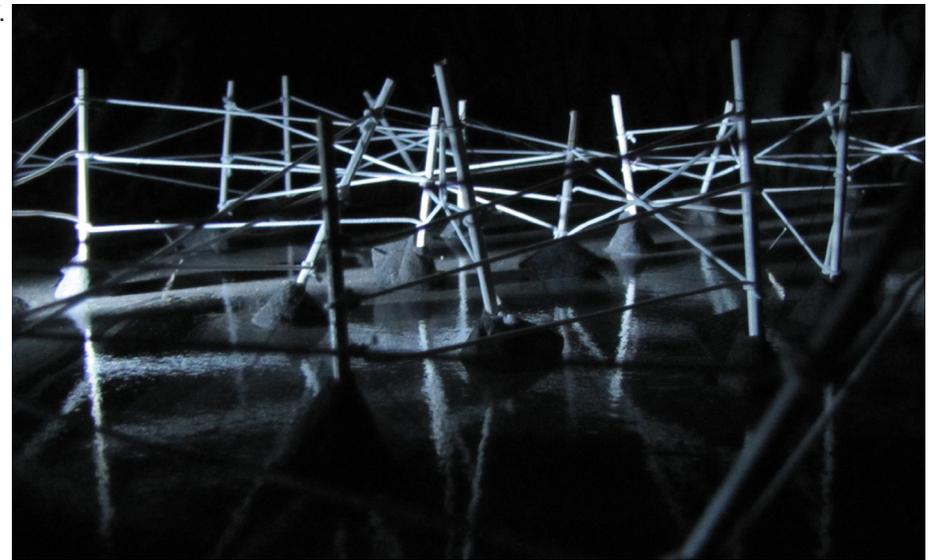
The spatial artefacts *Lamb of God and Mammon, INCorpus Christi Labyrinth*, and *The Font of Prosperity* will be framed within this spatial provocation. They will be displayed according to visual merchandising guidelines and can only be viewed by traversing the labyrinth which will occupy the space that divides them. The exit from the labyrinth could potentially be an inclined cattle-ramp, warmly lit to engender a feeling of euphoria. The irony of this element relates to the agricultural context, a threshold where the animal commodities are sent to their untimely deaths at the whim of their masters, ultimately dictated by the “all-powerful” market.

Second Iteration of the Labyrinth Installation

A visit to the vast empty Te rapa stockyards (Fig.33&34) and musing on the physical methods of crowd control, through the use of tape barriers in airports and bank queues led me to adopt a different readymade to employ in the installation, the electric tape fence. The recontextisation of the agricultural barrier, along with the ticking electric fence device, raises questions about the illusion of freedom and the limitations of human agency particularly under the neo-liberal/Evangelical right hybrid. The maquette (Fig.38) shows how the fencing system could be manipulated to compose a disorientating chaotic labyrinth through, distorting perspective and employing a reflective floor surface to elevate the sense of chaos.⁵⁰ The white fibre glass standards from which the fence is tensioned are two different heights, between eyelevel and chest height (the height of prime real-estate in retail shelf space), to achieve and interrupt of natural sight lines. The standards are set at skewed angles to each other to further elevate the feeling of tension and confusion. The white readymades lit at syncopated intervals and set against the boundless dark of the black box theatre,

⁵⁰ Environmental psychologist Paco Underhill observes that people slow down when they see reflective surfaces, but too many mirrors becomes disorientating. Underhill, Paco. *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*. Ibid. Pg 76.

37.



Second Installation Iteration, Maquette. 2015.

elevates the expansive and shifting unmappable quality of labyrinth. The physical limitations of the readymade tape fence as well as experimentation with achieving a heightened sense of tension in the structures led me to the next iteration.

Third Iteration of the Labyrinth Installation

The black box theatre possesses the benefit of a theatrical rigging system from which to suspend elements of the final installation. An alternative to having the white fibreglass fence standards weighted precariously upright by cumbersome concrete bases is demonstrated in the suspended labyrinth maquette. (Fig.40) Electric fence tape is attached to the fly system and held in suspended tension without contact with the floor plane by employing horseshoes to weight it taut. The recycled horseshoes, evoke an association with the superstition derived

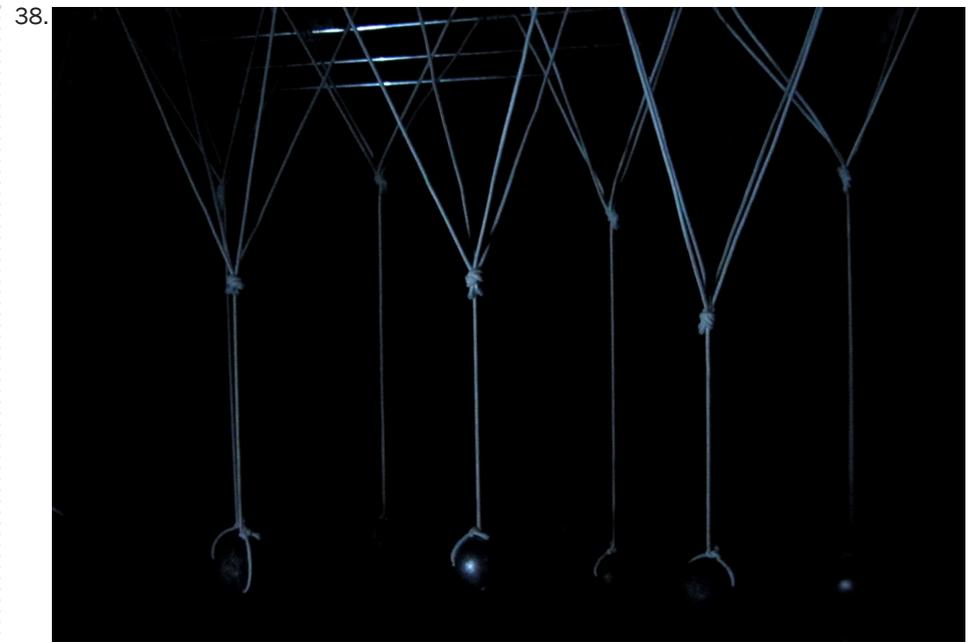
from Christian folklore.⁵¹

The form of the suspended structures references the suspended model for Gaudi's *La Sagrada Familia* and echoes the verticality and vaulted ceiling structures of traditional gothic cathedral Architecture. The apex of the inverted pyramidal structures will be set at differing heights, higher nearer the entrance threshold and graduatingly lower towards the furthest point to distort the sense of perspective, creating the illusion of greater expanse of space. The lighting will be set to shift across the suspended structures in synchronicity with an auditory rhythm set at the optimum beats per minute for increasing sales. Author Philip Graves writes "researchers have found that the type of music played can dramatically alter the amount of time people stay in a store and how quickly they move, and change their perception of how long they are kept waiting or how crowded a shopping area is."⁵² Graves points to research which showed that music set at less than 60 beats per minute in a supermarket led to a significant increase in sales. The auditory stimuli will be a minimal background element of the installation which may be picked up by the subconscious, with the idea that bodies and thoughts of the people within the installation may naturally fall into unison.

This chapter has framed and detailed the most recent works in progress at this late stage of the project, the spatial artefacts *INCORPUS CHRISTI LABYRINTH*, and *Font of Prosperity* are to be integrated into the final installation work within

⁵¹ The 10th century blacksmith and Bishop St Dunstan hammered a horseshoe onto the cloven hoof of the devil. McBeth, Jim. "The lore of nature: From lucky horseshoes to the rowan tree... how rural life is still touched by ancient superstition." Daily Mail, London.14 July 2010 (Web)

⁵² Graves, Philip. *Consumerology: The Market Research Myth, the Truth About Consumers, and the Psychology of Shopping*. 2010. Nicholas Brealey Publishing (Web) Accessed 26 June 2013. P.106.



Third Installation Iteration, Preliminary Maquette. 2015.

the context of a black box theatre. The development process of the installation work has been documented in this chapter, though further explorations are still to be conducted towards this final installation work. The final outcome of the installation and spatial artefacts will be further expounded on in a supplementary document.



Fleeing the Flock Signboard. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016

Installation WG210
Performance Research Lab
Auckland University
of Technology, CBD.
11th & 12th February 2016

Installation Post Mortem

Fleeing The Flock was the culmination of an ongoing investigation into how installations and spatial artefacts might be designed for the purpose of activating a critique examining the relationship between neoliberalism and Evangelical populism. The spatial artefacts curated in the installation were:

1. **Lamb of God and Mammon.** Dark chocolate and aluminium foil.
2. **Incorpus Christi Labyrinth.** Communion wafers, acrylic and stainless steel.
3. **Font of Prosperity.** Recycled television glass, polyester resin, silicone, steel frame.
4. **Fleeing the Flock Labyrinth.** 40mm electric fence tape, horseshoes (Ballymore Stables), Stainless steel tape joiners, truck tyre inner tubes, electric fence units, Wire.

On entering the space the ambient scent pervades the subconscious; one encounters a decompression threshold zone where the body is intended to adjust to the new spatial parameters and slow its pace aided particularly by the aural element. The movement across the threshold zone is interrupted by what retail merchandisers might call a power display, *INCorpus Christi Labyrinth*, the placement of this takes advantage of the natural path of movement and sightlines, the slowing effect of reflective surfaces and the alluring effect of intense internal lighting in contrast with the comparative darkness of the space. Taking advantage of what Paco Underhill terms “the pinball effect,”⁵³ a dispersal of

⁵³ Underhill, Paco. *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*. Simon and Schuster NY,

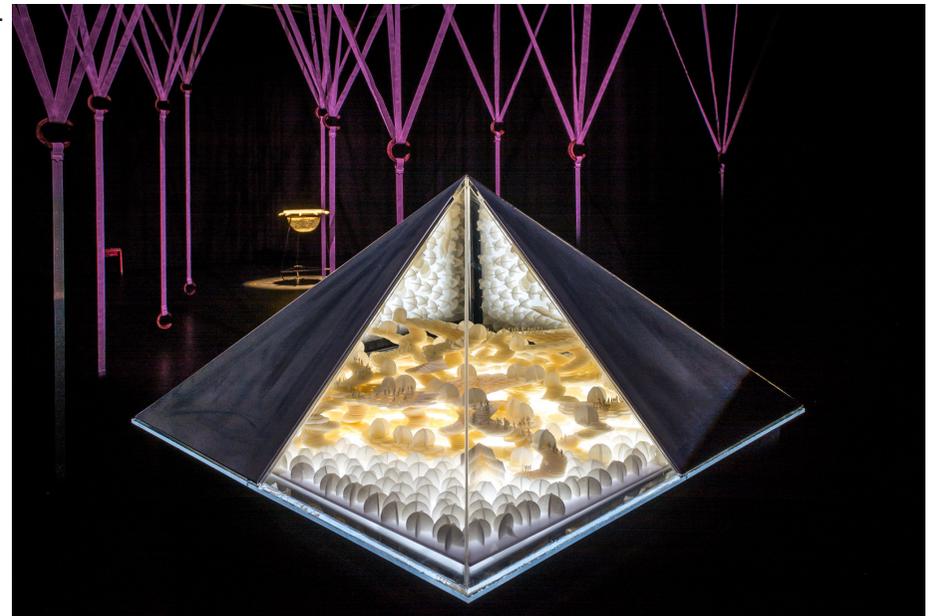
appealing objects which compell people to move from one item to another, this encourages a path through the suspended *Fleeing the Flock Labyrinth*. Focus is intended to be directed to the object at the furthestmost point of the space, the *Font of Prosperity*, which is spotlight intensely to evoke a similar transcendental shaft of light that may be seen cutting throught the dusty chiarascuro atmosphere of a gothic cathedral. Spatial artifices are contrived in an effort to synthesise a sense of transcendental euphoria overlaying an anticipatory sense of tension and unease.

Deus ex Machina

The mechanised theatrical fly-system of the Performance Research Lab resolved the conundrum of how to suitably tension the electric fence tape readymade. By using the existing fly-system apparatus, its regimented symmetry was transferred onto the suspended labyrinth form. The gridded uniformity had the potential to dilute the intended formal chaos of the suspended labyrinth. This uniform order was somewhat overcome by distorting the sense of perspective through incrementally raising the height of the apexes of the inverted pyramidal forms and by the level of the horseshoes nearest the ground plane in an effort to make one uneasy in their gait. Another spatial artifice employed to reinstate the chaos was the stage lighting projected onto the suspended elements, the three LED profile lights trained at different sections of the labyrinth were programmed to

1999. Pg 80.

40.



INCorpus Christi Labyrinth. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016

subtly, fade and shift in a seemingly irregular pattern in varying hues of white and the whitest variants of pink, purple, yellow and blue chosen to elicit feelings of euphoria, purification and transcendence.

The timing of the light changes were set to a similar pace as the metronomic percussion of the two electric fence units which were intended to direct the pace and synchronicity of bodies moving through the space. The units occasionally

41.



Font of Prosperity . Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016.

tick in unison before falling out of step with each other and then tick in turn, speaking to each other across the void and once again falling out of step; enhancing the anticipatory tension and unease. This ticking is periodically punctuated by the sound of a slot-machine jackpot, multitudes of coins pouring onto a metal tray, alluding to the tithing and commercialisation of the sacred. In Comedian Bill Maher's Documentary *Religulous*, he quips on Christianity, "it's like the Lotto you can't get saved if you don't play."⁵⁴

The ambient scent created to subtly infuse the space contains French pear, French vanilla and a hint of frankincense. A study by scholar Gael Hancock found that ambient scents increased the time casino patrons would spend sitting at a slot machine and hence spend more money.⁵⁵ Frankincense was selected for its significance as a traditional ingredient as the perfume of the Christian sanctuary. A study undertaken by Adriana Madzharov et al (2015) found that warm scents like vanilla can make spaces seem more socially dense, leading people to spend more money on luxury products in attempt to augment their self-esteem.⁵⁶

Font of Prosperity

The completed font exceeded my initial expectations. It was fortuitous that the glass casting was eliminated and substituted with a mix of crushed television glass and polyester resin, as the variation in texture created chaos and complexity in the surface quality which lead to interesting atmospheric light qualities to emit from its walls.

⁵⁴ Maher, Bill. *Religulous*. Dir. Larry Charles. Lionsgate. 2009. Film.

⁵⁵ Hancock, Gael D. "The Efficacy of fragrance use for enhancing the slot machine gaming experience of casino patrons" (2009). UNLV Theses/Dissertations/Professional Papers/Capstones. Paper 110.

⁵⁶ Madzharov, Adriana V. et al (2015) The Cool Scent of Power: Effects of Ambient Scent on Consumer Preferences and Choice Behavior. *Journal of Marketing*. January 2015, Vol. 79, No. 1. P. 83-96.

42.



Lamb of God and Mammon. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016.

Lamb of God and Mammon

On a re-purposed utilitarian communion stand directly below the pyramidal display of foiled heads, chocolate salvation was available to the few who were willing to knock off a portion of sugary skull with a small sacramental hammer. The display was spot lit from an angle which threw shadows onto the floor that resembled a squadron of fighter jets, waging war on the senses.

Exit

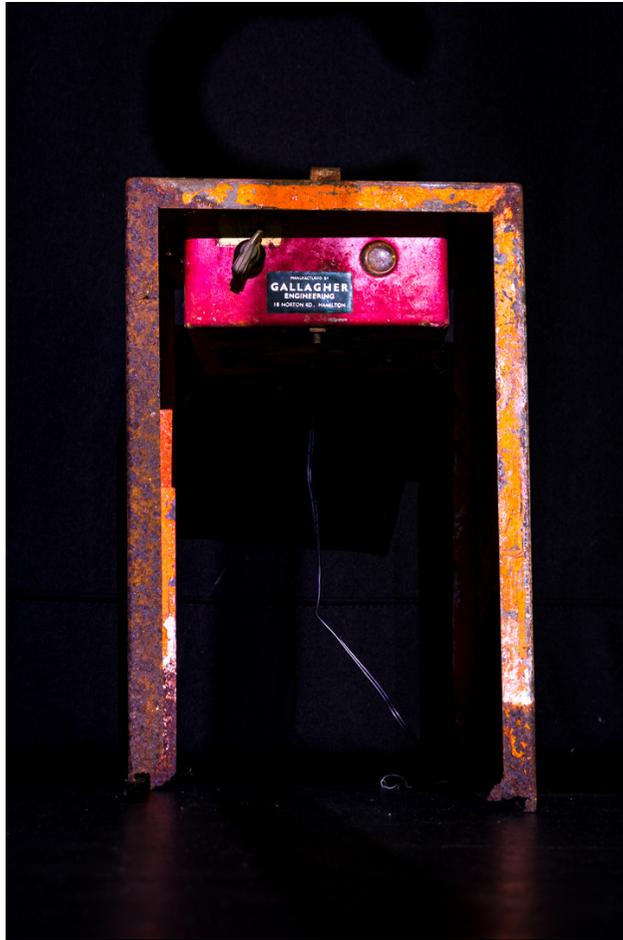
The installation has been documented on film to be analysed in view towards furthering an understanding of the way in which people inhabit subversive spaces. The analysis of the response to spatial cues and devices can contribute to the impact of future works.

43.



Lines of Sight, Fleecing the Flock. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016.

44.



Electric Fence Unit. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016.

45.



Detail, *INCorpus Christi Labyrinth*. Photo. Dr Stefan Marks. Feb, 2016.



Installation, *Fleeing the Flock*. Feb, 2016.

C O N C L U S I O N

The constant thread in my practice has been the examination of socio-political hierarchy, control, and the veiled artifices through which power is asserted and rigorously maintained. Tactical spatial configurations and affective spatial devices present in subversive works of art and the spatial archetypes of the Evangelical Protestant right that have been analysed in order to activate a critique of the Evangelical Protestant right. In this project the most significant of these modes of activation are the labyrinth, the binary antithesis of sacred and profane, and the affective devices present in the ironic interchange between sacred space and commercial space, the cathedral and shopping mall. The net was cast wide in the early conceptual and development phases of this project. Ideas, tactics and methods of making have been filtered and distilled through a series of critique sessions which have punctuated the project. Various iterations and re-workings have been synthesised in an effort to navigate an elusive path, on a somewhat vague trajectory towards an erstwhile unknown outcome. Reading widely on the subject matter and repetitive making, combined with the passage of time has lead me to question my own pre-existing suppositions and biases regarding the Evangelical right, moving from a position of critical opposition to that of an interested, critical observer. The project has illuminated new areas of interest and interrogative threads to explore in future works.

The labyrinth archetype emerged as a potent form for activating the critique. It lends its theoretical gravitas to the tactical spatial configuration of the installation, as a universally recognizable, historical symbol laden with associations. The dichotomy of the pyramid and labyrinth echoes the incongruity between objective reality and our perception of reality. There is a delicate balance to strike in selecting symbols to appropriate into a subversive work when considering the

audience of the work. Is the symbol universal enough to engage the precariat? as who would a subversive work resonate with more, other than a member of your own disenfranchised class. Is the symbology too coarse and simplistic as to furrow the brows of arts academia? And what of the Evangelical Protestant right? The many minotaurs inhabiting that labyrinth, the subject at whom the red cape is being waved, do the symbols appropriated and detoured in the work resonate with their emotions enough to provoke a reaction?

Debord quotes Philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach, “But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, representation to reality, the appearance to the essence... Illusion only is sacred, truth profane.”⁵⁷ From this perspective could the unveiling of the artifices of illusory apparatuses neoliberalism and the Evangelical Protestant right be considered a profanity in itself? Just as advertisers seek to cut through the overwhelming clutter of media by attempting to shock a public desensitized to representations of sex and violence, subversive practitioners utilize the combination of the sacred and profane as an effective mode for activating a critique. Provocation can be achieved through an apparent transgression of social norms. The appropriation of a religious symbol into a context incongruous to its innate associations and narrative, violating peoples’ expectations, is a formula for provocation.⁵⁸ Through recontextualising the religious symbol of the host, the figurative device of the lamb, and alluding to the environments in which animals are incarcerated and controlled, symbolic cues are set to connect with the subconscious, opening up potential for provocation.

Through the course of this research I became interested in social engineering

⁵⁷ Ludwig Feuerbach cited in: Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Ibid. P.11.

⁵⁸ Mallia, Karen L. “From the Sacred to the Profane: A Critical Analysis of the Changing Nature of Religious Imagery in Advertising.” *Journal of Media and Religion*, 2009. 8:3, 172-190.

applied to public and private environments; the manipulation of spaces and environmental stimuli in order to control and direct human behaviour. Affective spatial devices including controlled lighting, auditory, olfactory, sight lines and habitual way-finding have been considered for the final installation. The tactic of affecting the subconscious is commonly used in the spaces of both the Evangelical Protestant right and neoliberal capitalism, in the interest of brand evangelizing. In the West the social labyrinth can be seen to be partitioned by a tightly interwoven hurricane netting of the two symbiotic ideologies. The tactical efforts of both seem to benefit the proliferation of one and other. I have gained an acute alertness to the presence of the subtle affective environmental cues that permeate our engagement with the built environment and hope that the final installation work might foster in people a critical approach to potential tactically affective environments. To learn to read a space through these carefully orchestrated cues and to consciously oppose the desired intention of those cues, could be a small act of defiance that any person inside the labyrinth can make, which collectively could lead to a wider subversion.

Arguably one of the most damaging assaults the establishment can subject an activist artist to is to make them popular, commodifying them and their once subversive efforts, re-casting them as a brand and products to be absorbed into the vast workings of the capitalist machine. This could support an argument for an anti-aesthetic that rejects the painfully-overdesigned, infinitely replicable CAD printout that we now inhabit, the equivalent of Debord's 1:1 Scale model.⁵⁹ Unsaleable, unreplicable, ephemeral works that deteriorate before they can be commodified. The use of low-tech, low budget, re-purposed recycled

materials that may offend popular aesthetic sensibilities and values, rejecting the imperative to consume and be consumed. In holding up a mirror to society, the tactics employed to activate a subversive work must shift in accordance with the continually shifting cultural terrain. Identifying the prime situations and the most suitable mode to implement paradox, irony, and binary-antithesis is a challenge of wit that has the potential to fail spectacularly or resonate profoundly. In a sense the final installation *Fleecing the Flock* echoed the objective of the rodent labyrinths of social engineering, in that it tested affective devices on a small scale in view to developing future projects with increased exposure and participation.

⁵⁹ Self, Will. "Guy Debord's The Society of the Spectacle." The Guardian. 14 Nov 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/nov/14/guy-debord-society-spectacle-will-self>.

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