

THE MATTERS
THAT MADE IT
INTO MY GIANT
HEALTH SOUP:

POTTING AROUND
THE MOTION
OF THE
SENSITIVE
EVERYDAY



The Matters that Made It into My Giant Health Soup: Potting Around the Motion of the Sensitive Everyday

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Abstract:

The Matters That Made it into My Giant Health Soup: Potting Around the Motion of the Sensitive Everyday is autobiographical research situated in developing a ceramic practice and balancing employment in my family business at Ima Cuisine. Meaning has accumulated from the act of trying to be present in the art making process while also managing my on-the-job lifestyle. This writing concentrates on the nutrients that feed the praxis of my making practice, which are ingrained in restaurant hospitality and the dynamics around my family based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Pondering on past experiences and observations, the practice inhales and exhales stories of events that have set in motion the thoughts around the making, writing and installation. The project also employs sentiments from lessons attained during the process of building a studio practice.

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Attestation of Authorship

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

Signed

9 May 2023

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I would like to thank Monique Redmond and Ingrid Boberg, my supervisors in this Master's project. I would also like to thank the teachers and tutors from my past who have continued to educate me with tough love, and shattered my confidence with learning. I truly appreciated the kind words and encouragement along the way. You both know there were some very challenging periods where I was very down on myself, but I left each supervision meeting with the reassurance that I was doing the right things for myself and this project. I came into the degree with the aim to be more confident in my practice; I did not realise you two would help me find confidence in myself. Thank you for always supporting me, and especially being so patient, it really has made all the difference. Cameron Grigg my partner – you have been a significant help, not only with transporting bone dry vessels from Ima Cuisine to AUT, but constantly helping brainstorm installation ideas and being that additional assistance in making the mental metamorphose into the physical. Even before this project, you had given up time to make sure this ceramics practice is able to come to fruition. My sisters Avigail and Talia, you are my best friends because you are both so hilarious; being with you two boosts my serotonin, engaging the practice of enjoyment. Andrew Allan, my dad, you hold the humour that influences my making, and the academic determination that has delivered your achievements. While your library of thought has always been remarkable, for me it is not just what you have done for plant biology, it is the inclusion of film and music influences that you have passed on to me. Thank you for getting me obsessed with Radiohead as a child and introducing me to some of my favourite science fiction classics. You probably already know that you are the coolest dad there ever has been, so thank you for being authentically you. Yael Shochat, my Ima: the majority of this research has been a narrative around you and your complex life. Being so close to you has taught me so much about of our world, and the support you have given to my pottery has been phenomenal: it would not be where it is at were it not for you. I want to give you back your ceramic practice; when you are on the pottery wheel amongst new friends at Auckland Studio potters, I see a content relaxed side of you that is so beautiful to see. Let us play with clay more often. Ima Cuisine Staff – those who left, those who stayed – you have all been crucial to making this project hold essence and carry the story of dedication in labour. We have a collective shared experience of dealing with the traumatic cliental, the joyful experiences between customer and staff, and we have shared an openness about ourselves that not many other workplaces have.

Introduction

This thesis arises from the overlap between the ceramic studio practice and a busy family restaurant. My parents, in this nexus, had different approaches when providing me with solace over this two-year period. My father, Andrew Allan, advised me to reframe how I acknowledge goals, to view them as flags in a marathon. He says the giant flags, goals too large to reach immediately, will eventually become more manageable by knocking off small flags on the way, rather than being intimidated by the massive flag at the end of the race. My mother, Yael Shochat, reiterated lessons from therapies from her past and referenced Carl Jung's idea of caring for the "inner child."¹ Whenever she finds herself in an overwhelming position, she holds the child's version of herself tight and reassures her that it is okay to be terrified, the feelings are justified, and it is okay. In those two sets of lessons, I am met with the perspective of entering adulthood and running with changes and improvements, while looking back and acknowledging that I am still an adult baby who is sensitive to the feeling of intimidation but knows there is no shame in the anxiety.



Fig1__Naomi Allan. Installation view of test exhibition 2022

This exegesis will be a recollection of childhood thoughts, memories of situations from the workplace, and lessons learned from my pottery and illustration practice during the making period. In this crucial period of my late twenties, and where I meet the final chapter in my Masters, I discuss with myself within this exegesis what I gravitate towards in the visual field and what significance these attributes have in knowing myself and my creative practice. While I am coming towards my most ambitious installation yet, I am to write about the situations from the past in no chronological order. Instead, I will go where my mind goes when I am reminded of particular memories and why they still hold relevance as I move towards developing a studio practice for myself.

¹Jung, Carl Gustav, and Kerenyi Carl. 1949. *Essays on a Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Ginger and Lemon tea, or Black Coffee: acknowledging my everyday rituals to feed a making practice

If I were to define what I do and how I employ my time, I would categorise myself as a ceramicist by passion, a server by trade, and an illustrator when half asleep and indulging in a resting period. This project is positioned through an autobiographical approach, pivoting around the challenges of managing the Front of House in a family food business, Ima Cuisine, while nurturing a ceramic practice, and how I facilitate these experiences amongst the pottery wheel and varying forms of drawing. The discussion will open with how I have handled the project's routine in all its authenticity and what lessons have value in my relationship to clay as a material and a working environment. I will also share how Tāmaki Makaurau's nest of second-hand resources have influenced my way of working and what genealogy of material information informs the project design.



Fig2_Naomi Allan. *Coffee extraction*. Image Trace. 2023

Reflections on working in a clay and hospitality environment

The chapter title, "Ginger and Lemon Tea, or Black Coffee," is a metaphor I have chosen to reflect how the beverages I consume alter my working routine. Black coffee is a personal view on hospitality work, while ginger and lemon tea relate to the pottery release. Black coffee is easily consumable, provides energy, and has a taste that varies from bitter to disgusting, stimulating to fantastic, and goes straight to pumping the heart into overdrive. Coffee consumption and its criteria of specific ratios is an essential service of our business: being situated in the centre of various offices, Ima acts as an unofficial cafeteria for lawyers and real estate agents during the daytime. Because coffee service is breakfast for our regular clientele (while alcohol marks the transition to the special occasion crowd), they are the group of people we must please a little harder if we are to see them again. Ginger and lemon tea, on the other hand, provides opportunities for me to recover from the damage I have done to my body through over-caffeinating while overworking. I hardly crave ginger and lemon tea as my first choice of beverage, as I tend to run off caffeine's effects. I value the healthier option and wish to spend more time with tea than caffeine. Mentally, I crave the results of ginger and lemon, I love what this drink does for me and I like the taste, but it is not my drink of choice.

For the time being, I drink large amounts of black coffee. With my morning choices, immediately from when I wake up as I reach for the ceramic cup in my home, I hold the liquid accountable for what type of day I will have and how I will tend to myself. This explanation not only reveals how the project has been fuelled but connects the symbolism of a hot beverage in a safe ceramic cup to the experiences of my self-care and a memoir of my relationship to productivity.

At Ima Cuisine

Ima Cuisine is my parental job, as it is my first place of work and where I have gained experience in the fundamentals of hospitality. It is also where I have my pottery studio and where the making of my project is located. I do most of my pottery around my waitressing periods, often before or after I am on the clock. When I am on a bathroom break, I sneak in the back for two minutes to see if there is cleaning to catch up on or any other general admin before I get focused on making.



Fig3__Naomi Allan. Ima Cuisine Logo. Traced for the menus. 2019



Fig4__Naomi Allan. Ima Cuisine Dinner menu Front cover 2021



Fig5__Naomi Allan. Drinks menu Front cover 2022



Fig6__Naomi Allan. Ima Cuisine Lunch menu Front cover 2021



Fig7__Naomi Allan. Ima Cuisine Breakfast Menu Front cover 2021

Occasionally I would bring my clay and my mother, Yael Shochat, to Auckland Studio Potters in Onehunga, where we can concentrate on an activity that takes us both away from the business. I do this to involve Yael in pottery and try to give her balance, as practising in clay was part of her routine before her involvement in the food industry. Before my mother ran the business, she was a full-time practicing ceramicist. Unfortunately, she had to close that chapter due to difficulty gaining financial stability. A problem often manifests with creatives regarding their income and practice. With her entire contents in her studio being sold to local potters, hindsight made an appearance decades later when I developed an obsession with the art of ceramics. As I develop my pottery passion, so does the opportunity for Yael to return to her old love of working with clay. Being in a weekly evening class together is the stage we are currently at to regain confidence around returning to the clay.



Fig8__Yael happy on a Tuesday Night at Auckland Studio Potters. 2023



Fig9__ Throwing a large vessel first, then smaller ones after. 2023

I want to thank the community of potters connected through Auckland Studio Potters. Peter Lange and Peter Collis remained friends with Yael, and the late Peter Stitchbury taught her on Thursday mornings at the centre. Through Peter Collis's friendship with my mother, I received tuition in exchange for morning tea and lunch provided in my final year of my undergraduate in 2018. His time and knowledge helped me gain the skill to throw larger pieces and develop the confidence behind the potter's wheel.

When I became the manager at Ima Cuisine, it was not by choice but by circumstance; it was a priority for the family business that we had someone we could trust, and that that someone was me. I knew I was ready but did not want to be, as I realised my time with my clay practice would shift dramatically. Within the first few weeks of the new position, my mother offered to set up a pottery studio behind the restaurant. At the same time, she expanded the kitchen, a chance to save on transport and merge my Ima Cuisine life closer to practising pottery, guaranteeing I would continue as an employee so long as the studio stayed. It took a while to adjust to my paid work being so close to my pleasure. The more insecure I felt in my position as an employee, the less I would visit the space that my mother and the staff helped to turn into a sustainable pottery space. The guilt of not helping in the main homebody of the restaurant ate away at my practice. When I had tumultuous times, it felt like I was hiding in my room, actively avoiding responsibilities. I could not give myself time with my clay as the anxieties of the front-of-house were too tricky to confront. The irony was that when the manager who caused the most pain left this year, I thrived in my “workspace” as I could maintain more transparency by taking on more responsibilities. The most fundamental change and innovation to my pottery studio was when my mother used a broken-down pastry freezer to store my pieces damp for long periods. Any effort on the wheel could be preserved when I was needed on the floor for longer than expected. I completely controlled the preservation, like any food storage unit, fridge, or freezer.



Fig10_ Yael and Nidal transporting broken freezer into my space. 2022



19th October 2022



27th October 2022



8th February 2023



16th February 2023



Broken Freezer View 16th March 2023



Broken Freezer View 17th March 2023



Broken Freezer View 17th March 2023



Broken Freezer View 28th March 2023



Broken Freezer View 28th March 2023

Fig11__ Broken Freezer View, 19th October-28th-March

Joys in the Reclaim

I want to mention the “in-between” joy and learning I receive from recycling my clay, how exciting owning a pugmill is, and being lost in the feeling of sloppy mud without particularly making anything. Lately, I have gotten into the habit of recycling clay after the night shift. It has been a beautiful brain-switching-off activity, fitting in a few hours past my usual sleeping time to throw additional objects when necessary. My ethos and project mission to preserve everything I have includes the challenges of my obsession with keeping every gram of material. Often when I pour water on the studio floor to sponge up any remaining dust or clay, I position myself on my hands and knees, inching behind the pottery wheel, soaking up every shaving of trimmed clay. While doing this, I reminisce on my petty arguments with fellow workers about mopping the floor. I wonder if that girl I bickered with obsesses with the movement of liquid on the floor as much as I do. Still, then again, I am the one who chooses to spend my free time with my face and hands closer to the ground than one would usually recommend.



Fig12__ 70ltr of Clay in a slurry state. 2022

The clay body

My clay has a permanent pink hue from the 40 kilograms of brick-red sculpting clay I have, which originates from the United States and was donated by a family friend who no longer needed it. This influence on the clay body happened almost three years ago, and my recycled clay now equals three 70 litre rubbish bins from Mitre 10. For safety's sake and the survival of a piece, it is crucial in the processing stage to ensure the clay body is well-mixed and consistent enough to avoid any dramatic pulls of shrinkage rates, especially as I constantly attach other clay segments to the main form. Often dissociating into the mixed sediment bucket, I obsess with waiting for the clay to fall to the base, so I can pour as much excess water as possible into the waste. I currently own only 20 kilograms of Primo Mid-fire Porcelain Clay in my studio. Since purchasing this brand and type, the price has increased from \$42 to \$60 per 10 kilogram bag of clay. With the cost of clay increasing with every demand for materials, it is difficult not to treat each particle like an essential material worth its weight in gold, or in grams. All my clay wastewater is filtered by myself, switching the used Ima 70 litre tahini buckets from under the sink and pouring water down the shower in the next room until it is as clear as the water straight from the tap. As much as I can, I preserve every gram of sediment, responding to the financial and sentimental value of clay.



Fig13__ Pugmill Installed. January 2023



Fig14__ Clay in its bone dry state. 2022



Fig15_ Small man made by a chef on his break with the reclaim clay. Image Trace 2022



Fig16__Pugmill in action. February 2023

On the wheel

Throwing on the wheel benefits my mode of making because of the speed it takes to get forms made in excellent symmetry – and with the motion of the wheel I can enjoy a calming experience where I am focused yet completely relaxed. I love the challenge of free-forming taller vessels; the experience of reaching new heights with more daring forms exhilarates my ego as I constantly surprise myself with these vessels, which I did not think I could achieve. Working with multiple projects simultaneously has allowed me not to overwork the vases. When the vessel starts to do a goofy kink, like a person with a hula hoop swinging around their waist, I know there is either a problem or the clay is begging for no more work. Success is when the vessels are almost or just at the height of the shelf in the broken pastry freezer. But, like most things with ceramics, the transfer to the kiln can always be an ego killer. Mainly, the shrinkage rate brings the memory of something that once was unbelievable on the wheel into a more modest size. Glaze and clay bodies only sometimes fit, and as I am not dedicated enough to do the copious tests needed to know whether the fit is right, I must wait and see if the components get along. For now, imperfections or alterations for the additional firing have to have to collaborate when I transfer my drawings.



Fig17__Wheel Thrown Vessel before final form. 2022



Fig18__Three Orbs before top section is joined. 2022

Memorised by oil

I often draw to illustrate situations aligning with my intent for the form I have pushed around on the pottery wheel. My favourite drawing process is working with black and white oil paints on a horizontal glass surface, lining up the fluorescent light above my AUT studio space in order to warp the oil paint drawings. I do this because I am fascinated with how the light affects the oils and their shimmers, where only a few changes to the angle of the light create something unique. These images can only be produced through this technique. Drawing with thinned-out oils on the glass means I achieve the joy and speed of spreading this fluid material combination, having the power to wipe away a drawing and start anew once it has been documented on my phone camera. I then trace over the photographs of the oil drawings with simple graphic illustrations, translating these images into duo-tone silhouettes for other purposes. When I transfer the oil drawings onto the laptop, I typically draw more minor details while being relaxed. For example, I watched all seven seasons of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in parallel, drawing on top of my images in Photoshop. I do this stage in my downtime off work, somewhat switched off with little focus. The oil swims with the form and the pull of the slow pixels as they push the black and white lines around. This step of the drawing process is done with greasy liquids rather than achieved in Photoshop, because playing freely with the materials creates a much more dynamic visual flow with compelling results. Perfectionism does not hold me back from the impulse to undo a decision. With tools such as Photoshop, the unlimited ability to “correct” and “re-do” steps gives me endless possibilities, meaning I am prevented from fully engaging in a satisfying flow of improvisational drawing. Hence, I achieve a satisfying productive time with the making of oil drawings, rather than starting the process from scratch on Photoshop. The unknown territory is when my digital drawings leave my laptop's HEV (High Energy Visible) light for the ceramic bodies' skin – I am always eager to know how these complex layers of speckled stone in my fired pieces and the pixels will communicate with each other in the final form.

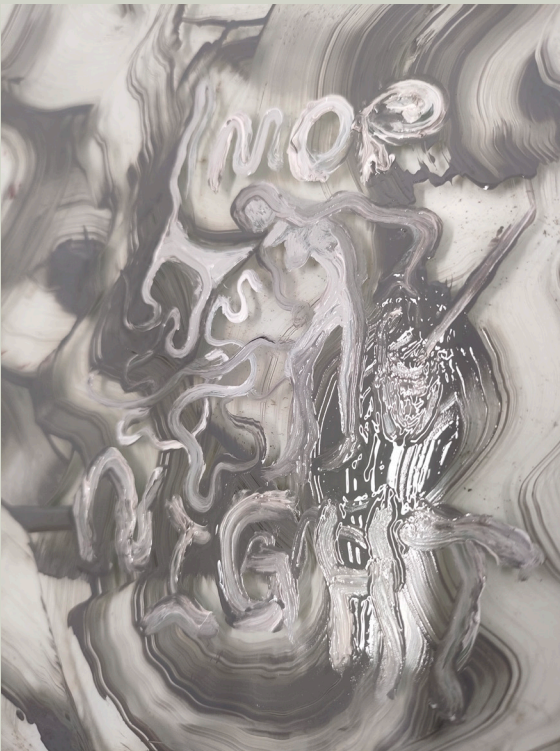


Fig19__ Naomi Allan. Mop Night. Oil Drawing on glass. 2022



Fig20__ Naomi Allan. Mop Night. Image Trace of Oil Drawing. 2022



Fig21__ Naomi Allan. Happy Brew. Oil Drawing on glass. 2022



Fig22__ Naomi Allan. Happy Brew. Image Trace of Oil Drawing. 2022



Fig23__ Naomi Allan. Sitting With a Hot Drink. Oil Drawing on glass. 2022



Fig24__ Naomi Allan. Sitting With a Hot Drink. Image Trace of Oil Drawing. 2022

While I am on my phone

Lastly, the primary tool I frequently use is my phone camera, the quickest form of photography, which allows direct access to develop images on my laptop via wireless technology. Documenting impulsive iterations has been my way of bookmarking observations in my everyday that I may typically overlook. The phone camera has advanced to a point where the quality of the images is near the desired results I would usually try to achieve with an SLR camera. The exact process I use with my photographed oil drawings is to duo-tone the image to black and white and marry the image with illustrations.

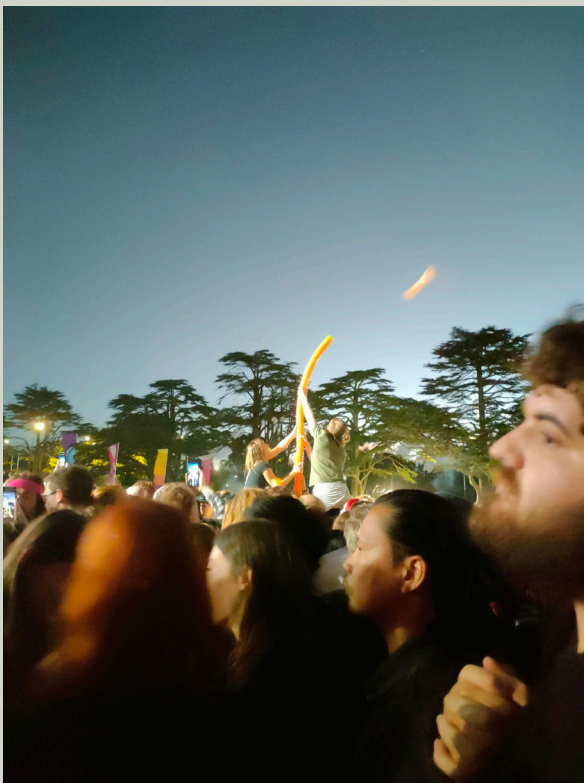


Fig25__ Naomi Allan. *Impressive cup stack at My Chemical Romance in motion*. Photograph. 2023



Fig26__ Naomi Allan. *Impressive cup stack at My Chemical Romance*. Image Trace of Photograph and Oil Drawing. 2023

Bread and Butter, Burgers, and Mayonnaise: Reflecting on Anxious Thoughts for Liabilities and Assets of Love in Labour

The Drunk Model

I remember when a drunk model wanted to give me some work advice while I was working a night shift. A tall thin girl came in with her sober friend on a weeknight; we were about the same age, and the girl was obliterated with alcohol. Technically she should not have been allowed to enter the premises.² We had never met, but every breath exclaimed her love for us at Ima. We fed her and hydrated her. No drinks other than water were to be consumed. Thankfully, she was in too much of a good mood to protest. When she paid for her bill, we chatted about my interests outside of waitressing and how I had been “playing” with ceramics. With an unfocused soul-staring look, the girl claimed that she could see I was not happy and that it would be more beneficial for my creative potential for me to get up and leave. I wondered if those same episodes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer or similar have been on her radar. Was she yearning for another powerful woman to be freed from the shackles of the service industry, or was she just biased by the privilege of being looked after versus the one performing the caring?

As my making is an assemblage in forming a permanent practice, it also includes the weight of emotive thought and the struggles of being self-conscious about how I am viewed in my working profession (being financially supported by hospitality work). I often reflect on insecurities as my narrative, as my intention from the beginning of the Master’s project was for my work’s theme to be a confidence-building practice. While my work stems from a diaristic perspective, I seek to understand how influences stir my thoughts and question where I put my time and energy. I am writing this segment as a mirror of my own analysis of myself before I reach the examination date. It is parallel to my love of *Twin Peaks*, where Laura Palmer and Dale Cooper record their influences in her diary and his recorder to the faceless Diane before their fate in the lodge.³ My destination is my final presentation in ST PAUL St Gallery, and my self-reflection is also material to mirror my psychology.



Fig27__Naomi Allan. Zine Presentation on Landlords door. Risograph print, Timber. April, 2022.

² New Zealand School of Food and Wine. 2012. *The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012*.

³ Boulègue, Franck. *Twin Peaks: Unwrapping the Plastic*. Bristol. Intellect Books. 2017

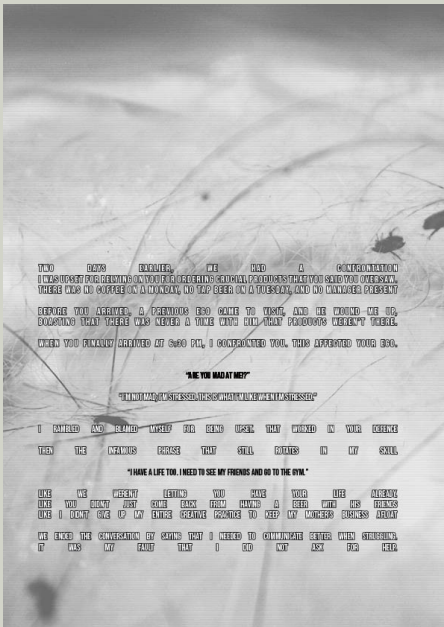
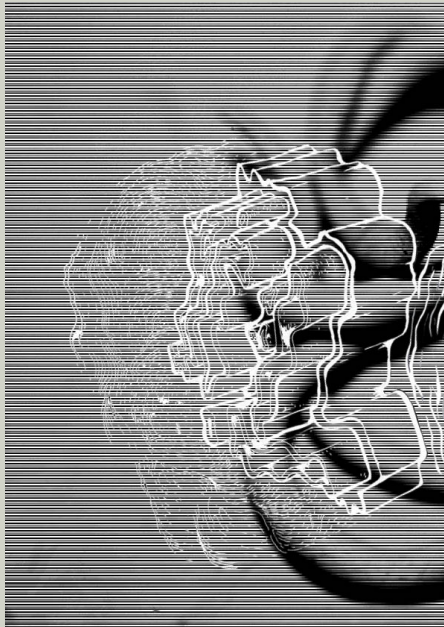


Fig28__ Naomi Allan. You lost the game. Zine. pg1-5. 2022

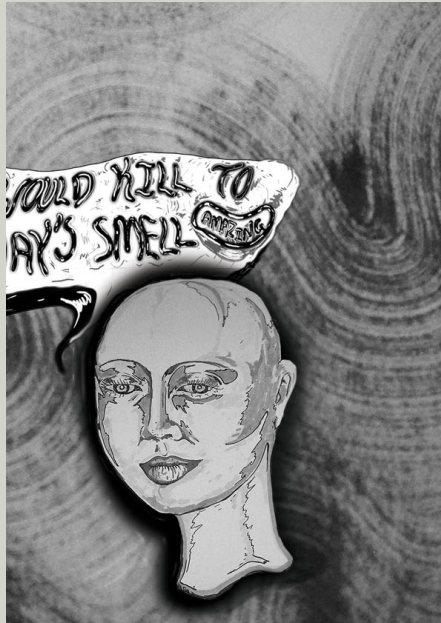
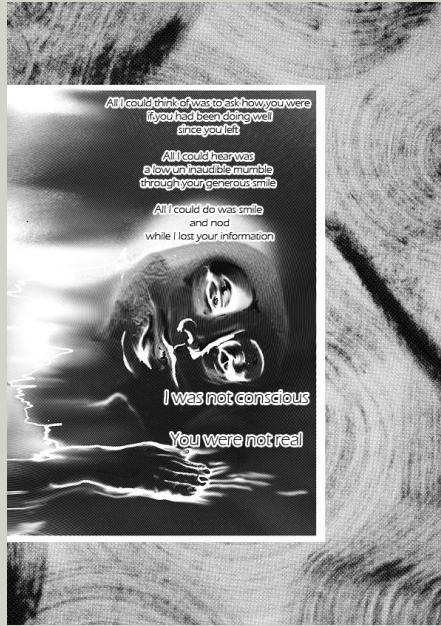
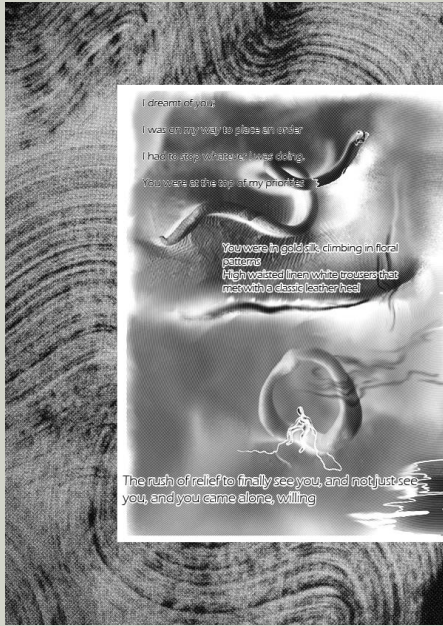


Fig29__ Naomi Allan. You lost the game. Zine. pg6-11. 2022

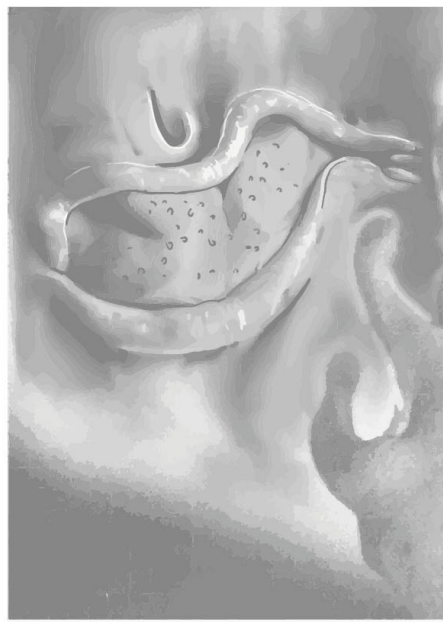
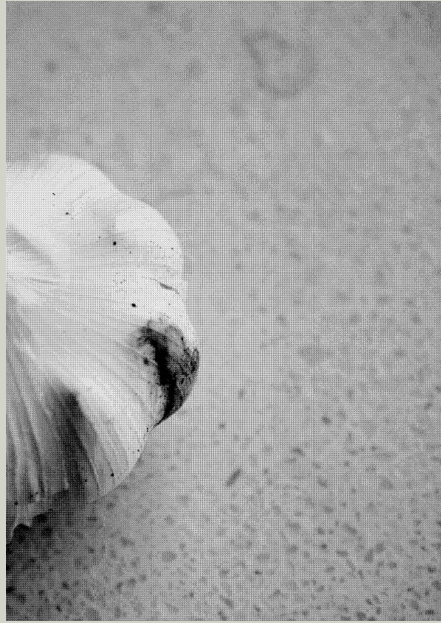


Fig30_ Naomi Allan. You lost the game. Zine pg12-16. 2022

Buffy Summers

There was a period at the very start of the thesis year when my access to clay was restricted, and I was bound to my laptop at home. I binged the full series of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Drawing was crucial during this time, as I became very diminished and homebound, drained of most of my energy, but with enough to engage with Buffy Summers, who was regularly assigned an immense amount of responsibility in each episode. For half a year, I clocked in the critical job of educating myself on Buffy Summers's coming of age through approximately 100 hours of watching. The payoff was that my illustrations are intense in their hyperfocus details. While editing my images in Photoshop, I took pleasure in slipping into the escapism of bingeing entire seasons of Buffy. The seven-season series has, on average, 22 episodes per season, each 45 minutes long. With each pull of the pixels, my engagement tasks itself on how a superhero woman comes of age. A notable takeaway from the fantasy show is the portrayal of being a working employee, specifically when Buffy Summers deals with the reality of financial hardship in Season Six. Even after waking up from being dead, there was still an expectation for Buffy to be the breadwinner of the house rather than recover from her trauma. Her peers continue to expect her to do her duties and fight demons, all while making an income. She settles with fast food hospitality as a last resort for her day job, at a burger institution called *The Double Meat Palace*.⁴ One of the perks of working in the service industry is that individuals are graded on how many years they last. The top honour in the business is the decade-long service, akin to how long I have been at Ima Cuisine (except it has been longer for me). The last time we saw Buffy Summers in a customer service job was when she ran away from the trauma of impaling her lover Angel to save the world from being sucked into hell. An ex-lover, Riley Finn, arrives at her workplace after being drafted to demon-fighting missions by a secret government military. He exclaims later that he feels pity for her and hates to see her like this. This storyline suggests that customer service is a trope of Buffy Summers at her lowest and most desperate to survive. The illustrations I made while watching Buffy iterate the diaristic perspective of the Covid isolation period and the conflict I felt when working, and not working, in my hospitality environment.



Fig31__ Film Still. Joss Whedon. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer : Doublemeat Palace*. 2002.

Lenora Ledwon's writing on Television Gothic discusses properties of the television as a medium to evoke examinations of self through engagement with the story telling vessel in the living room, the television. They state "the fact that television would seem an ideal medium for Gothic inquiry. It is, after all, a mysterious box simultaneously inhabited by spirit images of ourselves and inhabiting our living room."⁵ With me channelling my empathies through Buffy in her role at *The Double Meat Palace*, I examine my contradictions of balancing the customer service self and the making self.

⁴ Whedon, Joss, dir. 2002. *Doublemeat Palace*. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season Six DVD Collection*. Fox, 2006. DVD.

⁵ Ledwon, Lenora. 1993. "'Twin Peaks' and the Television Gothic". *Literature/Film Quarterly* 21(4): 260-70.

Hey friend, I've got a gift for you

This year has been really hard,

Personally speaking

Have you ever doodled on public furniture?

Have you ever wanted to scratch a huge penis on the Sky Tower?

Well I can not do that for you today, my apologies

All I can offer you is my half-fired clay vessels

And this notebook, that I ask you to draw, or write in

Will you return this notebook?

If you do, I personally promise that your work will be seen again

Set in stone forever, tattooed on ceramic forms, permanent
impulsive thoughts held on these bodies

If you keep this notebook

You get a notebook.

Will you return this notebook?



Fig33__ Talk week, me hanging out with my bisque ware and note books in hope for a collaborative concept. 2022



Fig34__ Talk Week, Installation. 2022

In Talk Week, I mustered up an idea to justify presenting bisque ware as a public installation. I toyed with the idea that people could receive notebooks I made for them to draw in, annotate, and send back to me, so their drawings could make their way onto the surfaces of my vessels. I did not continue with the idea as I realised I had much of my content to resource the work, and I would need more participants' responses to make this process material.



Fig35__ Test Crit puzzling stage. November. 2022



Fig36__ Test Crit puzzling stage. November. 2022

In the Incubator

Tearing myself away from the role of waitress to ceramicist holds more weight when the position is bound with sentiment. My mother raised me at the same time she grew her business, so in some ways, I could identify Ima Cuisine as my sibling. Both my actual siblings have expelled Ima from their working lives. Avigail is employed in the film industry, and Talia is in science. My pottery does not give me an income, so employment at Ima Cuisine benefits my quality of life in Tāmaki Makaurau. As Ima is my family business, frustration does boil up when it brings back memories of juvenile annoyance and being delegated household chores. Now, though, the rotation has stopped, and at Ima only I will do all the tasks; I must adopt new siblings who agree to help for pocket money. Thus, it is always painful to see them go, and it is exhausting to reintroduce someone else to the team.

I moved out of my parental home almost half a decade ago, pivoting my direction to a home structure that best suited my needs, paying rent to another parent I barely know but protected by a legally binding document that ensures both of our expectations are met. However, I am also still in my mother's ward in Jerusalem, close to her chest, being a portable larva. In my family business, I have not fully moved out of home, and neither has my practice because, at this stage, it cannot provide for me. I have never held children in my womb. The only beings I have incubated are the forms of my clay practice, which I am still holding tight in my guts until I am confident to show them off. I claim and collect ingredients and materials, and nest them in my place of work, my pottery studio behind Ima Cuisine.



Fig37__ *Waitress on her way*. Digital drawing. 2023



Fig38__ *24/7 EXHAUSTED*. Digital drawing. 2023

My pottery studio has all the requirements of a functional practice for now. The main problem with working in a space so close to my job is not feeling so guilty when I take time to be selfish and press myself into the clay. I have slipped into a boiler suit several times to protect my waitress's clothes and asked people to call me when things get too much. A few times, it worked; other times, a young team member rushed in to retrieve me for the front of house. Moving out of the space and into my own home would be the defining progression of leaving my parental home and embracing

more independence and reliance on myself. Temptations like Lotto tickle my impatience; likewise, conversations with friends who work far away from the service industry question my decisions about labour. Shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* hit me in my feelings. I hate to see someone already so busy having to take on more hours in physically and emotionally exhausting places to feed themselves.

Comfortable Greenware Stage

The collaboration between my body and the clay is an improvisation of what feels safe for the moving sediment and where I have pushed the walls in the space it fills. Afterwards, in exhaustion, I stare at what I had been wrestling with, battling spinning mud into a controlled hollowed form. I place these abdominal-sized shapes precisely into the broken-down pastry freezer to be further incubated and protected in the damp, dark box away from light and dehydration. I keep myself busy with multiple vessels to avoid disappointment and spending too many minutes dedicated to one vessel's offspring. I also delay the kiln stage for as long as possible due to my attachment to the vessels when they are at their most malleable. All is comfortable when I surround myself with greenware. Everything still holds endless potential, including the opportunity to depart from its current existence and become mud again. A fear of failure could be the underlying psychology of why I do this, as the kiln brings progressions but also potential for destruction⁶. The destination of the kiln is challenging for me as it is an acceptance that the clay forms hold a transition into a different responsibility, graduating into being waterproof and protected by glass, but somehow damaged by becoming permanent, as the freedom to restart my makings back to a bucket of clay sediment is removed. A frightening reality is that my decisions in clay become irreversible stoneware; however, they also initiate the bravery of accepting the object's materiality becoming fixed.

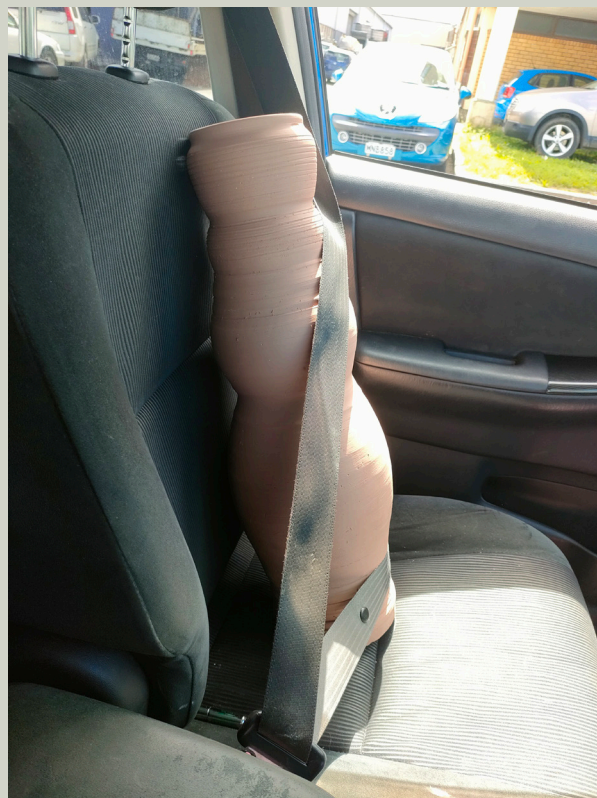


Fig39__ Vessel in the passenger seat. 2023

⁶Lantin, Martina. 'Failure Makes Great Reclaim.' *Studio Potter* 39 (2), Summer/Fall2011.

While boiling this chicken soup: Influences of the abject, horror and sci-fi in the sculptural practice

Hairy Negroni

I made a negroni for these beautiful women at a table of four, among other drinks; checking their tab, I note that food was yet to be ordered. I walk over with the short wide vintage glass, with single large ice cube and slice of orange, thinking I am at the peak of exemplary service in my performance as a charming waitress. While welcoming them to Ima Cuisine, I explain how the food works. Out of the corner of my eye, I see the stunning blond who ordered the drink pull out a strand of my hair. She gestured that it was something so abject that it could go on for miles; she ended the gesture with a giggle with her friend. My Ashkenazi roots have impressive lengths and do stand out in thickness. I disrupt the explanation of the menu, asking if everything is okay. As if I could not tell, she tells me there is a hair in her drink. I joke that I should wear a hair net when bartending, but the interaction is too awkward. Nobody laughs and I am left there, reminded of my body and what it leaves behind.



Fig40__ Halawet el Jibn with sugared beetroot strips. Served at Ima Cuisine



Fig41__ Naomi Allan. Upclose details of sugared beetroot served on the Halawet el Jibn Dessert at Ima Cuisine. Image Trace. 2023

Hypnotised by the worms

Motifs of strips, strands and fibres influence the imagery I am interested in in my practice. When boiling chicken flesh, I stare deep into the bubbling liquids, craving chicken soup, and as the muscle fibres weaken, I am engaged by the floating protein strands. Additionally, when I open the garden compost to expel my food scraps, I take some extra time to be captivated by the earthworms that twist their bodies amongst the filth. Whenever I draw in the digital space or on a clay surface, I usually begin my flow with lines like the observations of these scenes of moving strands. I follow the line, whether it remains in isolation or overlaps against another, like falling strands of hair. Zooming out from the details I have been improvising, I see hairs floating and wriggling like the worms I feed at home.

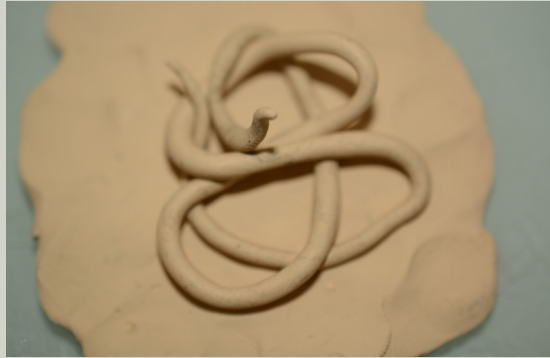


Fig42__Naomi Allan. *Plasticine worm*. Photograph. 2022.

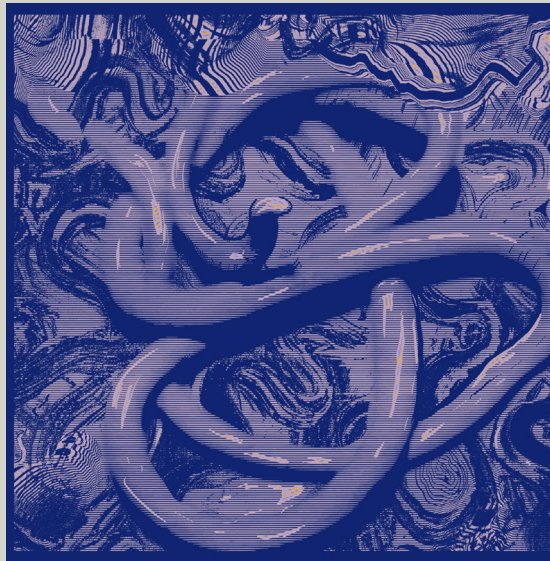


Fig43__Naomi Allan. *Plasticine worm*. Digital reproduction. 2023.

In my artwork, I want to involve my love for specific stylistic features from influential horror and science fiction films that have been favourites of mine for a long time. I am also searching beyond for artists who veer towards similar themes and features in a static sculptural practice. Film influence has an ever-looming presence in my ceramic and illustrative works, especially science fiction and horror. The texts I draw on use art direction to convey beautiful explorations of abject human conditions, whether psychological or physical adaptations. My recent large vessels draw inspiration from H.R. Giger's masterful visual design for the *Alien* franchise.⁷ This is no coincidence, as I loved these films as a teenager. Expanding past the human anatomy, Giger transformed the human skeleton into something hybrid, like a predatory insect with a complex exoskeleton. I, too, take the form of the vessel and attach segments of other clay pieces to flow into the detailing of vascular anatomy, including folds of skin and resemblances of the face across a section of the vase structure.

⁷ Giger, H. R. *Necronom IV*. 1000 x 1500mm. Acrylic on Paper and Wood. 1976.



Fig44__ Park, Nick. *Wallace & Gromit: A Grand Day Out*. Film still. 1989

Eraserhead taboo

Claymation and its stylistic features developed from paralysing fear (as a child) into a love that makes appearances in my still imagery. As an infant, I would sprint out of the cinema when my parents took me to see Wallace and Gromit; the anxiety and stress I caused my mother did not match the traumatising nature the plasticine melting the facial features. What stressed me out was not the wholesome storylines but the moments when the amatures of the characters were at their most amateur, particularly in Nick Park's earliest film work, *A Grand Day Out*, where the human features were not as sophisticated as their more practised and funded work in the series.⁸ The appearance of the plasticine that animated the entirety of the iconic children's series, which so unsettled me as a child, now pulls my interest, as I have become fond of such visual motifs in my illustrations and sculpting techniques. Any reference to the human is intentionally not refined to a motif, and the roughness of the early plasticine animation of Wallace and Gromit that gave me that gut-turning fear as a child now embosses on my vessels and resembles a homage to that feeling.



Fig45__Naomi Allan. *Small vessels in their greenware state*. Image Trace. 2022



Fig46__ Naomi Allan. *Large vessel in its bone dry state*. Image Trace. 2023

⁸ Park, Nick, dir. *Wallace & Gromit: A Grand Day Out*. Animation/Comedy, BBC, Warner Bros. Channel 4.1989.

Eraserhead was a defining film of my childhood due to the taboo around watching it and the fact it was a forbidden film in my family home. My very first impressions of the film were through the lens of my parents and how they viewed the film from the context of planning to conceive their first baby. A specific homage to the film that I link back to in my work is the scene with the plasticine worm that travels through a moon-like texture, entering and exiting holes in the cratered surface while squealing.⁹ Naturally, it reminded me of how I hand-build on the surface of my thrown work, fiddling small worm-like coils to enter and intrude on the vessel; these are small in retrospect but significant enough to remind me of the memories of Wallace and Gromit scavenging for cheese in *A Grand Day Out*. As that gut feeling of uneasiness resurfaced from the crawling worm, the crossovers from my childhood fears and my parent's anxieties reunited with the common thread of a wriggling coil of clay. The shock of the film's contents made a deep enough impact that almost 30 years on from their viewing, my parents both still grimace at the memory of *Eraserhead*.

My mother especially was deeply traumatised, seemingly personally offended, as if David Lynch himself had warned her of the horrors of parenting. Shockingly enough, Henry, the main protagonist, deals with the alien baby being ill with smallpox in a grotesque scene where the viewer shares Henry's up-close perspective of the sick creature. This was a horror my own parents went through when I was not even a year old, when my condition of Chicken Pox was near fatal – as a reminder, my face and body are permanently scarred with indentations and speckles. Of course, being warned to avoid something by a parent made me yearn for the opportunity to see it and understand it for myself. I do believe that my desire to see *Eraserhead* makes me look past the main protagonist's values into how the stylistic features have given me a taste for black-and-white Avant-garde films like it.



Fig47__ David Lynch. *Eraserhead*. Film Still. 1977



Fig48__ David Lynch. *Eraserhead*. Film Still. 1977

The Black Lodge¹⁰

After being absorbed as a teenager by the *Twin Peaks* television series, I often get recurring dreams where I am met with some resolution until I transition into another state of feeling where I have entered some other kind of dimension that I cannot return from.¹¹ Sometimes I am met with Laura Palmer screaming or an aged Dale Cooper. Other memories of the cult classic show resurface when I am unconscious and smothered in blankets. The show's transition from a murder mystery centred around family abuse to a surreal fantasy, interests the considerations I make in my sculptural installations. In Frank Boulègue's text examining the symbolism of *Twin Peaks* fantasy worlds, he discusses Laura Palmer's experience of distorted realities as the masked truths of trauma.¹² Specifically, I am intrigued by the Black Lodge and the fear of walking into a room that you do not come back from, trapped in a maze of curtains, familiar faces and waiting rooms. I want to take the perspective of my Black Lodge – an enticing room with hypnotising patterns and the furniture of comfort that holds the visitor stagnant physically and psychologically.



Fig49__ David Lynch. *Twin Peaks: Beyond Life and Death*. Film Still. 1991



Fig50__ David Lynch. *Twin Peaks: Beyond Life and Death*. Film Still. 1991

¹⁰The black lodge refers to the dimension in *Twin Peaks* where unexplainable darkness resides and eventually traps our protagonist Dale Cooper for twenty-five years.

¹¹ Lynch, David, dir. *Twin Peaks: Beyond Life and Death*. Crime, Drama, Mystery, Thriller. New Line Cinema. 1991.

¹² Boulègue, Franck. *Twin Peaks: Unwrapping the Plastic*. Bristol. Intellect Books. 2017

Manifest: 10,000 hours

When entering an event we have been hired to do, my mother's general anxiety is that she may under-cater for the occasion, so in response she over-caters for most of them. Most of the time, too much food is offered for the price we are paid, and often when we finish, we are left with large amounts of food waste. I believe I have inherited that similar anxiety when making and presenting my ceramic practice. In my environment of proving value through the amount of time I have put into a week or productivity levels according to recorded numbers, I often compare myself via values of measurement. For presenting my thesis work, the quantity of my output provides evidence for the value of my labour. The incredible power of the vast has the sculptural effect of absorbing the viewer, who falls into the artist's universe. Terri Lloyd-Jones writes about Clare Twomey's installation *Manifest: 10,000 Hours*,¹³ an enormous shelving structure containing 10,000 slip-cast bowls, and how the massive scale of immense repetition and grand heights does not just include themes of excess and examination of time and labour, but also provides for "the army of thought."¹⁴ The condensed mass of slip-cast bowls means that practising 10,000 hours as a skill set would make an individual a master of that chosen task. The project was made through participation in slip-casting workshops organised by the artist (Twomey); the meaning of successful labour became a shared experience, collectively done more efficiently with the shared education of her process.



Fig51 __ Clare Twomey. *Manifest: 10,000 Hours*. Ceramic Slip Cast, Steel, Timber. 2015. Image courtesy of Clare Twomey.

¹³Twomey, Clare. *Manifest: 10,000 Hours*. Ceramic Slip Cast, Steel, Timber. Centre of Ceramic Art, York Art Gallery. 2015.

¹⁴Lloyd-Jones, Terri. 2015. 'AFTER HOURS.' *Crafts* (0306610X), no. 255 (August): 40–47.

Head[Case]

Continuing with the concept of an army of thought comes the environment-altering exhibition that also held the significance of mass amounts of ceramic sculptures – Julia Morison's show in Objectspace, Head[Case].¹⁵ In this show, one hundred variations of heads were propped through shelving structures that intertwined and travelled through sections of the space, forming a distorted museum of the artists' reiterations of thought, including hairs from her cat that made it to the alterations of the shapes.¹⁶ Specifically, in the piece 027-Probe, the ceramic head extrudes a felt rope from its only orifice, generating thoughts of science fiction life supports or the umbilical. Alternatively, these references convey ideas of the darker content when the human association is exaggerated.



Fig52__ Julia Morison. *Head[Case], 027- Probe*. 290 x 1600 x 140mm, Glazed and Painted Stoneware, Wire, Felt. 2015. Image courtesy of Julia Morison.

Meonji Soojibga | Dust Collector

Suji Park's ceramic work *Meonji Soojibga | Dust Collector* (North Terrace commission) is currently arranged in the outdoor space at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (July 2022–June 2023).¹⁷ Underneath Albert Park fauna on the terrace is a distribution of large ceramic forms that are human in abstraction. They pay homage to the South Korean countryside sculptural figures whose purpose is to bring protection. The ceramic structures are plinthed on forms that do not hide away from their construction materiality, mirroring the materials that humans situate themselves on to keep safe. Even without the absence of walls, the outdoor scenery of Albert Park expands the works' space, and the human forms evoke a company to the noise and weather of the location.

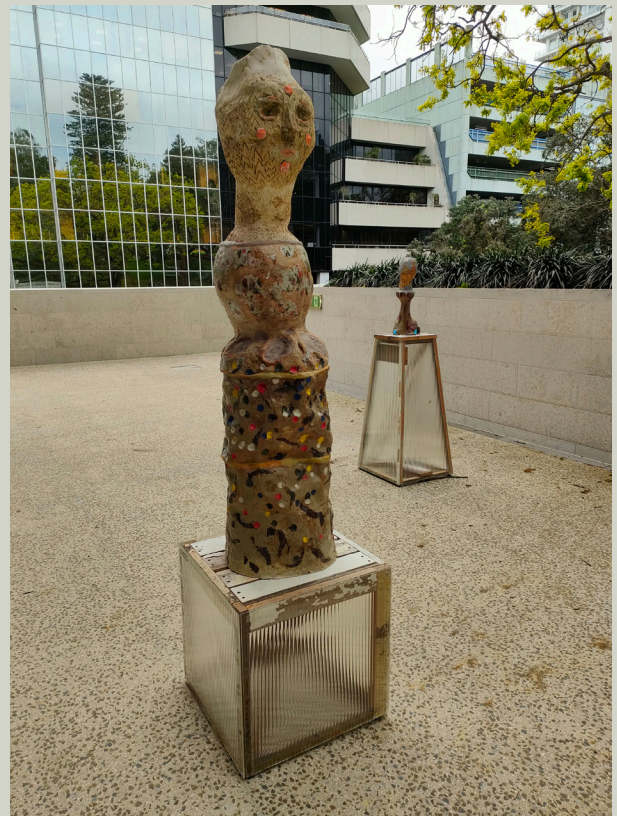


Fig53__ Suji Park. *Meonji Soojibga | Dust Collector*. Ceramic, Enamel, Timber, Corrugated sheet. 2022. Image courtesy of Suji Park.

¹⁵ Morison, Julia. 2015. *Head[Case], 027- Probe*. 290 x 1600 x 140mm, Glazed and Painted Stoneware, Wire, Felt. Two Rooms 2015. ObjectSpace 2019.

¹⁶ Richards, Becky. 2020. 'Head[Case]'. Vol 3, Issue 1, Ceramics NZ, 2020.

¹⁷ Park, Suji. *Meonji Soojibga | Dust Collector*. Ceramic, Enamel, Timber, Corrugated sheet. Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. 2022.

Giant

Homage to mid-century pattern design, with arching doorways familiar from Giorgio de Chirico's early surrealist paintings,¹⁸ Paul Maseyk's vessels hold a hypnotising value, and early and mid-century visual art histories are referenced in the surfaces of his large vessels.¹⁹ The immense patterning echoes the graphic, slipping historical and current motifs together into the same space of his vessel dimensions. The motion of illustration follows the smooth surface to the transitions of the curves, and extensions to the forms, exiting the flattened space where hyper-detailed drawing usually resides.



Fig54__Paul Maseyk. *Giant*.

670 x 220 x 320 mm Red Clay, Slip, Glaze, 2018.

Image courtesy of Paul Maseyk.

¹⁸Chirico, Giorgio de. *The Enigma of a Day*. 855 x 1397mm. Oil on Canvas. MOMA. 1914.

¹⁹Maseyk, Paul. *Giant*. 670 x 220 x 320mm. Red Clay, Slip, Glaze. Nadine Milne Gallery. 2018.

Ima Cuisine's dining space

At Ima Cuisine, my mother, Yael Shochat, has dedicated significant detail to the front of the house to reference as much of a personal echo from her home in Auckland, as well as her birthplace of Haifa, Israel, including resources from Tāmaki Makaurau's extensive selections of second-hand furnishings and crockery. Ima presents Yael's interests and sentimentalities and is a place for consumers to eat and drink. Similar to how I use my drawing practice to switch off near the television, Yael has an array of woven yarn light fixtures hanging from suspended panels above the seating. In the most recent renovation, her expansion of the form has increasingly become more experimental, shaped using a similar function and structure but improvised with an organic flow of shape-making. The entire setting of Ima vogues on mid-century design, with findings of second-hand furniture to be cautious with spending but reminiscent of what customers may have seen in their past family homes.



Fig55__Ima Cuisine dinner service. 2019



Fig56__Yael's light fixtures, Felt, wire hoop. 2022



Fig57__ Naomi Allan. View of Ima Cuisine. Image Trace. 2023

In this kitchen, this home. The mugs, bowls, and plates, they are in every room

My obsession with clay recycling runs deep with how I situate my ethos around the other materials that hold me, such as my clothing, crockery and furnishings. I have not bought new clothes in years, but I frequently bring in more garments from second-hand stores and individuals online, curating materials discarded or already pre-loved to benefit my needs. Whenever I am browsing, the function the resource has in the space is the crucial requirement; aesthetics is secondary when it boils down to considerations. The only exemption from the rule of possessing objects with past lives is the ceramics formed locally by artists I admire, vessels from friendships, or my pots that have helped my ceramic practice progress. Even then, I am inclined to expel these specimens from my domestic space, as I see the items I make as segments in my development.

The Ground is Lava

The floor is a space that understands my daily mood board and the rhythms of my emotions. My partner and I are both sensitive to dust and pollen, but our lives are too busy to maintain an utterly sanitised environment. In my bedroom, small crumples of tissue collect our mucus around the bed and beneath. Our cat Zsa Zsa contributes with her hair follicles catching our skin cells. All of this occurs while clothing snakes its way around and underneath the bed. In exhibiting during this Master's period, I have enjoyed the process of rearranging floorboards found from skips, roadside dumps, and dismantled furniture. There is joy in finding marked wood, markings that have been there before my discovery, as the timber and termites create stunning patterns – so that all I need to do is curate and acknowledge. My clay, too, consists of a careful aim to achieve very little waste when processing the next round of material ready to be processed through the pugmill straight to the wheel. New objects may carry previous failures or excess trimmings that once helped withhold their weight on the wheel but eventually became skin that has shed from the body.



Fig58__ Naomi Allan. *My bedroom view and Zsa Zsa in her basket.*
Image Trace. May. 2023

If You Love Lundia So Much, Why Don't You Marry It?

To save my mind from reaching vulnerable states of anxiety towards our mess, I crave storage organisation to keep my belongings from being swallowed by the floorboards. Instead of a bedside table, I acquired a two-metre-high narrow Lundia shelf set that hovers above my small bedside table and holds my bedside hierarchies. Currently there is no method in its order – objects climb as they please from where I distribute them from the bed. At various levels of the shelving unit, different mugs reside that will be transported back to the kitchen at some point. My partner and I have completely refitted our wardrobing system with Lundia, intending not to foster so many clothes on the floor.

Vessel socialising, family dynamics

The context of where my forms are made in their place and time is essential when making my vessels. It is this element that brings the togetherness of a family unit. Looking to my close family unit, my parents, Andrew Allan and Yael Shochat, from entirely different sides of the globe, produced my two sisters and me in two-year gap rhythms. As we grew up, with varying features that were randomised by our diverse gene pool, we were a set that came with our uniqueness but similarities in taste, humour and height. Now, when we are together, we are a comical, entertaining trio to be around. Throwing and altering my vessels in a condensed period helps me achieve a sibling formation within a body of work. As the vessels stand together, they are nurtured by characteristics that exchange conversations about their shapes and surfaces. glazing everything in a session with a similar colour scheme helps to give my improvised pours the feeling of shared family traits. Applying the decals of the drawings onto the ceramics I have produced during the project unites a community with a common thread of contexts, signifying the defining period they were a part of and belong to.

In Paul Rayner's reading of New Zealand potter Rick Rudd's career in ceramics, from his early work to the present, he describes the evolution of Rudd's practice as an allegory of human and animal evolution.²⁰ Rayner traces the development of Rudd's work from the Möbius works of the 1980s, which were based on a double inward spiral form; through his fundamental reinvention of form via a spiral bottle in 1979; to his move to colour in vessel forms in early 1993 – noting that each new work ushers in a minor design modification until the latest forms are utterly different to their ancestors. He then considers whether these items are art or craft, suggesting that when a craft object is not used, it takes on a double life as art. With each body of work from the same family, slight alterations hold their uniqueness and familiarities. An example of continuation in Rudd's work (since the early 2000s) has been his exploration of teapots, which still function as tea-brewing objects with a handle, lid, spout, and the general size of a typical teapot.²¹ His sculptures derive the gene sequence of the rules of the teapot and aesthetically remain in their relation, but their pulled-apart, exaggerated features hold their unique individualism on their own as well.



Fig59__ Rick Rudd. Teapot. Glazed Ceramic. 2018. Image courtesy of Rick Rudd

²⁰Rayner, Paul. 'Rick Rudd: This Is Not a Bowl.' *Ceramics: Art & Perception*, no. 32 (June): 94–96. 1998.

²¹Rudd, Rick. Teapot. Glazed Ceramic. 2018.



Fig60_The matters that made it into my giant soup, moving with the fluidity of sentimental materials, Installation. June. 2022.



Fig61__DETAIL. Installation. June. 2022.



Fig62_DETAIL. Installation. June. 2022



Fig63_DETAIL. Installation. June. 2022.



Fig64_DETAIL. Installation. June. 2022.

This Mug Meant a Lot

In my household, the ceramic mug also holds sentiment as a coping language in caring for the intimate. I reflect on the period of Aotearoa's lockdowns and the requirements for non-essential workers to be at home for further protection. With my family and my flatmates, our shared language of empathy toward someone going through a rough period is when we notice each other coming out of our bedrooms with large amounts of household drinking vessels cradled in our arms. A small chuckle is exchanged while we hold the small mugs and cups close to our bosoms. Most have little arms and signatures on the vessel surface to mark their personality. Having something so close to the user, like the object of a mug, also has the potential to occupy the melancholic thought behind certain sentiments. Part of my practice relates to emotional ties with these special vessels that carry emotive thought as well as a hot or cold beverage.

Refund on a Relationship

Working in the service industry involves all levels of mental exhaustion. The more responsibility the person has to Ima Cuisine, the more intense my level of trust is in that person. I got very close to a co-worker because she was applying to be a manager with us. With her level of experience, there was an expected level of trust. She had already worked in a high-ranking role in a well-known "cool" place in Ponsonby Central. It was expensive and fashionable, something we felt like we were not. Like a blind date, my mother and I sat across from her and interviewed her about why she needed to leave the other place. Our relationship was full of hurt, and my anxieties from suffering within tumultuous friendships in the past resurfaced. When she felt it was time for her to break her relationship with Ima, she phoned me to tell me that all the communication failures at the workplace were my fault and that "I" needed a month off to decide what I wanted to do, study or work. A day later, she handed in her resignation. I had to muster up resilience to not have a panic attack at my own family business, the place of work, where my pottery studio is, and my home. Her final gesture of breaking the relationship was returning a mug I gave her on a night when she was emotionally agitated. Without a conversation or even an excuse, it was left on the food pass, serving as a teaspoon holder. I could not ask why she did not take the mug with her; I just knew that leaving my artwork, visible at eye level from most walks through the restaurant area, was a gesture that rejected my attempt at workplace friendship.



Fig65_Naomi Allan. Mug from the pass. Image Trace. July, 2022.



Fig66_Naomi Allan. Mug on the Food Pass. Image Trace 2023

For most staff members at Ima, the cup remains a functional holder to distribute teaspoons in the Mezze platter. I held the memory of a hurtful gesture of a refunded friendship for an extended period until I was ready to remove the pain from the object. In Glen Adamson's writing about relics in his book *Fewer Better Things: The Hidden Wisdom of Objects*,²² he writes about the grief held in souvenirs from traumatic historical times. As well as attaining physical fragments from such events, there is an in-depth description of David Clarke's memorial piece for his mother, who passed.²³ The work was made by capturing the cast of the last ceramic teacup his mother drank from, translating the cups into pewter and lead. Each pour of the melted metal comes with less liquid than the previous, forming a stack of diminishing physical memories of the original.



Fig67__David Clarke. *50/50*. Pewter and lead. 2015. Image courtesy of S O gallery London

Did someone leave their crockery on the floor?

I arrived at the last group tour of the exhibition *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own: The Chartwell Show*²⁴ at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (March 2023), where I stood by a visitor who accidentally kicked over a floor piece. It was Peter Robinson's structure, *Rainbow Straight*,²⁵ a construction of coloured aluminium blocks installed as a barrier suggesting a wall. The sound of the foot kicking over these blocks was like dropping children's building blocks from a height. The harmless crash caused an uncomfortable tension; everyone turned, their eyes pierced. A gallery assistant shot up, and a "don't touch it" communication with their walkie-talkies occurred. A woman rushed in with blue powder-free latex gloves a minute later, and the "wound" was repaired within seconds. The artwork's brief interaction with the individual's foot was a refreshing moment of pause where there was an examination of the clumsy reminder of our bodily forms. Still, it

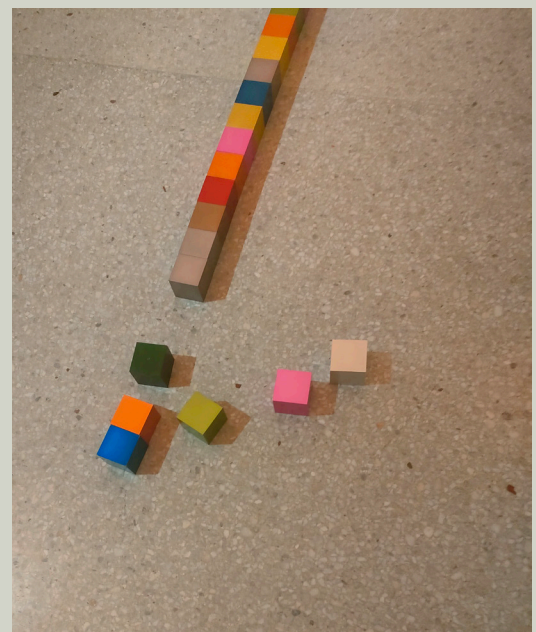


Fig68__(Kicked) Peter Robinson. *Rainbow Straight*. Anodised Aluminium 2018

also sparked an inquiry on priorities in object security of what we put forward first to trigger an alarm. The unintentional performance by the visitor, the Toi o Tāmaki staff, and the vulnerable blocks reminded me of my own fascination with hierarchies and my organisation. That night, on my evening shift, I pondered my relationship with the mug and where and what levels within the body reveal a visual language of emotional instability.

²²Adamson, Glenn. *Fewer Better Things. The Hidden Wisdom of Objects*. New York. Bloomsbury Publishing USA. 2018.

²³Clarke, David. *50/50*. 120 x 120 x 180mm. Lead and Pewter. Public Collection Plymouth Museum of art. 2015.

²⁴Conland, Natasha, Curator. *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own: The Chartwell Show*. Auckland Art Gallery Toi O Tāmaki. Sep 2022- Mar 2023.

²⁵Robinson, Peter. *Rainbow Straight*. Anodised Aluminium. 2018.

The cup that was rejected by the co-worker took on symbolic meaning for me: Thinking about this event, I envisioned what significance would manifest if a humbler ceramic piece, such as the mug (in comparison to my abdominal-sized vessels), were to break from an accidental motion of a visitor's foot. The communication I have with the floor, and where I can visualise my mental currents, comes with the positioning of the sentimental functional object and what occurs when it is at the same level as my dirty laundry. The ground can be the ultimate safety from the grace of gravity, with no risk of falling when the object is already down. However, at foot level, the chances of breaking are more present through the external activity of living creatures, like clumsy pets and exhausted people. While withholding so many of the intense feelings I have towards these humble objects, decorating them with my illustrative signatures, yet subjecting them to both sentimental and physical vulnerabilities by presenting ceramics on the ground, metaphors my exchange for the occasional perplexities of work at Ima Cuisine. Hiring new people or welcoming an already known friend to my place of work, getting them to know my mother and my entire practice, I offer them the gift of knowing how my life is laid out. Most of the time, it is a lifestyle not for everybody; they choose to leave, but I am still heartbroken by the rejection, even though departures are a normal part of work life. My mother and I have been there the longest. I have been working at Ima since I was fifteen and am now just months away from being twenty-seven. Every departure of other staff members comes with a tinge of grief, some more significant – usually, I hold great sentiment towards these people.



Fig69__Tightly packed studio around a single Lundia. 2023

Conclusion

The journey of creating within this project has involved working with, and navigating within, moving currents of decision. Sometimes this has been out of my control, although it keeps within the rules and guidelines of working with clay. For example, when throwing large vessels on the wheel, I have a particular profile that I want to achieve, but the distribution of clay sometimes disagrees; I know I must leave my expectations aside and negotiate with the clay body and what shape it wants to form towards. However, I keep to the guideline of respect for the language of the practised vessel as this is not something I can claim as my own, but need to learn so I can situate my practice in the already eclectic community of ceramic arts. Where I can put my time is also closely correlated with how my training is achieved. Gaining varying windows of timed opportunities for when and where I can work has determined how my sculptures have been shaped. Specific studio furnishings like the pugmill and the refurbished pastry freezer have been a way to manage my time and process. It has allowed me the option to pause and continue the development of a piece while fitting into a Front-of-House shift in a busy family restaurant business. though the mass accumulation gives the project its emotional weight, each chosen material and its surface illustrations contribute to an autobiographical ecosystem. The collection of Lundia, re-sourced timber, and steel coffee table legs are part of the selection of homing stations for ceramic beings and illustrations. Puzzling with the flooring and how to organise the arrangements of vessels is an act of labour that underpins the entire installation body. How the pieces of each section of the install will live on once the show ends is a mystery.



Fig70_Bone dry vessels on their way to AUT. April, 2023

The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.

Final Exhibition Presented at ST PAUL St Gallery, June 2023.

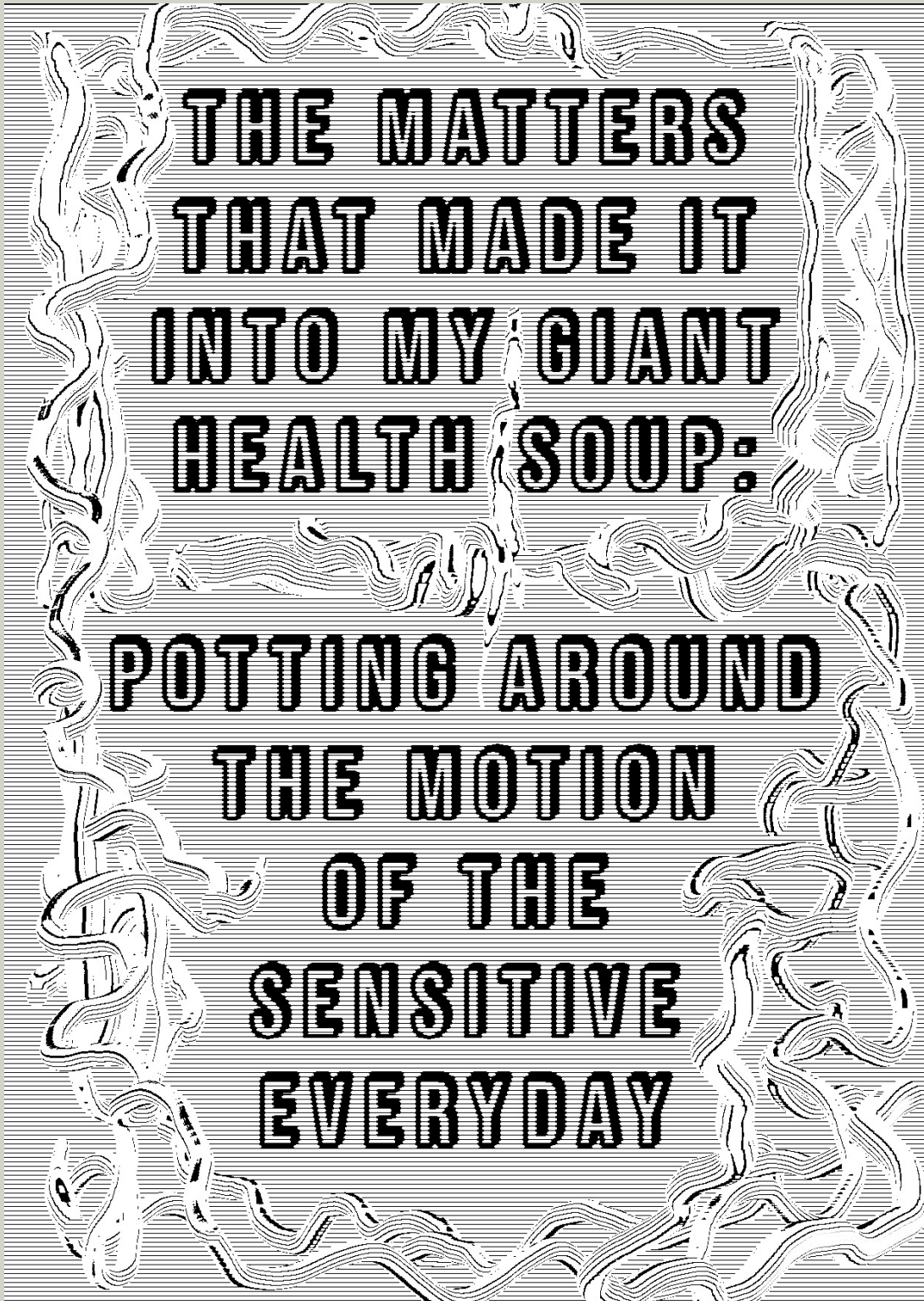


Fig71_ The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday. Opening Pamphlet Cover. 8th June 2023

Abstract:

The matters that made it into my giant health soup: potting around the motion of the sensitive everyday is autobiographical research situated in developing a ceramic practice and balancing employment in my family business at Ima Cuisine. Managing time to be present in the art making process has accumulated meaning from my on-the-job lifestyle. The install concentrates on the nutrients that feed the praxis of my making practice, ingrained in restaurant hospitality and dynamics around my family based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Pondering on past tense experiences and observations, the practice inhales and exhales stories of events that have motioned the thoughts around the making. The project also employs sentimentalities from lessons attained during the process while building a studio practice.

Everything in this installation has been thrown on the wheel, residing amongst second-hand timber and Lundia shelving resourced from various re-sale communities and individuals.

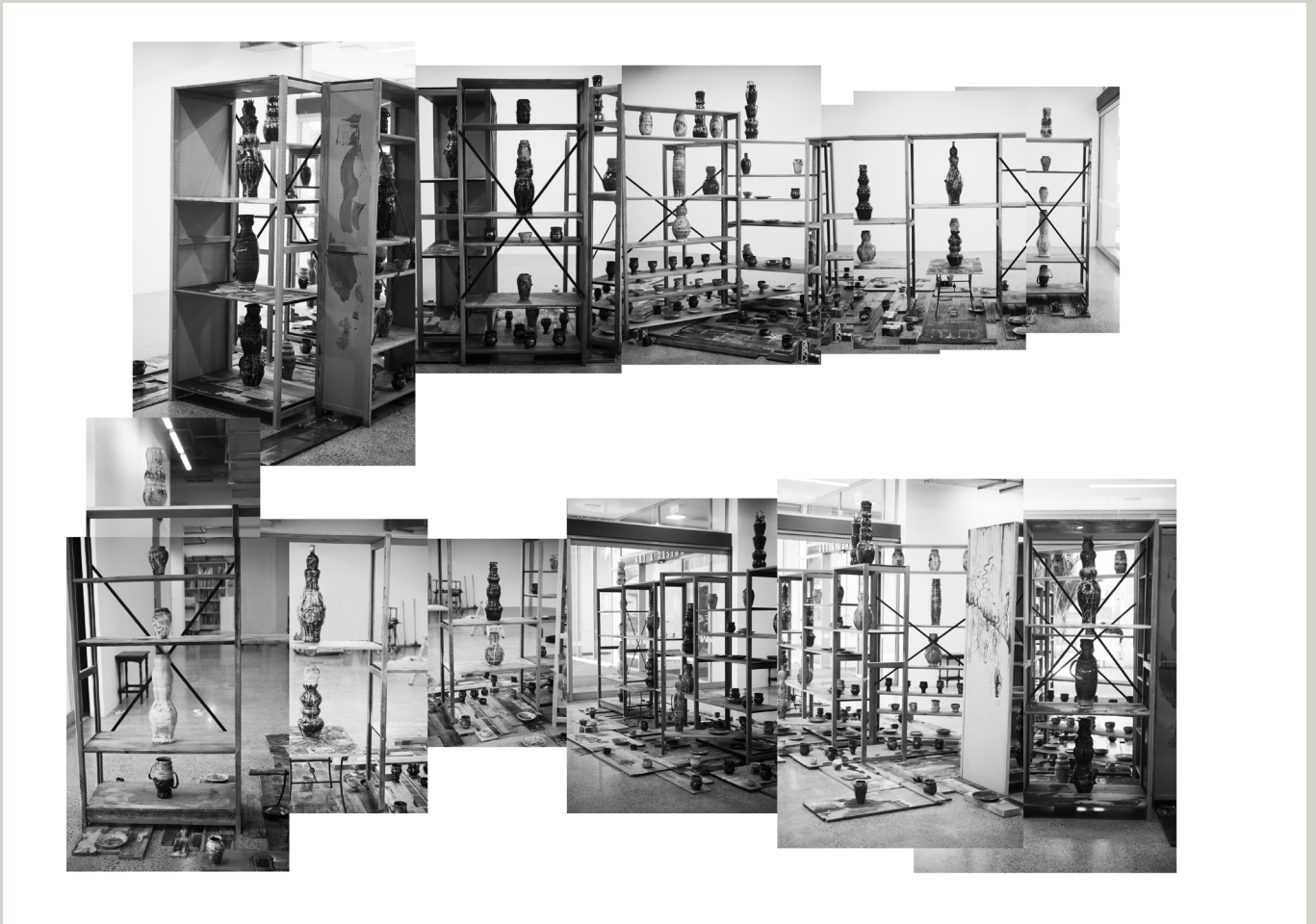


Fig73_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Contents with in the pamphlet.
8th June 2023

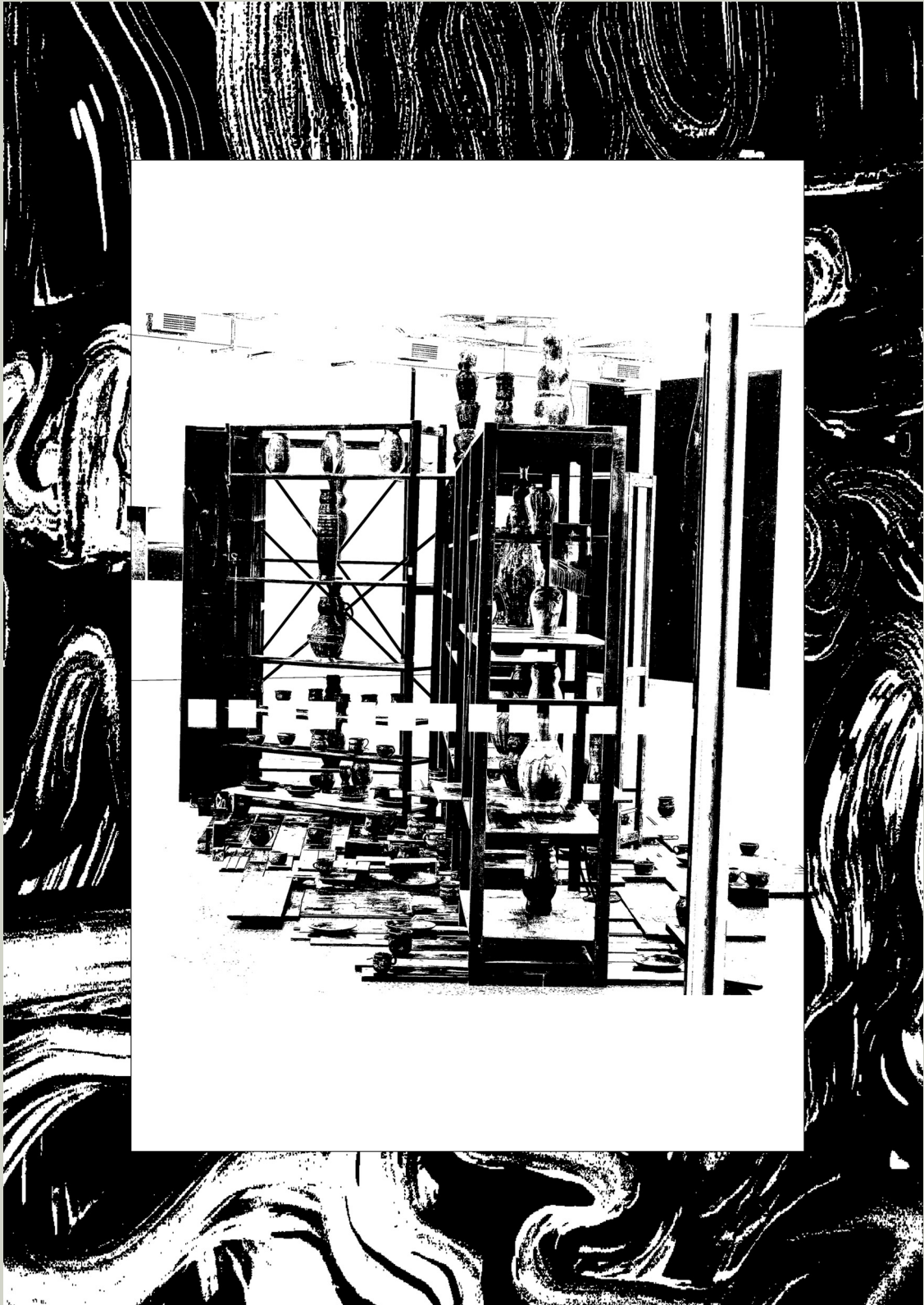


Fig74__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* Back Cover. 8th June 2023



Fig75__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* View from entrance, ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.

Wheel Thrown mixed porcelain stoneware glazed vessels with palladium lustre.

Large vessels, 13, Medium vessels, 3, Small vessels, 15, Large mugs, 23, Small cups, 16, Goblets, 13, Plates, 23.

Lundia: resourced second hand from Trademe and Facebook market place, 13 uprights, 4 cross bars, 34 shelves.

Painted Door. Arrangement of found timber. Found iron coffee table legs.



Fig76__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* View from the back, ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig77__Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* View from the back, ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig78__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* View from the entrance, ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig79__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig80__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig81__Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig82__Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig83__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* Looking down perspective. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig84__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* Looking down perspective. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig85__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Looking down perspective. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig86__ Image courtesy of Paul Chapman. *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Looking down perspective. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig87__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Full view from behind the exhibitor. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig88__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Perspective from the other side of the entrance. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig89__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Perspective of behind the installation. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig90__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* Perspective of viewing the timber slates, mugs plates, vessels and coffee table. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig91__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday.* Above perspective of large narrow vessel amongst plates, mugs and timber slates on a Lundia shelf. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig92__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View of large short-neck vessel with anxious expression amongst Lundia arrangement. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig93__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View of plates and single mug from below amongst Lundia shelving. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig94__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Large shorter vessel with anxious expression facing away from Lundia crossbar. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig95__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Peeping at a large and smaller vessel amongst an enamel painted closed upright with oil paint free hand illustrations. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig96_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Arrangement of vessels of varying sizes with mugs and plate on lundia shelving. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig97_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Arrangement of vessels of varying sizes with mugs and plate on lundia shelving. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig98_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View of three similar sized vessels above a tall narrow vessel on lundia. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig99_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail perspective of one of the three vessels with oil paint on glaze. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig100_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View in between lundia upright of tall narrow vessel next to a screen printed illustration on lundia shelf. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig101_The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday. Large vessel with human facial features, one arm curved and expressive chest. ST PAUL st gallery AUT AUT. June 2023.



Fig102__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Large shorter vessel with swollen stomach with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig103__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with gaping mouth expression. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig104__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with curved attachment on lundia. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023



Fig105__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with sad expression and text: I LOST MY HANDLE in palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig106_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with sad expresion and text: PRETTY & SAD in palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig107_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with multiple eyes with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT June 2023.



Fig108_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Large vessel with single curved arm and palladium lustre eyes. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig109__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Cup with beautiful woman profile in palladium lustre amongst plates on lundia. St Pauls Gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig110__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Looking downwards at five cups, a small vessel and a goblet on painted timber. St Pauls Gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig111__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small vessel with large vessel in the background. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig112__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Peering through lundia at large vessel and two small vessels. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig113__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Large textured vessel on top of a lundia shelf. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig114_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Two plates on a lundia shelf. ST PAUL st gallery AUT June 2023.



Fig115_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Five goblets above five cups on a lundia shelf. ST PAUL st gallery AUT June 2023.



Fig116_The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday. Small vessel above large palladium lustre illustrated vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig117__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on large vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig118__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on large vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig119__*The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on large vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig120__*The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on large vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig121__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on a cup. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig122__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of palladium lustre on a cup. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig123__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of blue glaze on yellow ochre glaze on small vessel. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig124__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Mug against green background. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig125___ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Medium vessel with human features. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig126__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Small cup in timber gap. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig127__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Plate with palladium lustre near screen prints of illustrations on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023



Fig128_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Two mugs on painted timber with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig129_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Plate with palladium lustre on timber slates. ST PAUL st gallery AUT June 2023.



Fig130_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*, Two small cups on timber offcuts. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig131_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*, Detail of small cup on timber slate. ST PAUL st gallery AUT June 2023.



Fig132__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View of variety of drinking vessels arranged on timber slates. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig133__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of small cup on timber slate with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig134_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of small cup on timber slat. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig135_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of small cup on timber slat with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig136_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of mug on timber slat with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig137__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of plate on timber slate with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig138__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of small cup on timber slate with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig139__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail shot of three mugs and three goblets on a painted door. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig140__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of two small cups on timber slate with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig141__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of goblet on timber offcuts. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig142__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of plate on timber slat with palladium lustre. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig143_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. View of arrangement of timber slats, coffee table legs plates and vessels with screen prints and freehand illustration. ST PAUL st gallery AUT.. June 2023.



Fig144_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of free hand illustrations, Oil Paint and acrylic on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig145__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig146__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig147_ The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday. Detail of free hand illustrations Oil Paint and acrylic on timber. St Pauls Gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig148_ The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig149__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of free hand illustrations, Oil Paint and acrylic on timber and illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig150__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of free hand illustrations, Oil Paint and acrylic on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig151_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of free hand illustrations Oil Paint and acrylic on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig152_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig153_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig154_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig155_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of illustration screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig156_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of free hand illustrations Oil Paint and acrylic on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig157__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of Zsa Zsa in a washing basket screen print on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig158__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of Oil painted sguiggles. ST PAUL st gallery AUT.. June 2023.



Fig159_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Details of timber offcuts. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig160_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Detail of expanding glue with shreds of cotton shirt. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig161__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Tribute to the rat that bit me on the week of the installation, oil paint on enamel on timber. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.

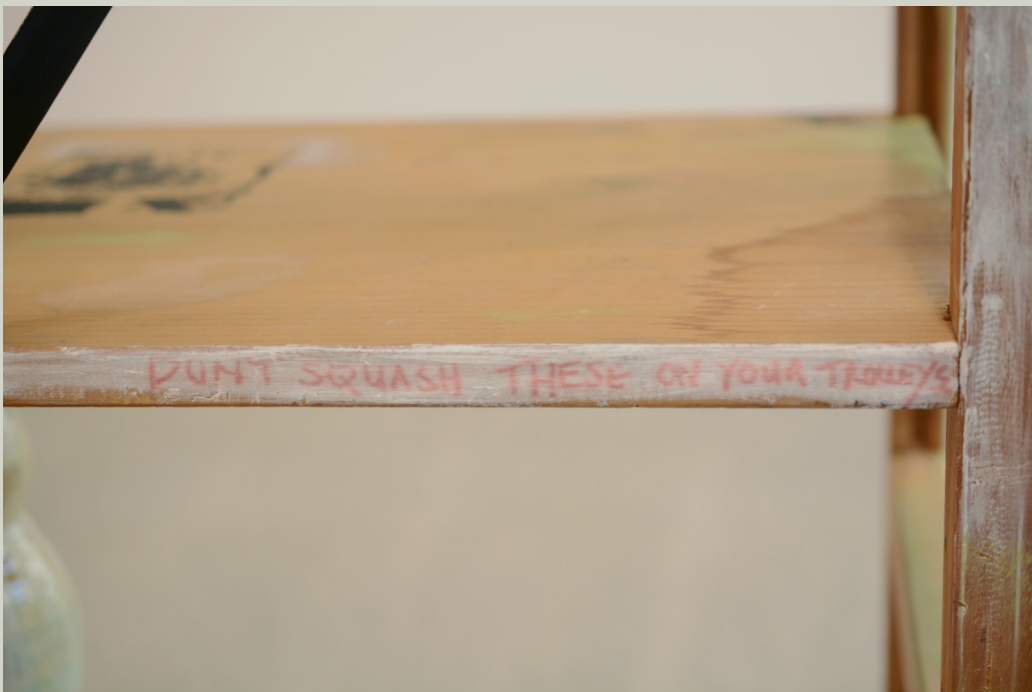


Fig162__ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Message from previous owner. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig163_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Message from previous owner. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.



Fig164_ *The Matters That Made It Into My Soup: Potting Around The Motion Of The Sensitive Everyday*. Hinge painted over. ST PAUL st gallery AUT. June 2023.

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