



Talking Pictures: a creative utilisation of structural and aesthetic
profiles from narrative music videos and television commercials
in a non-spoken film text.

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This thesis is submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Welby Ings

M.A. [Dist] Kent, B. Graphic Design AIT, Adv. Dip. Tchg, FRSA

May 2005



Dedication

To my beloved father, Arthur Stanley Ings; a shearing contractor and farmer
who left school at 12 and dreamed his son through higher learning.
[1929- 2004]

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abstract

This thesis is about storytelling.

It is presented in three parts, a major output with two supporting components.

The first and primary section is the short film .

The second is an exhibition of images, props, and environments created for the work.

The third is the exegesis.

Situated as creative practice, the project tests and develops structural and aesthetic hypotheses in the creation of a non-spoken film text.

These hypotheses are shaped by considerations from two areas.

The first is design for narrative music video. An analysis of selected texts leads to a creative reconsideration of the role and profile of imagery, space, time, sound, enigma, closure, and narrative voice.

The second area is typography. Reflecting on the anti-language, bogspeak, and the culture that has given rise to its development, the thesis develops inaudible typographical voices that operate as narrative contributions to the film.

These two areas of consideration support a unique way of telling stories. This is significant because emerging uses of short film now take these texts beyond the theatre. They are marketed as commercially available stories in their own right. As distribution companies are formatting them on DVDs, viewers are seeing these stories not once, but many times. It is useful therefore, for the design of such texts to consider alternative methods of narration that might work to preserve the durability and complexity of their stories as they unravel over repeated screenings.

acknowledgements

This thesis has been a multifaceted undertaking that has drawn on the goodwill and support of many people and organisations. While these are credited within the thesis, I would like to thank the following people and organisations specifically.

personal assistance

I am grateful for the ongoing personal and professional support of Professor Colin Gibbs who brought to this thesis the critical and nurturing facilities of an academic and artist. He understood that renegotiations of academic convention require the toughness of rigour, the bravery of challenge and the sensitivity to know when a researcher needs an arm around the shoulder. I am also thankful for the review of section two of this thesis provided by Professor Barry King.

I would like to thank Catherine Laing for her careful proof reading of the document.

I am also indebted to the small rural communities of Arapuni, Okororie, Putaruru and Te Awamutu for their support during the making of the film, for their belief in a foreign idea, and their kindness and generosity of spirit. I would like to thank my friends Yvonne Stewart, K.T. Ho, Brigit Lloyd and Dante Bonica for their moral support on this journey.

I would like to thank my family for their unstinting belief in me, and their faith in the fact that there was something more to me than a history of C-report cards and “get-real” claims about useless creative ability.

creative assistance

I am indebted to Nic Finlayson [as the director of photography and producer of the film] for the way he wrapped around this project his substantial professional and creative networks. I am also deeply grateful for the sensitive way he brought the unique voice of his camera to a film that was walking outside of convention.

I would also like to acknowledge Brenton Cumberpatch, Bella Erikson, Tom Miskin and Marcus Ringrose for their post-production support and Don McGlashan for permission to use the vocal and instrumental versions of his song *Anchor Me*.

research assistance

I would like to thank the Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand and the Alexander Turnbull Library for archiving interviews and material gathered in the process of this research, and for their support in locating obscure and unpublished material. I would also like to thank the libraries of *Out Magazine* and New Zealand AIDS Foundation for allowing me access to their facilities.

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Finally I would like to thank the hundreds of gay men whose lives and experiences form the reason for this film; men who, in finding the truth in themselves have continued to forge a better and richer world in which we all might live as equals.

Kia kaha.

ethics approval

This research was subject to AUT ethics approval granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee [AUTEC] on 15 March 2004, number 02/162.

intellectual property rights

The author/designer/researcher asserts the intellectual and moral copyright of the creative work contained in this thesis.

All rights of the owner of the recorded work are reserved. The film, contained in all its formats, is protected by copyright and use of the recording is restricted. Any manner of exhibition and any broadcast, public performance, diffusion, copying, resetting, hiring or editing, constitutes an infringement of copyright unless previous written consent of the copyright owner thereto has been obtained.

International rights have been secured, through both APRA¹ & AMCOS² for Don McGlashan's *Anchor Me* [instrumental and vocal versions] and Nikolai Korniev's direction of the St Petersburg Chamber Choir's, *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh*.

Permission to use fig. 3:19 The Wellington Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence has been granted by the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. LAGANZ-Ms-Papers-0607-396.

Permission to use excerpts from oral history interviews has been granted by Vanessa Wedding, Paul de Rungs and Howard Taylor [2004]³. I acknowledge the Alexander Turnbull library for lodging and preserving these interviews and transcripts in their oral histories archive.

¹ Australasian Performing Rights Association

² Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society.

³ MS-Papers-0648 for the project as a whole:

MS-Papers-0648-01 Interview with Vanessa Wedding

MS-Papers-0648-02 Interview with Paul de Rungs

MS-Papers-0648-03 Interview with Howie Taylor

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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 nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Welby Ings

1st May 2005

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section one
introduction





foreword

*Stories do not belong to eternity.
They belong to time.
And out of time they grow.
And it is through lives that touch the bedrock
of suffering and the fire of the soul,
it is through lives, and in time,
that stories- relived and redreamed-
become timeless.*

(Okri, 1997, p. 114)

forword

In 1997, when Okri published his *Joys of Storytelling III: Aphorisms and Fragments*, I had just returned from England where I had completed a drama for British television. I came home to a country I loved deeply, a country that contained my stories and the stories of the people with whom I grew up. After years of telling and making these narratives I wanted to understand how and why they worked.

the thesis

This thesis is about storytelling. It is an investigation into the structure and aesthetics of image-based narrative and how that might be used to contribute to human experience¹. It involves the design and realisation of a short film that draws its inspiration from a creative consideration of structural forms in selected narrative music videos and television advertisements. The work also reflects on the anti-language² bog-speak³, to develop an inaudible, typographic voice for the film.

The thesis has three parts.

The first and primary section is the short film .

The second is an exhibition of images, props and environments created for the film.

The third is this exegesis. This document is designed to contextualise and explain key features of the project.

¹ Scrivener (2000a) suggests that this contribution is one of the norms of creative-production Ph.D. projects. He argues, “*the creative production, as an object of experience, is more important than any knowledge embodied in it*” (p. 4).

² Halliday’s (1978) anti-language describes a language form used by an anti-society within a dominant society. Baker (2002b) argues that “*anti-languages are generated by anti-societies and in their simplest forms are partly relexicalised languages consisting of the same grammar but a different vocabulary in areas central to the activities of subcultures.*” (p. 13)
A full discussion of this language form is provided in the typography section of the exegesis.

³ Bogspeak may be defined as a specific anti-language used by a community of men in New Zealand who frequent public toilets for same-sex encounters. The language form appears to have been most widely used in the middle decades of last century. However, words and expressions predate that time and the language also continues to develop as a little known, contemporary system of communication.

nature of an exegesis

An exegesis is not a dissertation. The word is derived from the Greek *exegeesthai*, meaning to explain, and is used in this thesis to denote a substantial introduction and commentary which sets the short film “in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context”⁴.

A specific feature of an exegesis in art and design research is its close discourse with the created artifact. In this respect the explanations and reflections presented in this present document cross-reference to key developments in the design of the short film . Contexts, whether historical, theoretical or critical, serve to question the creative work forward, and the pertinence of their contributions are discussed in terms of this dynamic.

proportion

Although it is general practice for a postgraduate thesis to stipulate the proportionate relationship between the exegesis and the practical body of work, in this project they are inextricably linked. The exegesis explains and contextualises the creative production⁵. However, the body of research, while fed by investigations documented in the exegesis and appendices, is developed inside the film. The film is a contribution to new knowledge and experience, and also constitutes the site of creative experimentation within the thesis.

In the light of this, it is important to see the exegesis as explaining and contextualising the research and not as the central body of the research.

structure of the exegesis

The exegesis is divided into five sections.

introduction

The opening section contains a research positioning statement; a review of relevant theory, knowledge and information; and an unpacking of the research methodology deployed in the design of the film. These chapters position the research inside a wider body of relevant knowledge and explain the methods employed in the synthesis and creative testing of hypotheses.

⁴ Auckland University of Technology Academic Calendar (2004, p. 108).

⁵ The term creative production is used by Scrivener (2000a) to describe forms of Ph.D. research in design, where the work is concerned with intervention, innovation and change but its purpose is to contribute to human experience. An artifact produced is generally a response to, and manifestation of, issues, concerns and interests that reflect cultural preoccupations.

In the exegesis two influential areas of discourse are nominated to contextualise and explain the short film. The first is narrative music video and television commercial design, and the second is typography and anti-language. The central concerns of this exegesis are with these areas respectively.

narrative music video and television commercial design

The film’s design considerations are drawn from narrative music video⁶ and television commercials, rather than cinema. Therefore, this section of the exegesis examines influential narrative devices and features within this medium. The areas considered include image, space, time, enigma, closure, sound and narration. Consideration of these treatments is interfaced with experiments developed in the short film.

typographical concerns and anti-language

This section of the exegesis begins with a consideration of the voice of type as a documenter of the “other”. It then examines a particular underground community and key features of the anti-language they use. Two themes evident in this language form (detachment and ecclesiasticism) are then tested and evaluated against the design of the film’s typographical voice.

The section concludes with an analysis of the nature of type as a narrative voice, and how this has influenced design decisions in the film.

post-project reflection

The exegesis concludes with a reflection on the project. It also considers key issues, experiences and methodology, and highlights new creative and analytical research growing out of the study.

⁶ In this exegesis, the term “music video” applies to filmed musical promotions, the primary purpose of which is to sell music. The term, therefore, encompasses early clips not shot on video, including Soundies of the 1930s, the Scopitones of the 1950s, television music show *promos* of the 1960s and 70s, and selected early experiments by Fischinger. A consideration of the archaeology of these media forms can be referenced in the writings of Berg (1987), Burns and Thompson (1987), Doherty (1987), Ehrenstein (1983), Laing (1985), Lukow (1986), and Turner (1984).

appendices

The appendices provide background data referenced inside the exegesis. There are five separate documents:

Appendix 1 provides a detailed overview of historical and legal issues impacting on bog-cruising in New Zealand.

Appendix 2 provides a lexicon of bog-speak collated for this study. The document also contains an introduction that explains methodology employed in gathering and recording the data.

Appendix 3 contains transcripts of three recorded oral histories of bog-cruisers. The audio interviews conducted specifically for this study are now housed in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington (MS-Papers-0648). The interviews are concerned with language use and personal recollections of the culture and practice of bog cruising between the late 1950s and 2005.

Appendix 4 provides the final script for the film, along with a complete filmography.

Appendix 5 is formatted as a DVD. It contains hypothesis-testing experiments from the film, and excerpts from music videos and television commercials referenced in the body of the exegesis. Where a music video, television commercial, or experiment is viewable in appendix 5, it is indicated with an asterix* in the body of the exegesis.





the film

boy

is a fifteen-minute, fictional, narrative film⁷.

Its non-spoken story flows as a single, linear thread, referencing aesthetic and stylistic approaches taken to advertising narratives in New Zealand⁸. A significant feature of the film is the highly condensed nature of the story. The narrative (that might normally be told as a 55 minute drama) is heavily compressed into less than a quarter of that time. As a result, edited sequences average 3.2 seconds in duration. The effect establishes an unusually condensed, dreamlike, visually rich form of storytelling that alludes to the world of music video and television commercials, but uses these references to develop a highly intricate, intensified form of storytelling for cinema. Because it has no audible dialogue, the film constructs its voices through the creative use of imagery and type. Written words as thoughts, comment on developments in the narrative as fragmented or poetic text. The typographical language used, is either poetic, or references the little known New Zealand anti-language, bogspeak.

⁷ *boy* was shot on 35mm film, and used the HD format for all intermediate stages of post-production. The film was developed as a 35mm print for projection in cinemas. It has a screen ratio of 1:1.85 with a Dolby mix soundtrack, and is printed onto one 1340 feet reel with a 150-foot leader at the front.

⁸ These stylistic features include integrated colour palettes, editing rhythms, and condensed treatments of time and narrative.

conclusion

Okri (1997) said, “[t]he great essays on storytelling are done in stories themselves” (p. 123).

Story telling is a complex skill, whether with words, sounds or images, (or a rich combination of all three), and it remains one of our most powerful methods of communication. The actual creation of stories is not a common undertaking in the upper echelons of academia, despite the plethora of scholarly analysis concerned with understanding narratives and how they work.

In almost the inverse of general academic practice, this thesis places the actual telling of a story at its centre. Considerations of theory, structure and method operate as partners in the creation of the text, rather than as objective or detached commentators.

Such an undertaking at the highest level of academic qualification is a statement about the power and importance of creation, not as something to illustrate theory but as an act that might lead it- an act that might enable one as a scholar to touch the human condition... and in doing so, understand how.

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positioning the researcher
*Stories are always a form
of resistance.*

Okri, 1997, p. 121



positioning the researcher

This section of the exegesis discusses personal, professional, and cultural issues in relation to the project. It reflects on past practice and experience as factors in positioning the researcher. Through this process it locates the project’s literary voice as that of the subjective, self-conscious, and reflective practitioner.

Scrivener (2000a) suggests that

a creative-production project will be grounded in a practitioner’s current practice and realized in future projects. Consequently, it should begin with a reflection on past practice and appreciative system. (p. 9)

writing, painting and design

My professional and personal history as an academic, activist, writer, designer, and image-maker, has been profiled by the production of artifacts and actions generated from the politicising of beliefs. My plays, short stories, and films have in general been motivated by a desire to present in humane ways, narratives and artifacts that nominate for attention, issues that society tends to marginalise or misrepresent.¹ In many cases these works grew out of reflections on my own experiences or those of people with whom I have a close association. This work may be described as using fiction as a method of revealing social conditions through consumable texts.

¹Significant among fictional works are:

- Ings, W. (1997). *The Coopers*.* London: Manmade Productions, a television drama about euthanasia in a family who never married and grew old together on an isolated farm.
- Ings, W. (1997). *Lois, Jean, David and Jim*. London: Manmade productions, a documentary series about the impact of 1980’s government reforms on small farming families.
- Ings, W. (1986). *Going Home*. Wellington: Playmarket, a play about the family of a young alcoholic.
- Ings, W. (1985). *Out of the Drowning Pool*. Wellington: Playmarket, a one-act play about a young masseuse, forced to give up her baby.
- Ings, W. (1982). *Inside from the Rain*. Auckland: Brookfield Press, an anthology of short stories about life in rural communities.



Fig. 1:1 Promotion stills from *The Coopers** (1997). This was a one-hour television drama I wrote and directed in New Zealand for Meridian Television [UK]. The film considered the issue of euthanasia as an act of love inside a small, closely knit family. In an approach similar to that employed in 'boy', actors were non-professional and lived in the location where the film was shot. In several cases the actors were personally associated with the stories that inspired the drama. It was from a silent sequence I designed as a prologue to the film* that I began to consider the power of non-spoken narrative as a method of intensifying the power of story telling.



In a similar way, my painting has also been concerned with social documentary, but differs from the profile of my writing in that the works are rarely fictional. Instead I use portraiture as a method of presenting ideas about people in a way that confronts the viewer with the sense of tangible personality. (Fig. 1:2)

Fig. 1:2 Portraits of night-clubbers from the series, **Dancers on the dark**. (1989-1990). *Boys at the bar, Janice [left], Blue [above]*. These paintings formed part of an exhibition that employed references to the “camera’s eye” as a method of evoking spectacle in portraiture. The subjects of the works were people in nightclubs on Vivian Street in Wellington. This is a central city location with clubs often associated with trans-gendered prostitution, drug dealing and late night police activity.

Boys at the Bar (1989)
Oil on wood.





These works however, do not have a wide a circulation as they tend to be exhibited in galleries and purchased into company or private collections. As political documents they operate on a more durable level than film or literature because of their intimate relationship with “lived in” environments.

Conversely, my design work for television and print is more ubiquitous. However, because of its need to operate inside a client’s paradigm of values, I see this work as generally lacking the potential, beyond its ability to enhance messages about commodities and services, to contribute significantly to the human experience.

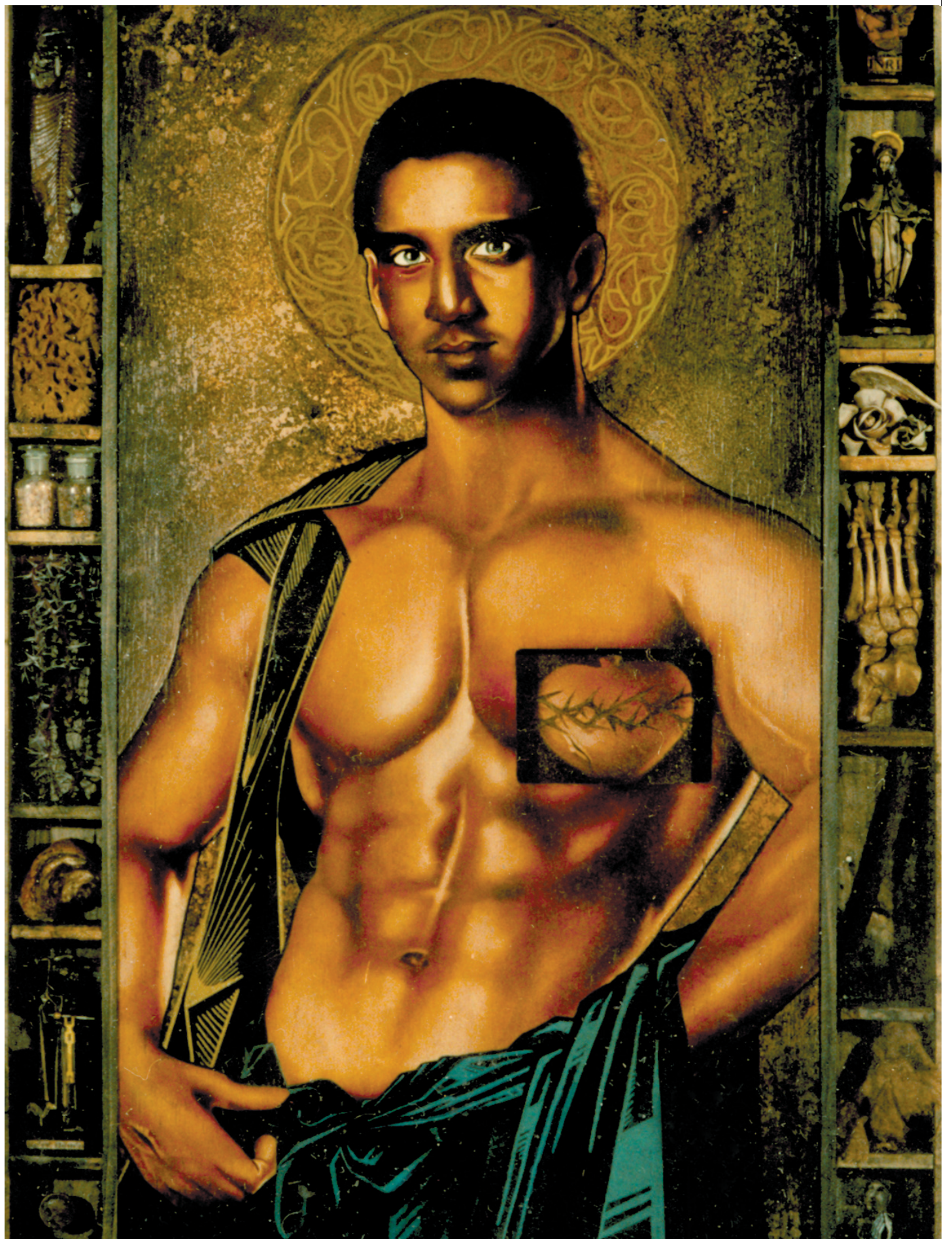
However, it is from the practice of intensifying meaning in design for advertising² that I became interested in the power and potential of structures this form of communication has developed, especially the unique ways that it tells stories. It appeared to me that some of the structures used to intensify meaning in television advertising and music video could be creatively employed in the design of short film.

From years of making people feel moved by creating seductively hegemonic constructions of the family, of youth, retirement and manhood, I am at the point where I believe that in this process I may have discovered something worth using. Lucius said “an idea is not responsible for the people who use it” and perhaps the same can be said for something I have discovered amidst the dross of my own manufacturing. Instead of the idea, however it is a range of devices. The unique systems of narration [both structural and positional], that have become ubiquitous profiles of selling in television, are powerful methods of arresting and focusing attention. It is my belief that they may be possibly employed [with careful synthesis] in the telling of marginalised stories to a society that has learned to read ads and videos in unique ways.... These marginalised stories however, will never qualify for the banal, homogenised and culturally exclusive world of television advertising. (Ings, W. 1999)³

² This is what Tibor Kalman (1998) refers to as the designer’s professional engagement with “enhancing a product beyond its truth” (p. 9).

³ Preliminary notes for Ph.D. project proposal.

Fig. 1:3 Two paintings on glass from *Ad te omnius caro veniet* (1994), *Madonna with Doll and Mesomorphic Jesus*. These works formed part of a series of portraits about people in my extended family. The paintings questioned historical metaphors and systems of representation. Images within these paintings were a fusion of personality specific objects [the doll and sauna towel] and traditional religious iconography.



subject

Scrivener (2000*a*) suggests that a creative project, rather than necessarily producing new knowledge, contributes instead to human experience. With respect to this, one of the norms of such projects is their highly personal profile, and by extension, their location in a cultural context. While sections of this exegesis and appendix deal with issues of culture in some depth, (specifically in considerations of how anti-language generated within a culture might determine how one designs typographical treatments about the marginalised), it may be helpful at this point to clarify the researcher’s relationship to the film’s central narratives.

I was born into a rural family of six children. My father was a shearing contractor and my mother, a farmer, and hairdresser for the women of the district. I grew up in a world where acceptability was prescribed inside what might be considered traditional values. In my early adolescence I realised I was gay [although such was my knowledge at the time, that I did not know there was a word for it]. At thirteen, however, I stumbled across bog cruising⁴ and through my adolescence, my life (like that of many young, rural gay men) was divided into two spheres, the over-ground world of compliance and carefully constructed identity and the underground world of the bogs. The latter, with its alternative language, precocious awareness of police behaviour, threatening violence and sexual secrecy, formed one end of a continuum over which the pendulum of my teenage years swung. Information about one’s life at either end of

⁴ In this thesis I use the New Zealand term ‘bog’ to describe a public toilet. “Bog cruising” refers to the use of public toilets for meeting men for sex.

this continuum was carefully guarded from people who inhabited the other. In the world of the bogs one was intimately known yet without a name, family, or specific connections. In the over-ground world, one was a carefully constructed paragon of complicity. Like many gay men who grow early into this world, I was angry by the time I was twenty and finding the burgeoning world of gay politics I became an active participant in law reform measures and the advocacy of human rights amendments. At this point I also moved to the city and became the art director of the country's first periodical for gay men, *New Zealand Gay News*. Over the next twenty years my political interests broadened to encompass those of other minorities. During this period gay politics began to separate itself from the world of bog cruising,⁵ so apart from times when I was acting as a legal advisor for men who had been arrested while cruising, my involvement with the culture of the bogs diminished. However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as part of the wider gay community's initiatives to educate our people regarding the risks of HIV transmission, I came into contact again with the community. At this time, I met a number of young men who "worked" the bogs commercially. While I assumed that this world had moved to the escort agencies since the 1970s, it rapidly became obvious that in many smaller towns in New Zealand it had not. It was through these boys' stories and reflection on my own experiences as an "outed" young gay man in a small town, that key threads of the film's narrative were developed.

⁵ In the late 1970s and early 1980s as gay politics focused on decriminalisation and equity issues, there surfaced a tension inside the movement between certain sectors of the gay community. This especially affected groups whose heightened profile threatened the chance of acceptability. There was a palpable tension between many queens, transsexuals and lesbian women over notions of gender. There was also a cautious distancing from men whose engagement with sex in public places [bogs and parks] continued to reinforce constructs of gay society as underground and predatory. Baker (2002b), offers a helpful analysis of this phenomenon to which he partly attributes the demise of the British gay anti-language, Polari.

the writer's voice

A diverse range of considerations has influenced this research, and I have endeavored constantly to draw relationships between these and the experiments employed in the resolution of the project. However, these connections have in common their journey through a self-conscious, systematic, and personally reflective process, and it is appropriate therefore, for the writing of this exegesis to bear reference to this in the narrative position adopted. This exegesis therefore, uses a first person system of narration.

Wood (1998) argues that many “freelance” designers are “expected to deny [their] own views, ideologies and immediate well-being in the quest for his/her client’s cause or satisfaction”(p. 6). He suggests that in an age of mounting ecological damage where we often see ourselves as powerless individuals, this position is problematic. An extension of Wood’s idea into the voice adopted by a designer in scholarly writing is an interesting one. Scrivener (2000a) suggests that a “characteristic research stance is that of objectivity, control and distance” (p.6) and traditionally, academic writing has encouraged forms of authorial remoteness. This is something Panofsky (1968) referred to as the “scholastic mind”, describing the approach as an introspective and closed mode of writing that contributed to the personal

detachment in modern academic writing. Wood (1998) argues that this detachment was encouraged, since the Enlightenment, by the “vain belief in a possible objectivity that discouraged the use of first person singular positioning and the use of active verbs” (p. 7).

Comparable with the way that much commercial design dislocates designers from identification with their own work and the consequences of it,⁶ this authorial detachment is inherently problematic in design research because of its potential to deny ownership of and responsibility for what is presented as knowledge.

The work generated in a creative production is a direct consequence of the designer’s self-identification as a creator,⁷ and it is because of this, I have adopted the writing position used. The work is subjective⁸ and does not seek to employ a sense of detachment. However, the research process employs rigorous reflection on practice, critical analysis, and creative synthesis of generated data.

This project is my work and I take responsibility both for the research behind it and the final outcome. This is because it is my aim to contribute something significant to both the structure and treatment of short film and to the wider human experience of narrative subject.

⁶ In general the graphic designer of a text in the public domain remains relatively anonymous. With the exception of awards given in the professional arena, creative texts are generally associated with the product or service they promote, rather than the person [or people] by whom they were created.

⁷ Scrivener (2000a) says that it is because of this self-identification as the creator that “*artifacts arising from the research cannot simply be conceived as by-products or exemplification of ‘know-how’, instead, they are objects of value in their own right*” (p. 2).

⁸ Wood (1998) suggests objectivity “*is only meaningful in a dualistic mindset.*” (p. 7). His argument builds on Simon’s (1957) notion of “bounded rationality” that argues a decision-maker in an actual situation can never have all information necessary for making an optimal decision at the right time.





review of theory, knowledge
and information

*History is the substance of
recorded stories.*

(Watts, 2003, p. 121)

introduction

This research project is interdisciplinary in nature, and as such draws on a wide range of academic and professional arenas. A review of theory, knowledge and information, therefore, examines significant discourse related to theoretical and practical research underpinning the project. The chapter is divided into four sections:

archaeology of relevant music video
music video theory
related narrative theory
and, anti-language.

A review of research and information inside these arenas is helpful in positioning key informants in the design of the short film . However, rather than viewing these as demarcated and discrete bodies of knowledge, the project draws them into a synergistic dynamic. This dynamic is used to stimulate the creative process of the production.

archaeology of the music video

The first section of this review profiles significant creative works that have impacted on the present research project.

In considering narrative and stylistic structures in music video design, I have adopted the position taken by a range of researchers¹, who argue that music video design cannot be considered as something that simply appeared in 1981 with the advent of Music Television [MTV]. Certain structural and aesthetic devices relevant to the creative processing of this project have involved reflection on experiments from well before that date. Therefore, the present review of works impacting on this project is discussed as a brief archaeology of the media form.

In general, key considerations are documented at an early site of influence, indication of later creative research in the field is noted, then the feature is briefly discussed in terms of its impact on research for the film.

¹ Significant among these theorists are, Berg (1987), Burns and Thompson (1987), Doherty (1987), Ehrenstein (1983), Goldstein (1983), Laing (1985), Lukow (1986), and Turner (1984).

rhythm (1920s)

Rhythm is a significant concern in the design of *boy* because of the need to harmonise antithetical features like dislocation and continuity. In this film, sound and image are interwoven, each contributing in different and complementary ways to the flow and emphases in the narrative.

Early research by Oscar Fischinger developed a system of editing visuals to rhythmically coordinate with beats in the music. Fischinger developed promos for classical and jazz music after synchronised sound became possible in the late 1920s. His *Komposition in Blau*^{*} (1934), (fig. 1:4) cut to Nikoli's *Overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor*, was shown in cinemas and forms part of a portfolio of promotional works he created at that time².

Fischinger's early awareness of the interface between rhythm, volume and movement, profoundly influenced editing processes in music videos and served as a baseline for later developments in their design. Significant among these later developments were the animated videos surfacing from dance culture in the mid 1990s, and the pop video work of directors like David Fincher (*Vogue*, 1990; and *Who Is It?* * 1991). In general, these videos are profiled by their heavy use of image-changes synchronised to the beat of the music.

However, emphasis on editing to the beat of music promos had altered considerably by the 1990s when directors like Peter Whitehead popularised a system of establishing synchronicity between image and sound by linking actions in the video with emphases in the music. Whitehead's approach, evident in *Lady Jane*^{*} (1966), was more suited to videos that used longer shots and stressed what was happening in the scene, rather than the pulse of changing imagery.

influence

Editing on the beat was developed as a way of accentuating pace and imagery in music promos. However, the technique has a tendency to distract from action occurring within the frame.

² Similar approaches to music and imagery were being explored by the Yugoslavian-trained American filmmaker Slavo Vorkapich, who designed impressionistic visual shorts to Wagner's *Forest Murmurs* (1947) and Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave* (1946).

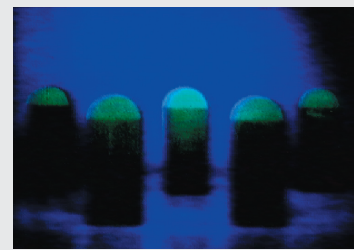


Fig. 1: 4 Still from Fischinger's *Komposition in Blau* (1934)

Fischinger's experiments involving cutting on and off music beats as a method of punctuating the structure of a sequence, is relevant to *boy* because the film required the design of an editing system that moved from stark fragmentation to the illusion of smooth flow. Without substantially disrupting the average three-second duration of each shot, I needed to employ devices that gradually masked the rapid pace of the narrative, allowing it to drift inexorably to its conclusion.



Fig. 1:5 Stills from *Low Down Dog* (circa 1940). An examination of homodiegetic address in Soundies offered an important stylistic consideration while I was developing the narrative voices in *boy*. This is because I was interested in balancing the main character's dislocation from the viewer, while simultaneously emphasising the intimacy of his story.

Because *boy* relies heavily on a careful orchestration of image and action, editing on the beat and editing around the movement within the frame have offered complementing approaches to establishing rhythm and emphasis. This has been particularly useful when there are shifts in the story between information contained in an image and information contained in an action.

homodiegetic address and movement within the fixed frame (1940s)

Between 1940 and 1946 three minute promos called "Soundies" were produced for a coin operated video jukebox called a Panoram. A Hollywood production company, headed by James Roosevelt, the President's son, was responsible for the manufacture of many of these films. The Panoram contained a 16mm film projector that projected a series of eight Soundies presented in sequence on a loop. This loop ran continuously, and updated loops were available weekly.

Significant features of these texts were the use of lip-synching and the locking down of both the camera and the microphone so the performers generally operated inside fixed frames. This approach was generally cheaper than applying the conventions of moving camera work, fashionable in cinema at the time. In Soundies, movement through an expansive set was generally achieved through a series of cuts. The Soundie *Low Down Dog** (circa 1940) designed for Meade Lux Lewis and Jo Turner, presented a husband's complaint about the disloyalty of his wife (fig. 1:5). The film profiled the early system of intra-diegetic address in music promos. Unlike videos in the 1960s, that generally presented the performer glancing at a suggested studio audience, or those surfacing in the 1970s and 1980s that employed a dominant system of direct address, these promos tended to have more in common with cinematic conventions of the time where the narrative unfolded without acknowledgement of the audience's gaze.

influence

This technique was experimented with in *boy*. In the film, characters do not acknowledge the audience, but typographic voices do. By examining early videos that did not permeate their homodiegetic structure with direct address, I was able to develop experiments that kept the film's story contained. By "containing" the diegesis, I was able orchestrate heterodiegetic voices that were less disruptive to the flow of meaning in the narrative.

spatial and structural considerations (early 1960s)

In the early 1960s, a new form of video jukebox was developed in France. It was called the Scopitone and used rear projection of films onto a top mounted twenty-inch screen. They offered thirty-six promos that could be selected by preference. Unlike the Soundies, Scopitones were filmed in colour and were generally profiled by a much faster editing style. This system of almost frenetic cutting was heavily influenced by Claude Lelouch's work in the medium. However, in England there were marked exceptions to this pace. Like their European counterparts, many British promos profiled an extensive use of studio sets and the filming of fragmented sections of the body. However, much of their work avoided the rapid-fire editing conventions of French design. Indicative of this is *Do the locomotion**. This promo, filmed in a continuous flow, contained only two edits. In later music video design, this minimal editing approach became a common response to the hyper-cutting of 1980s³.

influence

The minimal approach to editing is not a convention used in *boy* but the environments designed to hold the interest of these long-duration shots, are.

What is significant about *Do the Locomotion* is its distinctive treatment of space. The designer has fore-grounded objects to create

³ See Alanis Morissette, *Head over feet* (1997), Bif Naked, *Moment of weakness* (1998), Janet Jackson, *When I think of you* (1990), The Spice Girls *Wannabe* (1996), and Sinead O'Connor, *Nothing compares 2 U* (1990).



Fig. 1:6 Comparison of stills from *Do the Locomotion* (1962) (left) and the aftermath of the queer bashing in *boy* (2004) (right).

Bodies act as monumental masking devices through which other elements are witnessed. This use of tiering has the effect of breaking up simple shots and directing the eye to specific elements within the frame.

depth in what is essentially a shallow studio set.

The location is strategically tiered (using bodies or props) and we often witness the action in this video through the masking or moving of these objects. The compression of space in these 1960s tiered-sets was an influence on the image structure of assault scenes in *boy* (fig. 1:6).

vignettes

The use of shallow vignettes, designed as stills in which action occurs, was also a technique that grew out of the 1960s studio sets and was heightened in music video design in the 1980s. Highly iconographic use of this shallow space has become a feature in the work of contemporary advertising designers like Melanie Bridge (*A better world*, 1998; *Xenical**, 1999; *The glass is half full**, 2002), and music video directors like Tarsem Singh (*Losing my religion** 1991).

These directors tell stories by connecting a series of theatricised, low relief sets. In each of these environments a small gesture occurs, the camera pauses or cuts to a detail, then moves on. This technique is used to establish a highly compressed, spectacle-saturated method of storytelling.

influence

Experiments with vignettes in *boy* have been used to create pictorial intensity and narrative compression in the film. These vignettes draw on television's technique of focusing on central action, rather than contemplating information provided in detailed shots. Consequently, they offer ways of compressing information in an environment where attention can be highly focused on an action, held for a moment, and then quickly progressed to the next scene.

the mid 1960s

By the mid 1960s, Scopitones were beginning to become less popular. Berg (1987) suggests that this was primarily due to the increasing availability of broadcast television. In this decade a plethora of television music shows surfaced as a worldwide phenomenon⁴. These shows were generally modelled on a formula that employed a personality presenter, audience or programme dancers, and on-location performing artists. While the design of much music video at this time tended to profile devices like lip-synching, audience address and the primacy of the performance over the context, two designs developed in this period are of significance to this present research. In each of these texts, the designer broke with, or extended, conventions of the period.

the promo as a social commentator

Ray Davies' design for the Kinks' video *Dead End Street* in 1966 was perhaps the first clearly narrative music video designed for television. The promo portrays the band members as undertakers attending the death of a working class colleague. At the same time they perform the parts of local people involved with the event. In this video, the band is never seen singing or playing instruments. However, what is significant, beyond the video's veneer of dark, slapstick humour, is the insertion of a series of real-life stills of working-class poverty (fig. 1:7). While the video presents itself as a melodramatic comedy, it carries an element of genuine social critique. Music video rarely does this, and it was from designs like *Dead End Street* and later, more overtly politicised music videos like Castle's *Blue Sky Mine* (1990), Adlon's *So in Love* (1990) and Cunningham's *Africa Shox* (1998), that the inspiration for examining structural devices in music video, as potential techniques for intensifying political story telling, emerged.

⁴ These shows included *Oh Boy*, *6/5 Special*, and *Top of the Pops* (UK); *American Bandstand*, *Shindig*, *Hullabaloo*, *Ready Steady Go!* (USA); *Six O'Clock Rock* (Australia), *Let's Go*, *C'Mon and Happen Inn* (New Zealand), and the artistically adventurous *Beat Club* (Germany and Holland). The latter was renowned for its contribution to the aesthetics of studio-produced videos because of its creative use of solarisation, multiple layering and psychedelic backdrops.



Fig. 1:7 Stills of poverty among London's working classes, from Davies' *Dead End Street* (1966). The BBC initially banned this video because it was considered to be "tasteless", although it was never made clear whether this was because of the story line or the documentary imagery.



the beauty/abject dynamic

In 1966 Peter Whitehead used footage of the Rolling Stones in concert at the Albert Hall to create a hauntingly beautiful portrayal of violent adoration in his video *Lady Jane** (fig. 1:8). By stretching the film, Whitehead was able to give the illusion of seductive motion in the midst of continual assault.

influence

This use of beautiful imagery as a method for intensifying the abject became a consideration in *boy* as I looked for more effective methods for dealing with the sense of time dislocation which one experiences during a physical assault. In the film, graceful, violent movement became part of scenes like the queer bashing in the school locker bay⁵. By orchestrating seductive colour palettes and graceful movement, I was able to create a form of antithesis, where the hypnotically beautiful was used to describe the abject. This approach is evident in the work of more recent music video directors like Romanek, Sigismondi, Cunningham, Tarsem and Stern⁶. Morton suggests that this technique can heighten the drama in a visual narrative “because it involves the viewer in a form of unwilling complicity, where they are in aesthetic concord with the style, but witnessing a repellent episode in the narrative” (p. 127).



Fig. 1:8 Stills from Whitehead's *Lady Jane* (1966). In this film Whitehead stretched the original footage to create a distortion of time and a high level of texture in the print. The work profiles a distinctive, hypnotic grace that the director uses to record a concert that has gone out of control.

⁵ In *boy* a lot of the footage was shot ‘off-speed’, using an Arri3S, 35mm camera set to a frame rate either higher or lower than the normal 25fps (frames per second). In the queer bashing scene, the sequence was shot at 18 frames per second, which was then telecined (processed to tape), at 25 frames. This technique is called step-printing and produces a stepping/staccato effect, holding each frame for slightly longer than in standard 25fps mode.

When Nic Finlayson shot the slow motion sequences, the effect was produced in-camera by running the film through up to 150fps, so he was able to catch action at high speed. This is not something that can be done in post-production. Different sequences in the film were shot 33.3fps, 36fps and 50fps. This is called overcranking the camera.

⁶ Romanek, *Perfect drug* (1997), *Closer* (1994), and *Bedtime stories* (1995); Sigismondi, *Beautiful people* (1996), and *Makes me wanna die* (1997); Cunningham, *Frozen* (1998), *All is full of love* (1998), and *Flex* (2000); Tarsem, *Losing my religion* (1991); and Stern, *Breathe* (1997).



Fig. 1:9 Stills from Mulcahy's *Vienna* (1980).
The narrative in this video concerns a woman compromised by an espionage incident. In the course of the video she is exposed, betrays and kills her lover, and re-aligns herself with the controlling elite. The story is a complex one to tell in three minutes. This is compounded by the fact that the film's narrative bears little relation to the song's lyrics.

the early 1980s

In the 1970s and early 1980s there was a significant recording industry slump in both the United States and Europe. The advent of music television was seen by many analysts as the means by which the economy of the profession could be revitalised. Bailey and Barbato (1999), suggest that as larger corporations began to take over the marketing and brief setting for these texts, the prescription of commercially successful formulae began to limit the range of experiments conducted in the media form. However, during the last three decades of the twentieth century there were several video directors whose innovative treatment of narrative form are of significance to this present project.

enigma and compression in narrative

In 1980, when Russell Mulcahy designed *Vienna** for Ultra Vox, the production consumed the highest budget afforded a music video at that time. Historically, the work is indicative of his influence on later music video design because of his experiments with intertextual references to cinema and his rich, almost operatic, imagery. Mulcahy is also credited with innovations like the use of triple-screen edits, cutting on, around, and against the beat, transitions between scenes dissolved into seamless movements and the effecting of high production values on video, through the use of sprawling sets, back lighting and masked filming, to imitate the dimensions of the Cinemascope screen (fig. 1:9).

To achieve the narrative compression and enigmatic nature of the video, Mulcahy used a range of devices. Although shots appear to be lingering, they are generally cut to the most pertinent information necessary for the continuance of the story. This is a compression technique taken from television advertising, where a narrative is delivered in very short sequences, in a very short period of time⁷. By overstating the operatic nature of the imagery in *Vienna*, Mulcahy introduces a level of confusion into the unfolding narra-

⁷Many designers working in music video and television advertising have influenced, and been influenced by Mulcahy's distinctive treatments of the video narrative. While Mulcahy's videos provide an example of some of the more complex experiments involving the compression of a story into small, interconnected image-bites, this present research project has examined approaches to compression across a plethora of other texts, including television advertisements, film credits and cinema promos.

tive, as the viewer is generally uncertain which of the sequential images carries the story and which are atmospheric diversions. This dynamic helps to build the enigma in the plot, so that although it reaches a form of closure in the final frames, its internal narrative remains relatively elusive.

Enigma is used in narrative music video as a device for prolonging the durability of a text across repeated screenings. Narrative videos often profile disruptions of event logic, and through this, pose questions to audiences. These questions encourage a greater level of curiosity and involvement in repeated viewings of the text.

Merit Avis' celebrated design for U2's *All I Want is You** (1989) is a significant example. The video is less complex than Mulcahy's *Vienna*. However, its orderly, undisturbed linearity is powerfully disrupted by a single incident at the end of the text. In the closing sequence we see the victim of a fatal accident standing at his own funeral. He glances at a friend and we realise that he is not a ghost. This momentary disruption of event logic suddenly makes all previous meaning in the video renegotiable. The person we thought had died, had not. In a quest for closure of the video's events, we are called back to repeated screenings as we re-examine the story in an effort to ascertain what really happened.

influence

Both Mulcahy and Avis present different approaches to embedding enigma into texts. In both cases the technique has been used to increase the video's durability over repeated screenings. Because *boy* was designed for more than one viewing, both Mulcahy's density of imagery, and Avis' disruption of a simple, linear narrative, have been of significance. However, these approaches are not simply applied to the short film. Rather, they operate as points of departure, from which the design employs a blend of enigmatic iconography and disruptions to event logic, as methods of increasing the textural density of the narrative.



Fig. 1:10 Above and opposite, Censored sequences from Pellington's *Jeremy* (1991). These scenes depicting the boy's suicide and Pellington's references to Nazi-style fascism in American education were cut from the film before it went to air. However, the narrative still manages to allude to these issues through connections between the remaining imagery. The video's narrative is only loosely linear, running from equilibrium through fragmented scenes of dysfunctional family life and demeaning school experiences, and finally reaching an anagnorisis with a series of shots of the boy before a wall of flame. The story resolves with the central character walking back into the classroom and shooting himself through the mouth. The video was of significance to boy because of its innovative use of the written narrative voice and its demonstration of the potential for television audiences to read concurrent tellings of a narrative at relatively sophisticated levels⁹.

multi-narration (1990s)

Mulcahy's and Avis' innovations in the media form were further developed in 1991 in Mark Pellington's controversial video *Jeremy**. Directed for *Pearl Jam*, the work received considerable critical acclaim but was also re-cut several times prior to screening, because the marketing companies wanted to downplay the public suicide of the central character (fig. 1:10).

Pellington's narrative construction continued to build on devices that heightened the enigma in story lines⁸ because this approach, developed through the 1980s, had demonstrated the ability to call viewers back to repeated screenings of the text. *Jeremy* unfolds with longer shots of the performer and fragmented images of the film's diegesis. However, what is significant about this text is its use of multiple narrators. The story is sung by Eddie Vedder; a consecutive flow of fragmented imagery unfurls another version of the narrative; and these tellings are intruded upon by a third voice, appearing as written statements. As the text develops, these narrations become more tightly cropped and frantic, and it is through this that the tension in the video is built.

⁸ Other narrative music videos useful to this research, that have creatively developed this phenomenon are Burbidge, *Love is a stranger* (1983); Cunningham, *Come on my selector* (1998); Fincher, *Who is it?* (1991); Glazer, *Karma police* (1997); Geoghegan, *Caribbean blue* (1991); Gondry, *Cibo matto* (1996); Jonze, *Electrobank* (1997); Lambert, *Like a prayer* (1989); Milne, *Union of the snake* (1983), and Sigur Ros *Víðir vel til loftarása* (2003).

⁹ The advent of type as an additional narrator became a significant feature of a range of music videos and television commercials in the 1990s and continues to be a site of experiment in these media forms today. Pellington designed two other videos that experiment with this type of voice: *One* (1992), and *Beautiful girl* (1993). Other music video designers whose work has contributed to creative research in this area are, Gee, *No surprises* (1997); Gondry, *Bachelorette* (1997); Nordenstam, *Dynamite* (1997); Scott, *Everybody hurts* (1993), and Thraves, *Just* (1995). In television advertising, significant innovations have been profiled in Bridge, *The glass is half full: Cadbury* (2002); Cheeseman, *The riot of spring* (1998); Ding DDB Pubucidade, *Down's prejudice* (1998); Revista C'Pacas, *EPOCA* (2001).

typographic innovations

Type and line drawings as additional voices, have been laid over music video's image-narratives since the 1980s, profiling significantly in Simon Milne's unreleased version of *Union of the Snake**, (1983). However, it wasn't until the early 1990s that this form of narration developed substantially in both music video and television advertising. In videos like Scott Jake's *Everybody Hurts** (1993) and Mark Pellington's *Beautiful Girl* (1993), type was used as a way of speaking directly over the unfolding visual narrative. Type did not operate as a conventional subtitle, its voice was instead, actively involved in telling the viewer more about the story. In both music video and television advertising, this additional voice allows a director to condense large amounts of information into a limited time frame because both the type and the image can be read concurrently.

In television commercials the approach was profiled in 1995 in the work of both Jonathan Barnbrook, and the design agency Tomato. Their commercials for Radio Scotland, (*True Romance**, *Tartan Toyboys*, *Foggie Bummer**, *Nae Hope*, *Graffiti*, and *Cockrel*), demonstrated the paralinguistic potential of typography. Type was used as a method for drawing emphasis to dialect and intonation, when it was laid as an emotive veneer over a series of audio monologues. These typographical treatments carried a high level of personality and were influential in the design of *boy* because they demonstrated, through movement and texture, the potential for type to operate as a form of idiolect.

In 2001, a commercial by Revista E' Paca for *EPOCA** magazine, demonstrated a refinement of these experiments. Here, type was used as a poetic monologue, operating as a concurrent narrator. The design profiled a typographic "voice-over" that, like the earlier work of Barnbrook and Tomato, demonstrated how the written word could be used as a spatio-temporal language. This language went well beyond a direct translation of audio elements in the text.



influence

These texts have been influential in design experiments involving typographic voices in *boy*. The experiments are discussed fully in chapter three of the exegesis, but may be broadly described as trialing the potential of type as a spatio-temporal form of narration that operates both homodiegetically and heterodiegetically.

The texts also contribute to experiments in the film dealing with the creation of typographical idiolect. The paralinguistic and poetic potential of type is a central concern of the creative research because of the film's need to develop inaudible voices. These voices needed to carry, in their physical appearance, the ethos of the worlds of which they spoke.

review of relevant music video theory

Although record companies had been designing brief promotional videos prior to 1980, academic analysis of music video did not significantly engage with the form until the launch of American Music Television (MTV), on August 1, 1981.

Analyses of music video following this phenomenon, can be broken down in to three broad categories, namely, historical studies, audience centered studies, and critical studies. Of these, historical and critical studies are most useful to this present research project because they either contextualise significant developments or analyse structural and aesthetic features in the media form.

historical studies

Since the 1980s a range of researchers have examined what Berg (1987) called the "archeology" of the music video. Berg, and other writers like Burns and Thompson (1987), Doherty (1987), Ehrenstein (1983), Goldstein (1983), Laing (1985), Lukow (1986), and Turner (1984), have discussed the combining of visual images and music in the history of television and film. In these studies the researchers emphasise the significance of early developments in these media, including synchronised sound in motion pictures, the development of the Soundies and Scopitone visual jukebox systems, the phenom-

enon of pre-MTV music video programming, and the popularity of Busby Berkley's musical extravaganzas. Burns and Thompson's research is particularly insightful in its analysis of how these phenomena created codes for interpreting visual and aural imagery in later music videos.

Archer's (1986) production of the BBC's four-hour documentary *Video Juke Box*, provided rare archival footage interspersed with interviews with the directors of the works. While lacking the critical rigor of an academic analysis, the documentary presented an insight into developments in the medium and exposure to rare archival footage, especially from England and Europe, prior to the advent of MTV.

Several researchers have examined institutional, economic and aesthetic factors impacting on exhibition and production of music video, for example, (Denisoff, 1988; Frith, 1993; Hartman, 1987; Lewis, 1990; Viera, 1987; and Zeichner 1983)¹⁰. However, in terms of the present research, it is Ellis' (1992), *Visible Fictions* that has been the most helpful. Presenting an insightful comparison between design for broadcast television and cinema, he examines the technical and commercial factors impacting on the production of visual texts in both areas. His work has been useful because of his attention to the impact of environment and technology on the respective media forms.

The other significant historical text is Shore's (1985) analysis of the history and commercial context of rock video. This has provided perhaps the most comprehensive overview of the early profiles of directors producing videos up to that date. His work discusses how auteurs referenced film and advertising to create the texture and structure of music video. While not academic, this publication has become an important text because of Shore's ability to draw together and demonstrate the relationships between the commercial imperatives of the rock industry and emerging graphic forms.

¹⁰ Denisoff's research drew upon a substantial analysis of industry periodicals and interviews to profile a detailed history of the first years of MTV's operation and how this influenced popular culture at the time. Frith (1992), provided an analysis of British television structures, especially as financial and marketing pressures influenced them during the 1980s and 1990s.

influence

These works are important to the present research because they indicate origins and early developments of both the aesthetics and structure of music videos. They position particular features of this media form within the contexts that shaped them, and provide locations for research beyond the comparatively narrow consideration of much contemporary analysis.

This research also offers a nexus for this thesis from which the often-contradictory analyses and rationales proffered by designers and academics may be considered.

archives, showreels and portfolios

Bailey and Barbato's (1999) documentary *Video killed the radio star: the history of the pop video*, traces some of the major developments of the media form in terms of its relationship with emerging technologies and the marketing influences of the pop industry. The text also presents footage rarely seen, or banned, from television broadcast. Both this documentary, and Reiss and Feinemann's (2000) book, *Thirty frames per second: the visionary art of the music video*, provide updated historical commentary on music video in the 1990s and early years of this century. However, Reiss and Feinemann's text also provides portfolios of work from different designers and through this, outlines emerging auteur approaches to imagery.

Showreels of work by individual music video designers, specifically Brown and Fong's (2003) compilation of the work of Michael Gondry, Brown and Payne's (2003) collected works of Chris Cunningham, and Landay and Brown's (2003) portfolio of Spike Jones' videos, have all contributed to this present research. Gondry's showreel has been significant because it contains texts he has designed for television advertising and music video. A comparison of these works reveals certain stylistic and structural similarities, especially in his use of compression and colour. Cunningham and Jones' portfolios both provide commentaries that give greater insight into the voice of the director. They also provide extensive overviews of work, normally only available on an agency's showreel.

Archives of music video have been helpful to this research because they have provided access to little known, early forms of music video. Significant among them have been the New Zealand Film Archive, the Huntley Archives and Van den Hemel's (1988) collected rock and roll videos. The New Zealand Archive has made available early examples of the media form designed for national distribution. The Huntley and Van den Hemel collections have made accessible, relatively well-preserved texts from Great Britain produced between 1964 and 1967. These archives provided access to examples of narrative music video that generally sit outside the scope of contemporary research. The Van den Hemel collections have the advantage of presenting these works chronologically. This has enabled the present research to trace and verify certain stylistic and structural profiles in early developments of the media form.

Finally, advertising showreels from the British Design and Art Direction Awards, New Zealand Axis Awards, and the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festivals, have contributed to the research examples of some of the more innovative, international work in the area of television advertising and music video, especially in the areas of typographic narration and concordant treatments of colour.

influence

One of the advantages of accessing archives and showreels is that they generally provide names of directors and production companies. In academic research this information is rarely available. Most academic writing incorrectly attributes these videos to the performing artist. Access to information about designers has enabled me to trace certain stylistic, technological and structural approaches affecting the development of the text. I have been able to discuss design decisions directly with the directors and production companies of specific videos. Because of this, the present research provides added insights into the constraints and developments that have affected the look of specific narrative music videos.

Access to these archives has also enabled me to locate relatively obscure texts that have had minimal broadcast rotation. This has been

important because innovation does not always result in a commercially successful product. Yet the research profiled in these works is often of considerable value. By accessing archives I have also been able to consider early examples of music promos produced between the 1920s and the 1970s. These videos have been helpful in this present project, especially in the development of low-relief spatial treatments in set design. They have also been useful when considering changes in editing style and the creation of rhythmic relationships between sound and image.

critical studies

Supporting these historical studies and archived texts, is a body of research that has also impacted on the development of this present project. These studies tend to concentrate on the actual design of music videos and the systems used by designers to actively engage audiences. Within the broad arena of this research, selected essays have been helpful in considering how music videos construct and articulate specific themes and identities, and how they create new forms of narrative.

identity

In an effort to understand how identities are constructed in music video, a number of critics have examined the formal and stylistic qualities of address and portrayal. Of influence in this research are Lewis' (1989) discussion of the way certain female performers challenge the male prerogatives in the media form, and Straayer's (1990), discussion of systems of address in terms of "postmodern bi-sexed performance".

influence

While these essays deal with how address is used as a method of establishing power in music video, Lewis and Straayer both raised issues for this present project through their analysis of how power structures are embedded inside music video. It was from a consideration of their writing and that of Dan Rubey's (1992) *Voguing at the carnival: desire and pleasure on MTV*, that I began to research methods

of address and portrayal of gay men in the media form. I was especially interested in how music video, in its hegemonic construction of gay identity, uses stereotypes to exoticise and marginalise homosexuality.

gay and lesbian identity

Music video's depiction of gay men and lesbian women has been analysed by a range of writers, (De Chaine, 1997; Friedman, 2004; Hawkins, 1997; Savage, 1989; Smith, 1993). However, Avicoli (1994) and Wasler (1993), provide perhaps the best critical analyses of the video performance as construction of bisexual chic and sexual ambiguity, and the phenomenon's inherent denigration of gay men's sexuality. They profile rock music's dubious engagement with homosexuality as essentially one of exploitation and reinforcement of negative stereotypes.

Common depictions of homosexuality use systems of encodement that represent gays as parodies, narcissistically flamboyant, apocalyptically decadent (Savage, 1989), bisexually chic (Avicoli, 1994), parasitic, wasteful and non-reproductive (Friedman, 2004), and ambiguously khamp (Smith, 1993). Savage (1989) argues that these systems of portrayal have left gay men "*politically disenfranchised, socially marginal, and vulnerable*" (p. 168).

influence

In *boy* this body of queer research contributed to my avoidance of stereotypical khamp portrayal and iconography. Politically the film seeks to readdress depictions of young, gay men by creating a narrative that disrupts commonly held assumptions. Sam is not sexually ambiguous. He is not the narcissistic, flamboyant, effete, simpering or exotically decadent gay archetype of the world of the music video. He is a darkly creative, small town, closeted gay kid with a secret. He may use the structure, aesthetics and intensity of music video to tell his story, but he is presented as something entirely outside of music video's hegemonic depiction of his sexuality.

postmodern sensibility

A number of theorists have examined music video in terms of a post-modern sensibility. Kaplan (1988), argued that common music video techniques including self-reflexivity, pastiche, and abstraction are used to disrupt linear codes of narrative and leave viewers “*decentered, perhaps confused, perhaps fixated on one particular image or series of images, but most likely unsatisfied and eager for the next video where perhaps closure will take place*” (p. 63).

Kinder (1984), profiled postmodern codes of spectator relations created by music video and drew parallels between watching music videos and dreaming. Aufderheide (1987) discussed music video in terms of its ability to encourage viewers to constantly recreate their identities. Jones (1988) argued that music video, by its use of a digital narrative structure, profoundly restructured visual perceptions of space and time¹¹.

By utilising an interpretive approach, these writers have considered the complex, communicative dimensions of this media form. By discussing some of the unique strategies used by music video designers to communicate with audiences, these studies attempt to explain why the media form has been able to elicit such different responses from diverse types of audiences.

However, Gow (1992) suggests that these critical analyses,

rely so heavily upon personal interpretations and argumentation there are no definite criteria for assessing how accurately their insights explain the ways in which young television viewers actually experience music videos. (p. 40)

Gow further argues that the criteria for selection are generally an inadequate representation of music video. As a result, conclusions in many of these studies are based on critiques of only a small number of videos. Straw (1988) also contests the status of music television within the postmodern construct. He argues that analyses of music

¹¹ Other writers whose works have linked music video to postmodernism include Goodwin (1987), Lipsitz (1987), Straayer (1990), and Turner (1986).

video, in terms of the politics of the signifier, often have conflated premises within cultural theory, in ways that are misleading.

influence

The debate over music videos as essentially post-modern texts is a complex one, and many writers have supported or argued against the idea. Because the film *boy* is essentially a design project where preferred meaning and structure are inextricably linked, the debate has served as a fertile ground for constant reconsiderations of position. What research suggests is that no fixed, absolute meaning can be presumed. However, from a professional context, as a director, one is constructing texts to communicate certain meanings to targeted groups. Music videos are advertisements for artists and core meanings are designed to be embedded within them, so they serve to promote and sell the product to the targeted audience. Similarly, short films are increasingly becoming commercial undertakings. They are marketed and sold on their ability to communicate “pleasurable” experiences to paying audiences. The tensions, therefore, between the positions of open reading and preferred decoding, create the fertile ground in which this research is developed.

related narrative theory

Drawing upon a critical review of literature, this present project has employed considerations of narratology as tools for analysis by using them “*not in the construction of a perfect model which ‘fits’ the texts*” but as... “*discursive modes which affect semiotic objects in varying degree*” (Bal 1997, p. 14).

definitions and structure of narrative

While early Russian formalist writings, like those of Propp (1928), have had little directly to offer the study of narrative structure in music video, Freytag’s (1968) dramatic triangle is significant to this present research in its description of a narrative process that moves from an expository sequence, rises through complication to a climax, then gradually falls off in intensity to a coda that resolves the crises and

delineates a new state of affairs. A version of this idea has been developed and simplified by Todorov (1977) in his definition of a minimal narrative as a move from equilibrium, through disequilibrium to a new equilibrium.

However, it is Mieke Bal's (1997) definition of a narrative as "*a series of connected events composed of language signs, caused or experienced by actors, presented as a finite, structured whole*" (p. 27), that I use in this present research to delineate narrative music videos from those, that either document an artist's performance, intercut a performance with other footage, or create a text of non sequential images that operate as an environment for the sound of the music¹². By using this definition one is able to place emphasis on the transactional relationship between the performer and the narrative. This is the feature that essentially separates narrative videos from those that suggest stories. In this research, the transactional relationship between performer and events in the narrative is also helpful in separating homodiegetic and heterodiegetic positions within the texts.

the narrative voice

While Booth (1961), Lasswell (1948) and Stern (1991) have offered views on narrative that have been useful to this present research¹³, it is the writings of Ellis (1992), Kozloff (1992), Mealing (2003) and Salen (2001) that have impacted the most significantly on the design of the narrative voices in this present project.

¹² Carlsson (1999) alternatively classifies music video into three categories: the performance vocalist inserted into one or more settings; the narrative, silent movie to a musical background where the singer may or may not lip synch the song's lyrics; and the "art clip" that offers no perceptible visual narrative and no lip synching. The difficulty with this classification is that Carlsson's first category does not indicate a significant demarcation between the documented performance (the band or artist performing before the camera) and the performance cut between a ranges of connected or seemingly disconnected imagery. This latter approach to music video is perhaps the most widely used and suggests itself as significantly less "authentic" than the filmed "live" performance.

¹³ Booth's (1961) *The Rhetoric of Fiction* offers an analysis of narrators, discourse and what has traditionally been called 'point of view'. Stern's (1991) concept of narrative point of view in television divides narration into three types, first person, third person and dramatic character. Lasswell (1948) discusses the narrator who pervades texts even when no visible presenter exists.

Ellis (1982) offers a specific consideration of narration in television when he argues that

the movement from event to event characteristic of cinema narration is radically reduced in favour of the multiplication of incident, of action-clinch and of conversation. (p. 158)

By comparing differences in systems of narration, structure and reception between cinema and television, Ellis demonstrates how television's unique forms of address propose themselves to a particular type of viewer. Ellis discusses television narrative as a form of storytelling constructed for the "glance". He suggests forms of narration in this medium exist in a uniquely repetitive environment where a final resolution is rarely achieved. Television narratives, he suggests, are essentially open-ended with certain segments containing internal coherence. In terms of music video this idea is significant because music videos, as heavily rotated narratives, may have developed specific ways of telling stories so they survive in this environment of repetition and glance.

Kozloff (1992) is concerned essentially with narrative theory and television and her writing considers objectivity and authority in television in relation to homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration. Her typology of narrators is based on the question:

Is the narrator in the story he or she tells, or is the narrator outside of the story-world? (p. 82)

This question formed the basis for negotiating the nebulous and sometimes protean demarcations between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic spaces within this present project. Kozloff's writing also discusses unique representations of time in terms of compression, ellipsis, pause and slow-motion narration, and these have all been useful considerations that are discussed later in this exegesis.

Finally, Salen (2001) and Mealing (2003) talk about the unique role of typography as a "visual voice". Salen examines how typography may display "otherness" in both letterform and use, and she discusses the

implications of its use. Mealing examines the paralinguistic “voice” of type as it has moved from still letterforms to a unique language form that operates in spatio-temporal environments¹⁴.

narrative structure and style in television advertising

In terms of considering the structure and “visual voice” of television advertising, three pieces of research have been helpful to this project.

Goldman and Papson (1996) offer a useful discussion of hypersignification in television advertising in the mid 1990s. Their analysis of reflexivity, intertextuality, and changing realist conventions are features that may equally be applied to innovations in music video design during this period.

Gerald Genette’s (1998), method for considering a narrative in terms of its heterodiegetic and homodiegetic spaces underpinned Kozloff’s (1992) demarcations of narrative sites. His writing however, offers a more extensive consideration of these spaces. His concept of homodiegetic narration may be understood as narration situated inside the world the story tells us about, and heterodiegetic narration may be seen as coming from a space and time clearly outside of this world. Because music video, and by development boy, disrupt his binary system, this present project has extrapolated his definitions to define two further spatial adaptations, embedded heterodiegetic narration and oscillating narration.

In terms of the design of *boy*, Gitlin (1987) provides perhaps the most pertinent analysis of the influence of advertising and music video design on television narrative¹⁵. He does this through a comparison

¹⁴ Type design for spatio-temporal environments is also profiled in Woolman and Bellantoni’s (1999) *Type in Motion* and Woolman’s (2000) *Sonic Graphics: Seeing Sound*. This latter publication provides a useful overview of designers experimenting with the paralinguistic nature of type at the end of the 20th century. Significant among these are Gert Dunbar of *Studio Dunbar*, Elliot Peter Earls, and *Why Not Associates*.

¹⁵ Other writers whose theories on structure in television advertising have been of interest to this research are Cook (1992), Corner (1995), Fiske (1987), Savan (1994), and Tolson (1996).

between car commercials and the music video influenced television series *Miami Vice* (1985). While this is dated material, Gitlin's consideration of issues like character blankness, displacement, display, and diversion in television advertising, have been useful in considering the design of dislocation and character in the film *boy*.

closure

While a range of writers has considered closure in narrative¹⁶, it is Neupert's (1995) analysis of closure in his study of narration and endings in cinema that has offered two considerations for this present project. Neupert discusses film in terms of open and closed texts and his observation of specific devices used in cinematic narrative, including bracketing¹⁷, and retrospection¹⁸ are useful in understanding how music video may construct meaning and cohesion from seemingly disconnected imagery.

¹⁶ Relevant studies in closure as it relates to literature are Kermode's *The Sense of Ending* (1967), Smith's *Poetic Closure* (1968) and *On the Margins of Discourse* (1978), Richter's *Fabel's End* (1974), Gerlach's *Toward the End* (1985), MacArthur's, *Extravagant Narratives* (1990), Mortimer's *La Clôture Narrative* (1985), and Torogovnick's *Closure in the Novel* (1981). Smith's and Richter's writings go beyond most literature and examine where literary criticism succeeds and where it fails to support a detailed analysis of endings. Both studies analyse texts by opposing strong methods of closure with weak ones. Both researchers argue that strong, stable closure is profiled by a definite sense of completeness and a structurally determined stylistic resolve. Smith differentiates between "endings" and "conclusions", arguing that any event may end but only a text may conclude, with this conclusion profiling at a definite "termination point". In terms of music video, Vernallis (1998) discusses the technique of creating endings that are "a compression of thematic oppositions" (p. 173) squeezed into closing shots. These, she suggests, operate as a payoff for the absence of conclusion in the text.

¹⁷ Bracketing describes the use of similar opening and closing sequences (as in *boy's* typographical, "voice over"). The term can also be applied to the use of combinations of similar elements that enable a text to establish a cyclical unity for its narrative.

¹⁸ Retrospection has also been discussed by Smith (1978), and Rimmon-Kenan (1983). Smith describes retrospective patterning where "connections and similarities are illuminated, and the reader perceives that seemingly gratuitous or random events, details and juxtapositions have been selected in accord with certain principles" (p. 120).

These concepts when applied to *boy* help to understand how the work encloses itself but also operates as a text designed for multiple viewings. Neupert's definition of retrospection was important to this present research because the idea could be projected beyond a consideration of cinema. The notion that an image's meaning might be designed to unfold or expand after it has passed, is helpful in understanding the unique systems some narrative music videos use to hold attention during repeated screenings of their texts.

influence

Because this thesis is essentially about storytelling, reading of narrative theory has been extensive. However, this present project is concerned with the methods of narration developed inside a very specific media form. Music videos have been moulded by unique environments. As a result, the research for this present project has been aided less by complete paradigms of narratology developed around literature, drama and cinema, and more by specific ideas that can be extrapolated from these analyses.

Ellis' (1992) theories of television's imagery designed for the glance, have been influential in the development of rich, simple imagery that quickly reveals its surface content. Neupert's (1995) theories on demarcation and retrospection have been helpful in explaining the film's use of enigmatic and bracketing imagery.

Kozloff (1992) and Genette's (1988) discussions of heterodiegetic and homodiegetic positioning of the narrator have been useful in explaining the spatial positioning of the story-telling voices in *boy*. Salen (2001) and Mealing's (2003) research into the nature of typography's "visual voice" have heavily influenced the use of typographical treatments in the film, both as representations of the "other" and as stylistic devices used to communicate paralinguistically, the ethos of Sam's over-ground and underground worlds.

anti-language

Research into the nature and profile of bogspeak has been bifurcate, drawing into discourse writings on linguistics and queer theory. Within this nexus, research may be divided into three broad areas, namely, lexicons and critique of gay language, writings on language form, and research into the culture and demographics of bog cruising.

lexicons and critique

Three texts which analyse gay underground language, published within a year of each other, have been especially helpful to this present research. Cage's (2003) *Gayle. The Language of Kinks and Queens: A Dictionary of Gay Language in South Africa*, presents a lexicon of gay men's language in South Africa, and contextualises this in terms of cultural and political events that have impacted on these men. The work offers some analysis of the nature of the language form through its discussion of certain features like the feminisation and reginisation of nouns.

In 2002, Baker published two books, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men* and *Fantabulosa: A Dictionary of Polari and Gay Slang*. These works grew out of a doctoral research project. Both of these books provide lexicons of the British underground gay language, Polari. Baker traces the development of this language from the words of the Molly houses, thieves' cant, and the palarley of the fairground operators, prostitutes and actors. However, of the two books, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men* offers the most scholarly analysis of the language form, discussing derivations, profile and socio/cultural features that shaped it.

Predating Baker and Cage's research is an extensive lexicon of American gay and lesbian speech compiled by Rogers in 1972. *The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon*, offers a collection of words dating back to the eighteenth century. The book profiles gay and lesbian speech from prisons, hobo culture, prostitution and the world of the queens. While it provides an extensive platform for research, its brief intro-

duction offers only a cursory analysis or explanation of the origins and cultural context of the language¹⁹.

language form

In defining and understanding bogspeak, the work of a range of theorists who have considered language varieties have been of use to the present project, including Hudson (1980), O'Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamamba (1996), Wardhaugh, (1986) and Wolfran (1991). However, it is Halliday's (1978) concept of anti-language and his study of the social values of words and phrases, which has been most helpful to this project. Halliday's definition enables one to differentiate bogspeak from the slang, argots, cant, idiolects and sociolects that have contributed to it. Baker (2002 *a&b*) draw heavily on Halliday's analyses in his writing on Polari, and although bogspeak is more specialised and localised than its British influence, Polari, with its pervading sense of oppression, brutality and depersonalisation, still has much in common with the New Zealand language form.

research into the culture and demographics of bog cruising

Perhaps the earliest significant research in to the culture of bog cruising was Humphries (1970), study *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. While much discussed because of ethical issues surrounding its methodology, his research offers an early analysis of the demographic and rituals of bog cruising in the United States of America. This study, along with sociological research by Delph in 1978, helped to profile this culture in academic discourse. More recently writing by Hollister, (1999), Ingram, (1997), and Nardi, (1999), have continued to raise issues regarding the cultural practices and politics of men who have sexual encounters with other men in public spaces. While these more recent theorists have reflected on data

¹⁹ Because this present research is concerned specifically with the language of the bogs, and not with broader gay and lesbian lexicons, other related writing on verbal communication in these communities has been useful, but less pertinent. Significant research in this area includes: Cory (1965), Farrell (1972), Gaudio (1994), Goodwin (1989), Morton (2003), Legman (1941), Lumby (1976), Moonwomon (1985), Moran (1991) Niemoeller (1965), Stanley (1970), Stearn (1965), Webbink (1981), and Young (1996).

already in existence, it is the work of gay men who are personally involved with the culture of bog cruising which has been of significant assistance to this project. Their insights help to elucidate and explain in a New Zealand context, themes and rituals within the community. Many of these writers are men who have been involved in the BEAT projects²⁰ organised by the New Zealand and Australian AIDS groups. Goddard (1990) in *The Forgotten World*, provides one of the few acknowledgements of cultural practices, now generally assumed to have passed away, but still evidenced in rural and suburban cruising communities. Jenkin (1997) provides an historical and political overview of cruising in public places in New Zealand, and Smith (1993) provides a brief documentation of dynamics and rituals used by men in these communities.

Supporting this research are the oral interviews of Howie Taylor, Vanessa Wedding and Paul De Rungs, (Ings, 2004), conducted as part of this current research project. These interviews provide a means of verifying and extending understandings about the cultural and linguistic features of the New Zealand bog-cruising community.

Descriptions of the socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics of New Zealand gay and bisexual men, who cruise public toilets, are presented in a report to the New Zealand AIDS Foundation by Chetwynd (1990). This research forms one of six reports that analysed characteristics of men according to the venues at which they make sexual contacts. This research provides the only formal statistics on the demographic profile of men who use public toilets in New Zealand for same-sex encounters. It was useful to this present research because the demographic profile it presented helped to explain why the language form bog-speak was not a replica of over-ground gay language in New Zealand. The research also confirmed that bogcruising communities not only existed in New Zealand, but are also still a relatively common phenomenon.

²⁰ The BEAT projects were interventions by trusted men into the world of the bogs. These groups, organized by region, used the culture and networks of bog cruising to disseminate information, products, and services related to sexual health and safe sex.

influence

Baker's writing on Polari is important to this research because the language form heavily influenced New Zealand bog-speak. Polari was brought into the country by British merchant seamen who visited the ports, drinking establishments and bogs, frequented by gay and bi-sexual men between the 1950s and the 1970s. Cage's work provides the only other significant analysis of the integration of this language form in a British colony. While Gayle and Polari are clearly different languages to bogspeak, they share many words and thematic profiles and these have been helpful when tracing origins and comparing uses of bog-related words outside of New Zealand.

Understanding this language form as something inextricably linked to an anti-culture, and realising that words are ways of understanding the social values of a community, have been influential in the design of the film. Initial decisions to trial the paralinguistic potential of type came from a realisation that spatio-temporal typographic treatments might be used to visually extend the semantic potential of a message.

The voices in *boy* not only use words from bogspeak, but they crackle and flow with the anti-language's dislocated, angry, acerbic, poetic, ecclesiastical nature. These words carry the anger and grace of the community in their form and movement.

Research into bogspeak inside this exegesis and appendices, has created a platform of data for analysis, from which structural, aesthetic and dramatic profiles of the film have been developed.

Boy deals with a marginalised community that is easily exploited and exoticised. For the film to have integrity, it was necessary to confirm and challenge assumptions I held about the nature and characteristics of the world in which was set. Through interviews, writing, statistical analyses and the compiling of a New Zealand lexicon of bogspeak, I was able to more effectively and authentically develop the film's discourse and story.

conclusion

A review of relevant theory, knowledge and information impacting on a creative work is often eclectic. Within this project, influence has been drawn from a wide range of professional and academic researchers operating in the realms of theory and practice.

Historical and critical studies emerging and developing since the 1980s, have sought to contextualise and examine music video and its protean nature. However, within this engagement, little attention has been paid to the creation of these texts as artistic works.

This exegesis is therefore, interested in explaining the film *boy* through a consideration of the artifact's design. While theory, knowledge and information contribute to the richness of data impacting on the project, it is the creative way these findings are used that forms a core concern of the exegesis. To understand the unique ways in which findings are orchestrated, the following section examines the process and methodology employed in the film's design.





methodology

*It is in the creation of a story,
the lifting of a story into the realms of art,
it is in this that the higher realms
of creativity reside.*

(Okri, 1997, p. 119)

This chapter considers the methodology employed to create the short film *boy*. It outlines with reference to key processes and specific experiments, the complex and interrelated nature of reflection on practice¹ as a form of heuristic research.

The chapter begins with a consideration of the specific nature of the project within the research context of creative-production². It then discusses some of the primary features of heuristic research driving the film's resolution, and finally examines these, through their appearance in the three primary arenas of ideation and development: dialogic designer's journals, sketching, and narration.

the project as creative production

Scrivener (2000a) suggests that design projects at Ph.D. level may be broadly considered under two categories, namely, *research projects* and *creative-production projects*. While both forms of research share a common concern with the generation of an artifact (or artifacts), they differ significantly in their nature and often in the research design employed in their development.

Problem solving research projects, he suggests, are generally concerned with the development of new or improved artifacts. Generally the artifact is a solution to a known problem and demonstrates a useful solution to the problem. The problem that is solved is normally recognised as such by others and the knowledge reified within the artifact can be described, transferred, and applied. This knowledge, he argues, is generally more important than the artifact.

¹ The concept of reflection in and on action and practice is profiled in Schön's (1983) *The reflective practitioner. How professionals think in action*. His writing develops an epistemology of practice that places problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry.

² The term creative production is used by Scrivener (2000a) to describe forms of Ph.D. research in design, where the work is concerned with intervention, innovation and change but its purpose is to contribute to human experience. An artifact produced is generally a response to, and manifestation of, issues, concerns and interests that reflect cultural preoccupations.

In creative-production projects however, Scrivener argues that the artifact may be more important than any “knowledge” reified in it. The knowledge he suggests “*is a by-product of the process rather than its primary objective*” (ibid., p.3). However, most significantly, in terms of research methodology, this kind of research differs from conventional problem solving design projects in that the artifact may not be generated in response to a known problem and as such may not demonstrate a solution to a problem.

The film *boy* is not a prototype. It does not seek to improve on forms of silent film design. It does not seek to position itself as a more effective artifact and it is not driven from the identification of a defined need or problem. The work may be described as original, emerging from a cultural context, contributing to human experience and being generated out of a response to a set of on-going issues, concerns and interests.³ It is the emerging and protean nature of issues and concerns that predicate a research methodology for this project that is designed to maximise the potential of disruption, intuition, reflection and unique connection.

Schön (1983) argues that when a designer makes sense of a situation that is perceived to be unique he [sic] sees it as part of an already established repertoire of examples, understandings, images, and actions. “*Seeing this situation as that one*” he suggests that the researcher “*may also do in this situation as in that one*” (p. 139).

While this allows a designer, in the generation of a creative work, to draw on past experience in the resolution of new and emerging problems, he is also actively engaged in distinct types of experiment that may be aligned with three of Schön’s definitions of experiment in practice (1983). These experiments are used to drive and change the situation. They involve rigorous testing in an effort to bring into

³ These are the features Scrivener (2000a) describes as the norms of creative production projects.



Fig. 1:11 Exploratory sketches of Arapuni streets (1999-2001). Numerous drawings were developed as a form of contemplation on the environment. These exploratory experiments considered not only the framing of worlds but also contemplatively mused with colour and texture in a non-specific manner. Significantly it was these early sketches that were finally used as influential reference points, two years later, when I framed the world of Sam's journey to the bogs and graded [coloured] this section of the film.

concord and discord the creative potential of ideas. Schön suggests that through this the researcher

must learn by reflection on the situation's resistance that his hypothesis is inadequate, and in what way, or that his framing of the problem is inadequate, and in what way. (p.153)

Schön's forms of experiment in practice

Scrivener (2000a) suggests that creative-production projects may utilise range of experiments that have been discussed by Schön (1983). Of these, four are important to the methodology employed in the resolution of this project.

exploratory experiment

The first form of experiment Schön calls exploratory. This is when an action or series of actions is taken with the purpose of seeing what emerges. This form of experiment tends to occur in this project during the initial consideration of the diegesis when large numbers of drawings, paintings, and photographs are generated as a way of both creating the central narrative of the film and considering the potential for the styling of its final aesthetic (fig. 1:1).

move-testing experiments

As a creative-production, this project also employs what Schön calls move-testing experiments. These experiments describe an action that is undertaken in a deliberate way to make a specific change. Such moves are considered in terms of the whole and then either negated or incorporated into the emerging text. In this project this form of testing profiled significantly in the editing of the shot footage, and in the development of typographical treatments for the film.

hypothesis testing experiments

Schön posits a third type of experiment, hypothesis-testing. Scrivener (2000a) suggests that this “succeeds when it effects an intended discrimination among competing hypothesis” (p. 6). In boy this type of experiment is evidenced in instances where several versions of the same



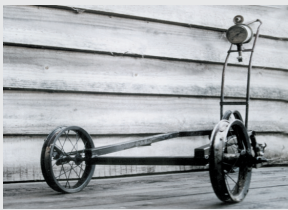


Fig. 1:12 Sketches and prototypes for Sam's trolley (2000-2002). Many pages of sketches underpinned the development of final prop used in the film. Ideally I was seeking to create an artifact that was both fragile and purposeful, something that would visually build on Sam's distorted relationship with his world. Notions of eclecticism and oddity were tested through sketches. Specifics of movement and proportionality were realised through 3D experiments. As a result, hypothesis testing was often an inter-media undertaking. If a hypothesis demonstrated potential it was refined and trialed against the emerging aesthetic of the film.

artifact (like Sam's trolley) were developed in sketch and physical form and tested in pursuit of the most effective design for purpose.

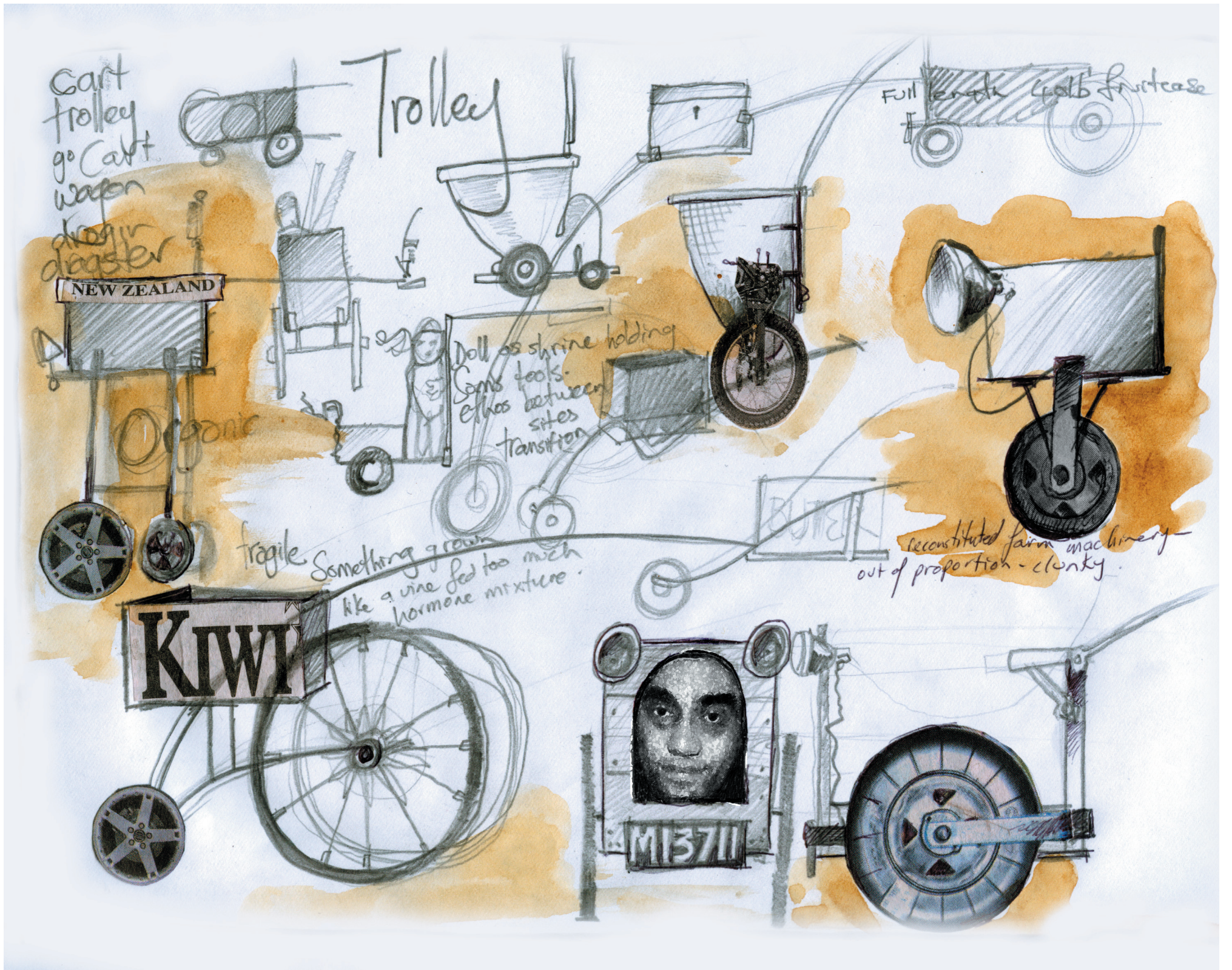
transactional relationships

Another of Schön's profiles of experiment in practice, refers to the subjective relationship between the researcher and emerging data. Scrivener (2000a) suggests that in creative-production projects

the practitioner violates the canon of controlled experiment, which calls for objectivity and distance. The practitioner's relation to the situation is transactional. The situation is shaped, but in conversation with it, so that his own models and appreciations are also shaped by it. (p.6)

The transactional process involved in this project meant that as one aspect was configured, it served to configure not only other aspects, but also the whole itself. In turn, the dynamic nature of transactional relationships meant that emerging work constantly changed and created change. Experiments were not discrete, insular interventions, but part of an interconnected dynamic that led the project forward. This process cannot be considered as linear because interventions affected (and often undid) past solutions, causing new patterns and relationships to surface and new networks of imagery to be developed. The transactional nature of the research meant that "the self" was also part of the dynamic of change. Feelings of euphoria, confidence, and despair resulted from the success or failure of experiments and at times the sheer complexity of the patterns developing in the work became creatively, intellectually and emotionally exhausting.

This project involved a complex level of analysis and synthesis within emerging bodies of data. It sought out potential patterns and congruencies within this information, and from this, projected new questions back in to the project. However, this processing was not objective; it was subjectively reflective. It was intimately connected to the researcher's own values, feelings, and experiences.



While *boy* is not strictly autobiographical, much of the decision-making was based on recollections and reflections on personal experience. I grew up in the community in which the story was filmed. I knew the streets, the pub, the school, and the hot pools, because they were places woven through my childhood. The interviews I conducted to build Sam's world of the bogs, were with friends. The language form they used (that I designed as the typographical profile of the film) was a language I had learned as an adolescent. The position I adopted in the process of gathering and verifying the lexicon that fed key questions and concerns in the project was that of an inside researcher⁴.

Finally, the completed text is not a fixed, objective construction for disseminating information but a film designed to provoke reflection, through its deliberate alignment of incident, structure, and aesthetic.

Much of the decision-making leading to refinements in the text, was 'felt'. It came from long periods of contemplation on selected contexts, events and emerging experiments. These were often transformed intuitively. This is because as both Schön and Scrivener suggest

there is a recognition that the creator's interest is in transforming the situation (i.e. psychological, emotional and created) to something better (e.g., equilibrium between intention and realization).

(Scrivener, 2000a, p. 7)

conclusion

In summary this research is located in the arena of the creative production because it contains specific features of this type of research. The research differs from conventional problem-solving design projects because the artifact is not driven from a need to address a known problem and as such it does not demonstrate a solution to a problem. The creative text is more important than any "knowledge" reified in it, the knowledge being a by-product of the process rather than its primary objective.

⁴The introduction to the appendix 2 bog-speak provides a more detailed discussion of the methodology and rationale employed in compiling this lexicon.

Significantly, in terms of approach, the researcher's relationship to the data is subjective and the processing of this data is transactional in nature. Within this relationship three forms of experimentation in practice are utilised. *Exploratory experiments*, where an action or series of actions are taken to see what emerges, is supplemented by two more focused approaches: *move testing experiments*, with their emphasis on deliberate actions affecting specific changes; and *hypothesis testing* as a method of discriminating between competing potential solutions.

Having established the research project as creative production and profiled the main methods of experiment employed in its development, it is helpful now to consider the most appropriate methodology for the project and the rationale supporting its employment.

research method

Schön (1983) suggests that the designer is often engaged in research where typically, the making process is a complex discourse between practice and reflection.

There are more variables-kinds of possible moves, norms, and interrelationships of these-than can be represented in a finite model. Because of this complexity, the designer's moves tend, happily or unhappily, to produce consequences other than those intended. When this happens, the designer may take account of the unintended changes he [sic] has made in the situation by forming new appreciations and understandings and making new moves. (p. 79)

Schön's analysis of the nature of this type of research was something I only discovered after the project started. Initially I had begun with a fixed question that I sought to test and answer through a series of analyses and experiments⁵.

⁵ The initial question framed in the application to the AUT Doctoral Studies Board was: *What are the typical structural profiles of narrative music videos as communicative texts and how can these structures be tested and utilised in the development of a new type of silent film?* (Ings, 2000, p. 2)

However, I rapidly encountered a series of significant blockages to the creative alternatives I was able to trial, and found myself illustrating a structural formula that could be tested in a linear fashion, rather than generating a significant contribution to human experience. As the project developed I realised that the most significant research was being generated out of a response not to one, stable question or the pursuit of a fixed “truth”, but to a set of what were rapidly becoming mutable and ongoing issues, concerns, and outcomes. Wood (1998) suggests that

responsible and thoughtful modes of design practice are less dependent upon permanent ‘truths’ in the academic sense as they are better governed by informed and situated acts of judgment in which there is seldom a predictable-i.e. ‘stable’, ‘durable’ or ‘certain’- answer to important questions which occur in a given design task. (p. 8)

Schön (1983) also discusses this phenomenon when he suggests that

the practitioner evaluates his experiment in reframing the problematic situation not only by his ability to solve a new problem he has set but by his appreciations of the unintended effects of action, and especially his ability, in conversation with the situation, to make an artifact that is coherent and an idea that is understandable. (p. 136)

This pursuit of coherency depends heavily on the resolution of issues that emerge as a result of ongoing decisions. The film was not an inherited, written script that was then shot-listed, storyboarded, filmed and edited against a formula drawn from a quantitative investigation. It was an emersion in an atmosphere that raised questions from the outset and with each new development posed new problems that grew out of reflections on the emerging ethos and structural features of the artifact. It was in this sense, transactional in the way it evolved.

Scrivener (2000a) suggests that in creative production doctoral projects

what one is dealing with is a topic of interest.. and creative objectives... that resist, throughout the programme of work, reduction to a single problem or solution.... A project's topic of interest and goal may change as the work progresses. This occurs for a number of reasons: first, the student is usually exploring manifold interests and goals and the priorities given to them may change as the work progresses; second, new issues and goals may emerge in response to the work in progress. (p. 3)

The protean and subjective nature of this project had a fundamental influence on its research design. Guba (1990) argues there are two philosophical considerations a researcher must address before designing a methodology for a practice-led project. He suggests the choice of methodology should be a consequence of epistemology and ontology. Thus, the methodology is developed inside an awareness of what the researcher considers knowable (or potentially knowable), what can be researched (or is irresolvable through practice alone), and an understanding of the relationship between the researcher and the knowable.

Thus a positivist paradigm of inquiry is profiled by realist ontology (reality exists as an external phenomenon), and an objectivist (or detached) epistemology. In contrast, a constructivist paradigm is profiled by relativist ontology (the acceptance of multiple realities that may exist as social and personal constructions) and a subjectivist epistemology.

Gray (1996) says

[w]ith regards to epistemological issues the practitioner is the researcher. From this informed perspective, they identify researchable problems raised in practice, and respond through practice. The role is multifaceted- sometimes the generator of the research material... sometimes the co-researcher, facilitator and research manager.... In the role of 'practitioner-researcher', subjectivity, involvement, reflexivity is acknowledged and the main interaction of the researcher with the research material is recognized. (p. 13)

This recognition of the designer's position as an intimate and reflective generator of research material initially caused a disruption to the proposed research design. I was confronted by the fact that I was dealing with a subjective system of protean, enquiry-based discovery for which no formula existed. Wood (1998), Gray (1996), Scrivener (2000a) and Kleining and Witt (2001), have all considered the implications of this type of research in design-based projects.

Such a methodology resides in the definition of heuristics as a qualitative method of solving problems for which no formula exists. Heuristics therefore, is perhaps the most appropriate description of the methodology employed in this thesis.

heuristics

Heuristics comes from the Greek word *heuriskein* meaning "to discover" and it relates to the ability to find knowledge, patterns or a desired result by intelligent questioning and intuition rather than by the application of pre-established formulae.

Heuristics often involves using knowledge gained by experience. Wood (1998) suggests that because heuristics is more concerned with discovery, than with proof, it is a more appropriate method for many designers because it does not involve a series of linear, finite questions. Scrivener (2000a) suggests that the non-linear nature of creative-production Ph.D. projects requires approaches that afford considerable flexibility to accommodate the "*manifold interests and goals and the priorities given to them*" (p. 3). He suggests that

in creative-production, multiple issues and goals may be appropriate and it should be acknowledged that these may change, grow, and be given different emphasis as the work proceeds (ibid, p. 9)

Kleining and Witt's theories on optimising the chance of discovery

In much creative work the ability to question the potential of an idea in many ways, using intuition and empathetic insight is imperative. Kleining and Witt (2001), suggest that the potential for optimising the chance of discovery in heuristic research may be realised through the consideration of four mutually dependent rules. The first two

refer to the interaction between the researcher and the research topic. The second pair relate to the relationship between data collection and data analysis.

First, they argue that a researcher must be open to new concepts, being willing to change preconceptions to data collection and analysis. In terms of this project this includes moving between sketching, photographing, using written language, journals, immersing oneself in constructed environments, multiple re-editing, trialing versions of an idea, and discussing emerging outcomes with others. In exploring concepts then, the researcher needs to be willing to instigate new and diverse ways of exploring.

Second, they suggest that the researcher must be prepared for the research question to change during the research process. They argue that the research question may only be fully known after being successfully explored. This often means regarding changes as a positive sign of accumulating knowledge and insight. The authors suggest when this situation occurs, *“the research person is advised to continue the research under new headings despite institutional and planning problems that may arise”* (ibid. p. 7). While their consideration of the disruption is framed inside advice for non-design based disciplines⁶, changes in both the preliminary research question and those emerging out of reflection on developments within it, meant that substantial restructurings were often required, sometimes inside very compressed timeframes. A significant example of this was the need, because of time and resource constraints, to suddenly cut carefully integrated scenes out of the film while we were shooting. This meant sudden and substantial restructurings of character and narrative development, and the loss of scenes that had been embedded into both the linear flow and the developing diegesis of the film.

⁶ Kleining and Witt (2000) developed their approach to qualitative heuristics at the University of Hamburg in an attempt to reintroduce the qualities of *“systematic exploration and discovery into psychological and sociological research”* (p. 1).



The need to maintain a high level of flexibility as discoveries unfolded, and new questions emerged can be illustrated by the following episode in the development of the film.

These photographic mock-ups from November 2000 illustrate threads of both the narrative and stylistic approach to the film that were dropped during shooting. In the original narrative the driver's daughters frequented the dump as an almost ghost-like intrusion. These children, in fact, discovered Sam's small workshop of broken dolls and told their father.

During the filming, it became evident that I had over embellished the narrative, and both time and financial restraints meant that I had to quickly renegotiate how the story could be told without this incident. Originally, the world of the dump was to be shot through translucent veneers of coffee stained paper. With the removal of the scene I had to untangle the aesthetic and narrative sequence from the film. This meant removing the filtered appearance of supporting sequences and suddenly moving the question from *"How do I build tension through a decayed, milky, predatory watching"* to *"How do I build tension through threat?"* I was forced to restructure an enigmatic watchfulness and in the flow of a now more compressed narrative, to create a world between two antagonists (Sam and the driver) with no third character buffer. The result was the almost antithetically gritty, tense, and broodingly violent scene of Sam's hiding from the driver in the dump.



Fig. 1:13 Indicatives of identical twins in the dump (2000).

Kleining and Witt's third basic rule for optimising the chance for discovery in heuristic research, is the need to create maximum structured variation of perspectives; avoiding one-sidedness of representation and being open to importing variables into the research as it develops. In creative-production projects like *boy*, this involves being willing to trouble one's preconceived and successful practices in developing work through constantly changing data collecting and interpreting practices including media selection, scale, formulae, narrative positions, working patterns and environments (fig. 1:14).

The fourth rule Kleining and Witt (2001) posit is the need to discover similarities and patterns by frequently asking questions of the material, locating similarities, analogies or homologues within the diverse data that are collected and processed. This follows Simmel's discussion on method (1908) where he states that "*out of complex phenomena, the homogeneous will be extracted... and the dissimilar paralyzed*" (p. 1). Kleining and Witt suggest that the success of the procedure is often measured by the richness of the result, its cohesive patterns and inter-subject validity. In *boy*, it was this rule that became the most active determiner of direction and resolution. The film, because of its highly compressed nature, needed to seamlessly integrate a complex narrative into a smooth but diverse sequence of images. Relationships and subtle shifts in methods of telling or emphases within the narrative were constantly being questioned back against aesthetic and narrative patterns emerging in the text.

variation of perspectives

Having established an heuristic paradigm for developing the research method for this project, it is useful to consider the specific arenas of data gathering and processing that were brought to bear on the problem-solving contained within it. This is because they illustrate the application of the methodology. These arenas may be considered as three generic but interrelated systems employed in the ideation and development of the work. Although they each employ fundamental methods of enquiry, indicative of heuristic research, each processes data in unique ways.



Fig. 1:14 Still frame from *The Coopers* 1997.

Traditionally my approach to film and theatre narrative has employed the gradual presentation of a range of episodes that resolve into coherence as the text progresses. In *The Coopers*, as in my writing for theatre, the work developed in a linear fashion from a written script.

However, *boy's* development was not linear. It grew through the creation of very dislocated images. I sought to think in pictures, to feel a world of possibility through marks on paper and composited photographic indicatives. Other variables imported into the research as a way of opening it up to a multiple range of perspectives, included working with a complete cast and crew with whom I was unfamiliar, generating images inside new media (35mm film, Flash and Final Cut Pro software, medium format analogue photography and handmade filters), designing, building and dressing the sets and props, and working in unique and unfamiliar ways out of a shifting range of studios in Auckland, Kihikihi, Arapuni, Henderson, Putaruru and Te Awamutu.

It is this diversity of approach that has been used to create the maximum structured variation of perspectives discussed by Kleining and Witt. The three arenas utilised in the development of this project are the dialogic designer's journal, sketching, and narration.

dialogic designer's journal

The journal⁷ is a flexible, non-linear system of data gathering and processing that enables unique systems of grouping and dialogic reflection on emerging ideas.

Kleining and Witt (2001) see heuristic research as a process of dialogue. They suggest that this type of research has

procedures that are not linear but dialectical. We 'ask' our material 'questions' in a similar way one may ask a person, receiving 'answers' and questioning again' text should be interrogated from as many different perspectives as possible and the answers analyzed as mentioned above. (p .3)

Mach (1905) suggests that this dialogic procedure is used as a means of adjusting the epistemic structure of the researcher to the phenomenon's structure.

Newbury (2001) suggests that journals as approaches to research, are distinct from academic report writing in that they do not "generally attempt to present the process of research in the linear fashion that is typical of research paper writing" (p. 1). Instead they often employ subjective systems of data collecting and processing. Marshall and Rossman, (1995) suggest they integrate elements of "the real 'inner drama' of research, with its intuitive base, its halting time-line, and its extensive recycling of concepts and perspectives" (p. 15).

⁷ The journal has a long, educational and professional history in design research. In this exegesis the term is used to describe a bound or unbound document that records and reflects on data gathered and processed in the development of solutions to problems. The journal's main purpose in this project is two fold. It facilitates the research process through recording observations, impressions and questions as they occur, and also stimulates reflective thinking about the research.

The designer's journal is used in this project to enable this non-linear, dialogic questioning of data. It is able to do this partly because it can group recordings in different pools of data and reflection. The journals used in this project are not necessarily bound documents. Some are folders that allow for regrouping of images and notes and some are simply large sheets of paper that when pinned onto a wall, allow connections to be drawn between large bodies of information. Because the journals used are generally loose leaved, I am able to move information around, as the research progresses through phases of data collection and synthesis. New patterns, emotions and areas of commonality can be identified by cutting, photocopying and re-pasting written thoughts and images. It is through this that significant connections begin to occur (fig. 1:15).

The journal also has the advantage of being reflective, reflexive and portable. The journals used in this project record observations, impressions and reflections from the outset of the research. Newbury (2001) argues that the journal is *"a self reflexive and media literate chronicle of the researcher's entry into, engagement with and departure from the field"* (p. 7). Because of the portability of a journal, it is a helpful method of recording information in a relatively non-threatening manner⁸. At the beginning of this project I spent considerable time recording buildings, people and locations in these documents. These recordings were media discursive, moving between sketching, drawing, creative writing, small paintings and photography. Prosser and Schwartz (1998) make a distinction between a visual diary [subjective] and a visual

⁸ While the approach is unobtrusive, it also operates in an almost antithetical manner. A man sitting down with a sketchpad attracts tentative attention in a small community and over the initial months of this process, many locals dropped down to look at the work and talk. They provided a lot of specific information about the locations and in return, I gave them copies of drawings of their houses for their own collections. (The originals will be given to them at the conclusion of the project as a token of my appreciation for their support). This reciprocal approach to information gathering over time, altered my position within the community and afforded a far more detailed level of access to data than could have been gained by simply operating as a dispassionate observer.



Fig 1:15 Studio walls in Auckland (2003) and Arapuni (2002). These walls, typical of many scattered through locations where this project was processed, contain drawings, notes, photographs and artifacts, removed from journals and sketch pads and recomposed in larger space environments where relationships between data could become more flexibly discursive. Schaltzman and Strauss (1973), suggest that journals have recording tactics that provide for an ongoing developmental dialogue. It is through the unbinding of traditional journal structures that I was able to reflect on key questions by re-grouping and re-ordering of information.



Fig. 1:16 Sketch of the driver's house (2001). This is one of many drawings of the village where the film was shot. It records both details of the location owners and projections [added drawings of cars and shrubbery]. These sketches test the site's potential in communicating the ethos of the respectable but loveless, driver's family.

record [objective], though I would suggest that with designer's journals these distinctions could be somewhat blurred. Although research is generally experienced subjectively⁹, the journal is also a method of recording site-specific information. This includes gathering technical data like light direction, shadow densities, location ownership, and information relating to seasonal changes accessed from local people who stop to talk with you while you are working. These notes are generally scrawled down onto pictures rather than written on separate pages as it helps to facilitate a quick reference system when I need to follow up on information at a later date. (Fig. 1:16)

Where a site requires a level of contemplation, in general it is drawn. Such a process of dialogic experimentation engages me in contemplation, problem solving, problem posing and consideration of the physical properties of the site. Because this is not a quick process, it affords time to consider the location's potential through close observation and suggestion (trialing imaginary and potential set dressings). Where a location simply requires records of lighting, angle or technical information, I generally photograph, either with a Polaroid or digital camera. This allows me to enter notes on location including audio [atmos.] and notes on changing light directions not captured in the image (fig. 1:17).

This system of recording technical data in conjunction with the image means that when parts of journals are re-contextualised (for example, by the pages being pinned onto a wall), technical information carries with it the graphic recording of the environment, date or event that was being documented. This is part of what Newbury argues as the need for journals and field diaries to develop systems for categorising data. This view profiles strongly in writing on diary as a methodology in areas like anthropology and education, (Burgess, 1981; Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Newbury, (2001); and Sanjek, 1990). In the dialogic journal this facility for categorisation is often not linear.

⁹ Hastrup (1992) notes "fieldwork is situated between autobiography and anthropology" (p. 117) and Clifford and Marcus, (1986), and Newbury, (2001) suggest that the voice of the researcher is intimately linked to the data.

Fig. 1:17 Recording of data on Garrison St Arapuni (2001). It is down this road that Sam eventually rides his bike, with the angel strapped on to the handlebars.



sketching

While the dialogic journal affords flexibility in the way one might locate and construct potential syntheses, interfacing with this arena, sketching is a specific form of creative processing, reflection and communication that is integral to the development of this project.

As a methodology, sketching in this project may be seen as having three significant, (and not always clearly demarcated) uses: contemplation, processing and indication.

Rogers (2000) notes that during conceptual stages of design, sketching is widely used to express ideas and Temple (1994) argues that the sketch also has the potential to operate as a facilitator and recorder of creative thinking and thereby provides opportunities for improved evaluation and renegotiation of problems.

The three purposes of sketching used as a method of researching this present project differ widely in application and purpose. While sketching as a method of processing and communicating ideas has been widely discussed, (Ferguson, 1992; Goel, 1995; Goldschmidt, 1991; Herbert, 1998; Hwang & Ullman, 1990; Pipes, 1990; Purcell & Gero, 1998; Rogers, 2000; and Scrivener, 2000b), much of the emphasis of research in the area of design has focused on what Rogers (2000) considers are three primary forms: concept sketching, presentation drawing, and drawing for manufacture¹⁰.

Contemplative sketching however, does none of these things. It sits uneasily in paradigms focused on refinement and questioning because its approach does not contain a clear direction. It is used in this project as a unique way of immersing the designer in the “feel” of an environment. This is what Rogers (2000) refers to as using sketching

¹⁰ Other theorists have developed alternative, yet related demarcations. Ferguson (1992) identifies the *thinking sketch* (that designers use to focus and guide non-verbal thinking), the *prescriptive sketch* (developed by a designer to direct a draftsman in the making of a finished drawing), and the *talking sketch* (used during exchanges between the designer and other professionals in order to clarify complex or confusing parts of the drawing). Goel (1995) divides designer sketches in to *vertical transformations* (sketches that move thinking from one idea to a more rigorous consideration of the same idea), *lateral transformations* (sketches that move thinking from one idea to a slightly different idea) and *duplications* (sketches that move from one drawing to a ‘type-identical’ drawing).

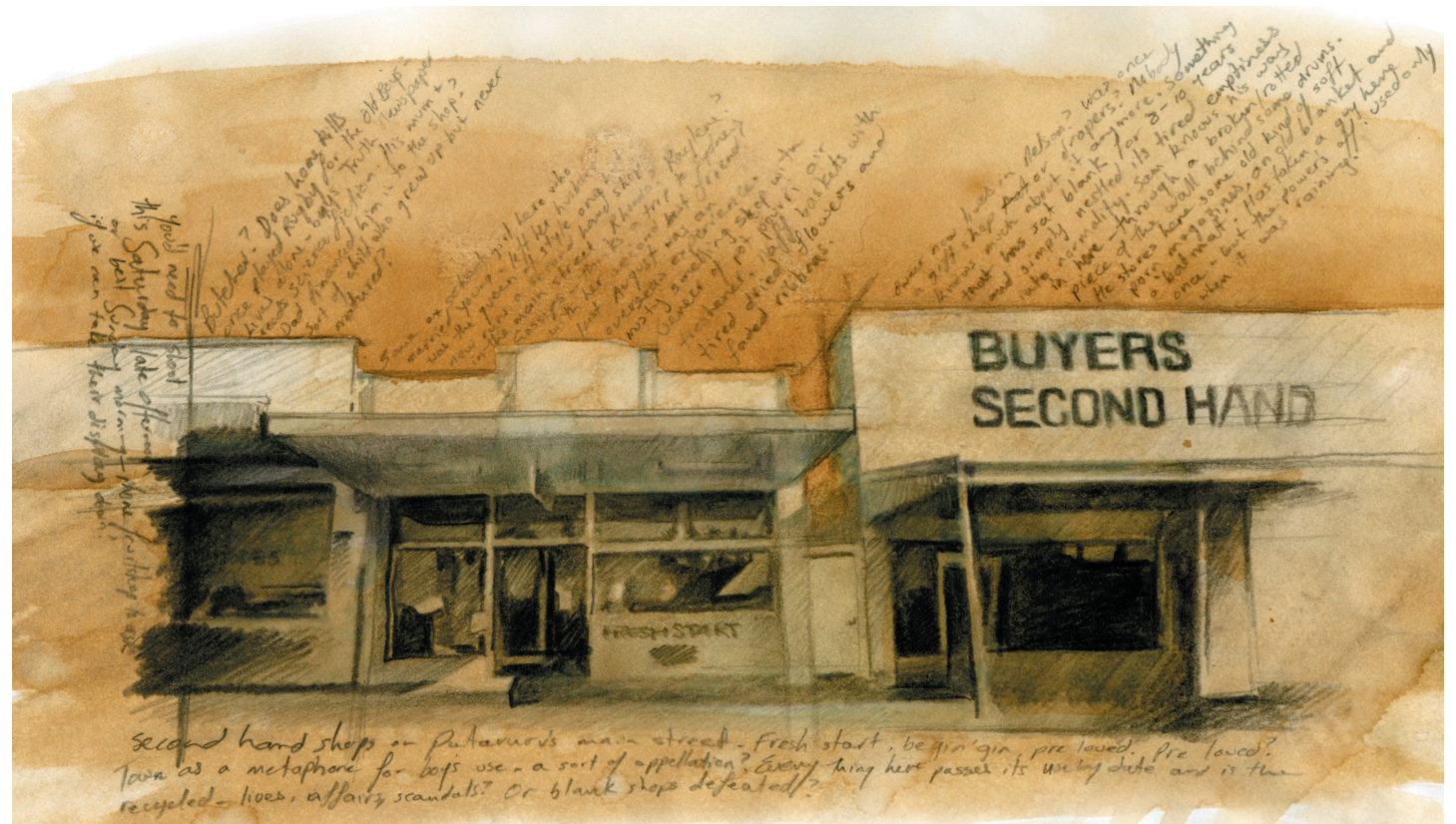
Contemplative sketching is generally very slow. On average most of the drawings I do when working this way involve up to two hours of quiet, concentrated thinking. Through the rhythm of drawing one leaves oneself open to reflections on the potentials of the location (fig. 1:18). Theorists like Cassie and Drake (1990) and Miller (1993) argue the importance of the contemplative approach to visualisation and creative thinking. Miller (1993) suggests that

Dipped car - sunk of the street. Apeiron. The kind of brutal indifference - bearing
 a defeated aspect outside on the footpaths. This is a car of the former Times houses
 where for one big wife or so. The older kids hang round - then Rasta music and the
 dank smell of mucky upholstery on the porch. The curtains are drawn but I am
 being watched while I sketch.



A kind of nightmarish vicarage - covered but enduringly
 a reminder of the strength - techs-terrace - a few beers, right?
 something the head in an arm. Not back soon.

These sketches demonstrate reflection on the ethos of the world from which they were drawn. The shops have notes recorded on them about fictional incidents that might have occurred in the location. Although none of the incidents created in this sketch appeared in the final narrative, the image is indicative of how, in the pursuit of internal coherency, the research scoped broadly and then through reflection and refinement tested hypotheses against the emerging structure of the film. In the final text, I eventually depicted the ethos of the town using the uniformity of a road of inhabited, state houses. This was because rather than a deserted, built environment, these images posited the sense of community as the agent of oppression.

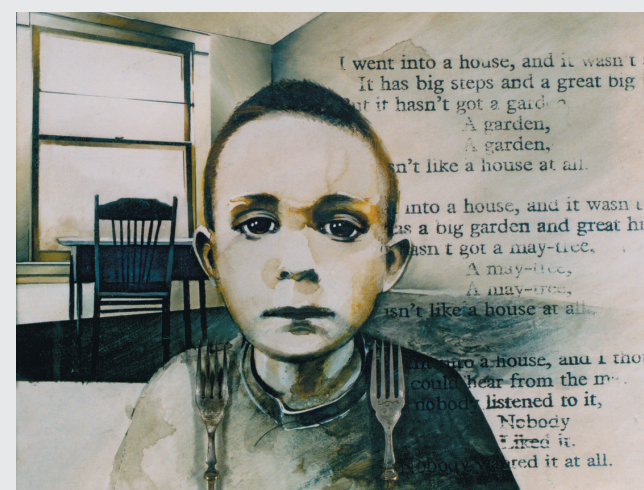




During the recording and interpretation of details, these sketches afford one time to sit and consider in detail what places might “feel” like on film, and in the process of the drawing, they suggest fictional incidents that might have occurred in the environment. These sketches are generally of locations and artifacts one comes across serendipitously during the process of scouting an environment.

A similar, contemplative form of sketching is employed in the creation of characters in the film. Over the four years spent developing the narrative, I built Sam’s character through contemplation on, and through, drawing. I thought about his childhood and the journey he made to where he was in the film. It was from this continued reflection through the development of these works that a decision was made to present Sam at two ages in the film. On the road he appears as a lonely but innocent boy who tells of his mother’s death and takes the driver’s jacket into safe-keeping. In other parts of the film, Sam appears as an adolescent (with residual traces of the child in him), but now exposed very early, to the sophistication of adult duplicity. These contemplative sketches were generally developed in my studios as the images were essentially fictional works and took few reference points beyond my imagination and the occasional use of a “base model”. The studio location also allowed me to consider his character through a much wider range of media (media that would be difficult to use on location). (See fig. 1:19).

Fig. 1:19 Contemplative drawings and paintings of Sam (1999-2003). These are generally media discursive works used to trace a fictional childhood. I was seeking to determine the development and “look” of a child who ages before his time, somebody who is watchful but locked inside himself. It is from these drawings that the almost emotionless “look” of Sam was developed.





Paintings of Sam from childhood to adolescence. Oil on canvas, watercolour and dead leaves on card and acrylic on wood. Facing page, graphite pencil and coffee sketches.



process sketching

Scrivener (2000b) suggests that

although it may be debatable whether sketches, via perception, are a driving force for discovery or simply aid creative cognition... it is becoming clear that sketching and cognition are closely coupled. (p. 1)

Rogers (2000) argues that the sketch

possesses the potential to act as both a facilitator and recorder of creative acts, presenting opportunities for improved evaluation and the restating of problems. (p. 452)

In this project sketching was used to ideate, develop, and test hypotheses in several areas. For the development of the shrines that divided the film into its three sections¹¹, sketching was used as a method of trialing out and refining generic approaches. See figs 1:20 & 1:21 (over leaf).

An early idea was to have the shrines revealing Sam’s sexuality. The hypothesis tested was that they might contribute a counterpoint to the dominant over-ground narrative. However, as these sketches developed it became evident that the approach was too heavy handed and they genericised rather than personalised Sam’s sexuality.

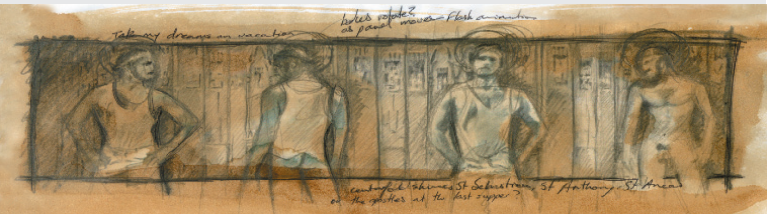
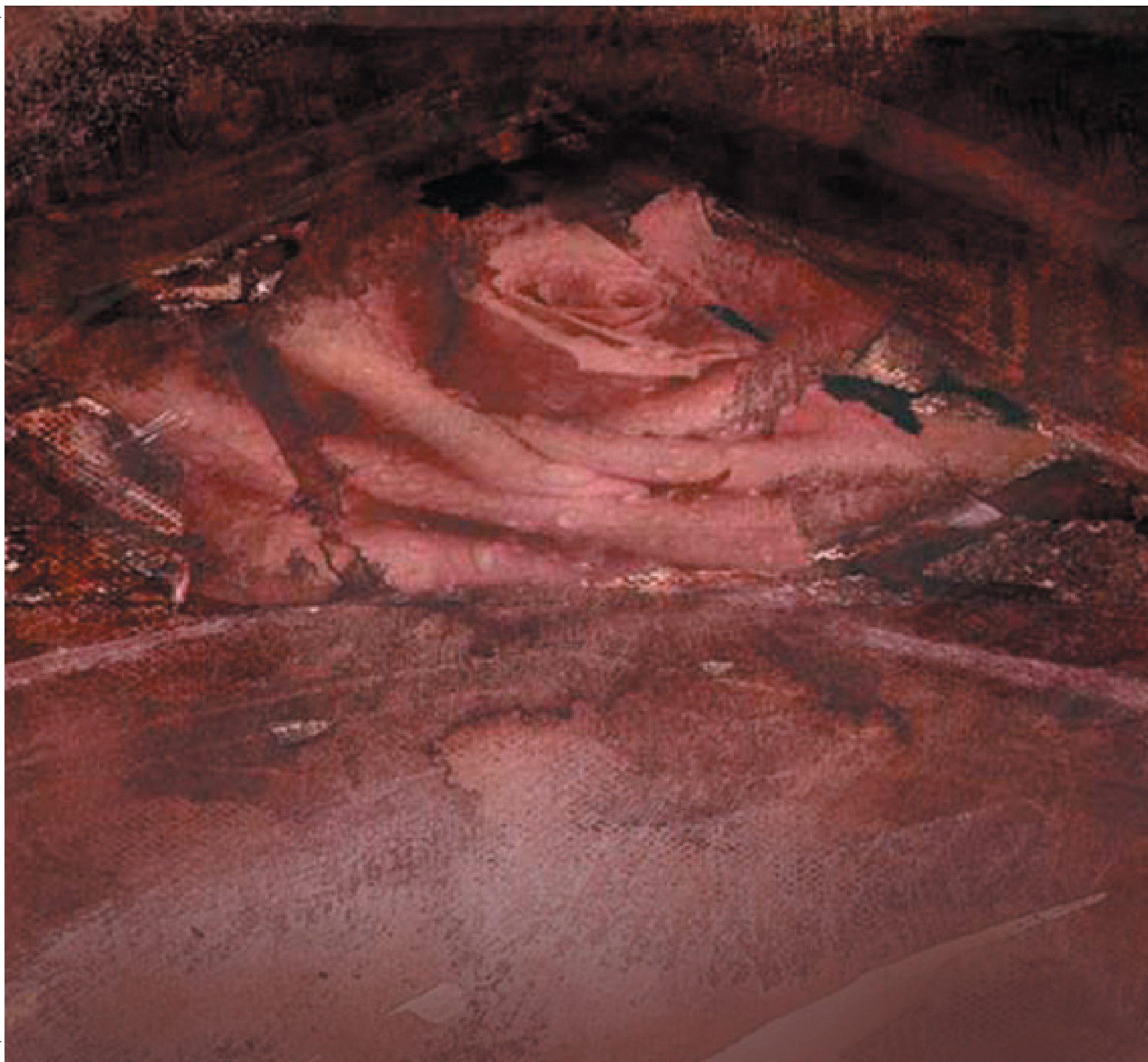


Fig. 1:20 Above and opposite, rejected approaches to the shrine's design as a sexual fantasy.

¹¹ Originally there were to be five shrines intersecting the film in a manner reminiscent of a verse’s discourse with the narrative of a ballad. While these shrines had a generic structure, each served an increasingly disturbed purpose. The first was to introduce the main characters, the second reflected on the death of the hitchhiker, the third profiled the pressure building in the school, the fourth dealt with the rape of the young woman in the pub, and the final shrine depicted the disturbed sleep of the guilty. As the film developed, these shrines were pared back to two because, instead of allowing some “breathing time” in the story, they had begun to impact too heavily on the actual narrative of the film.





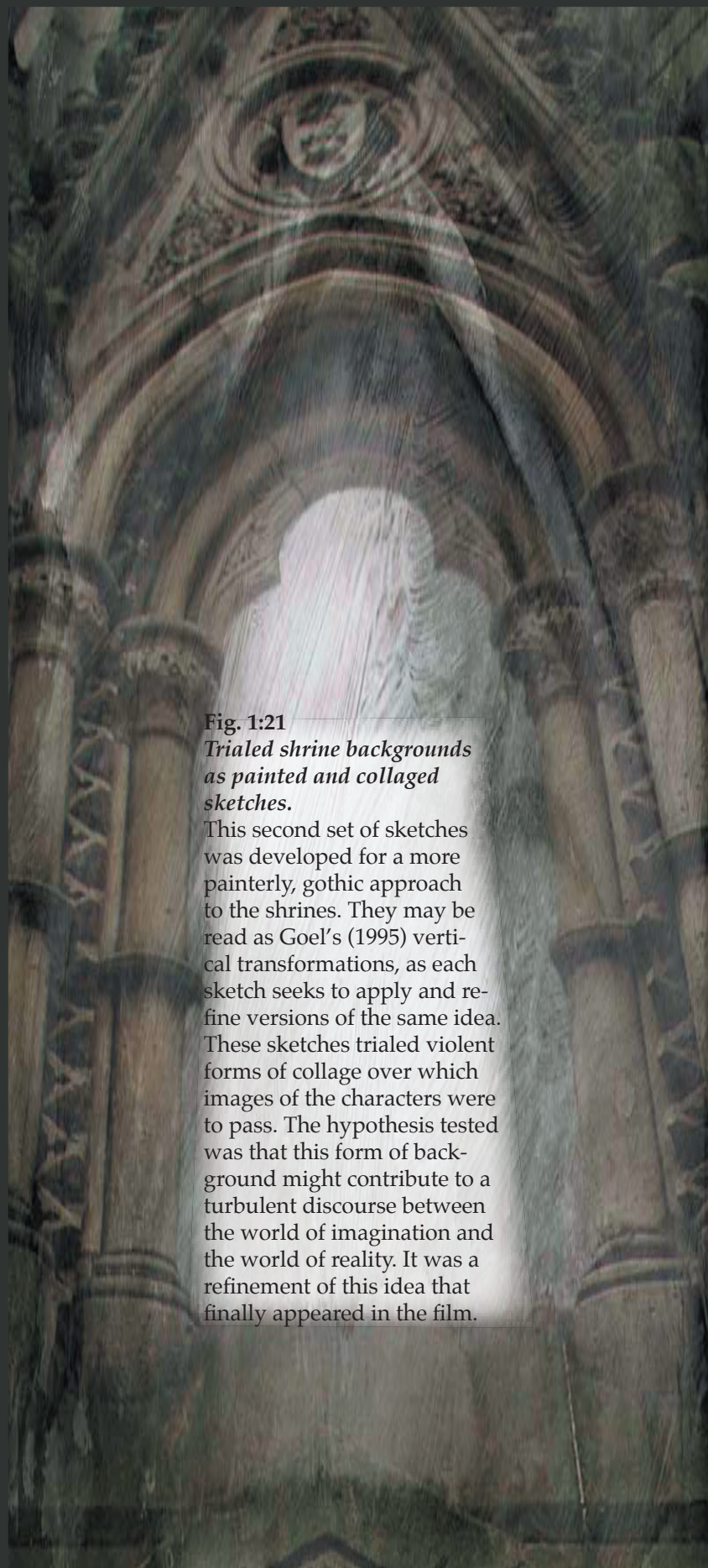
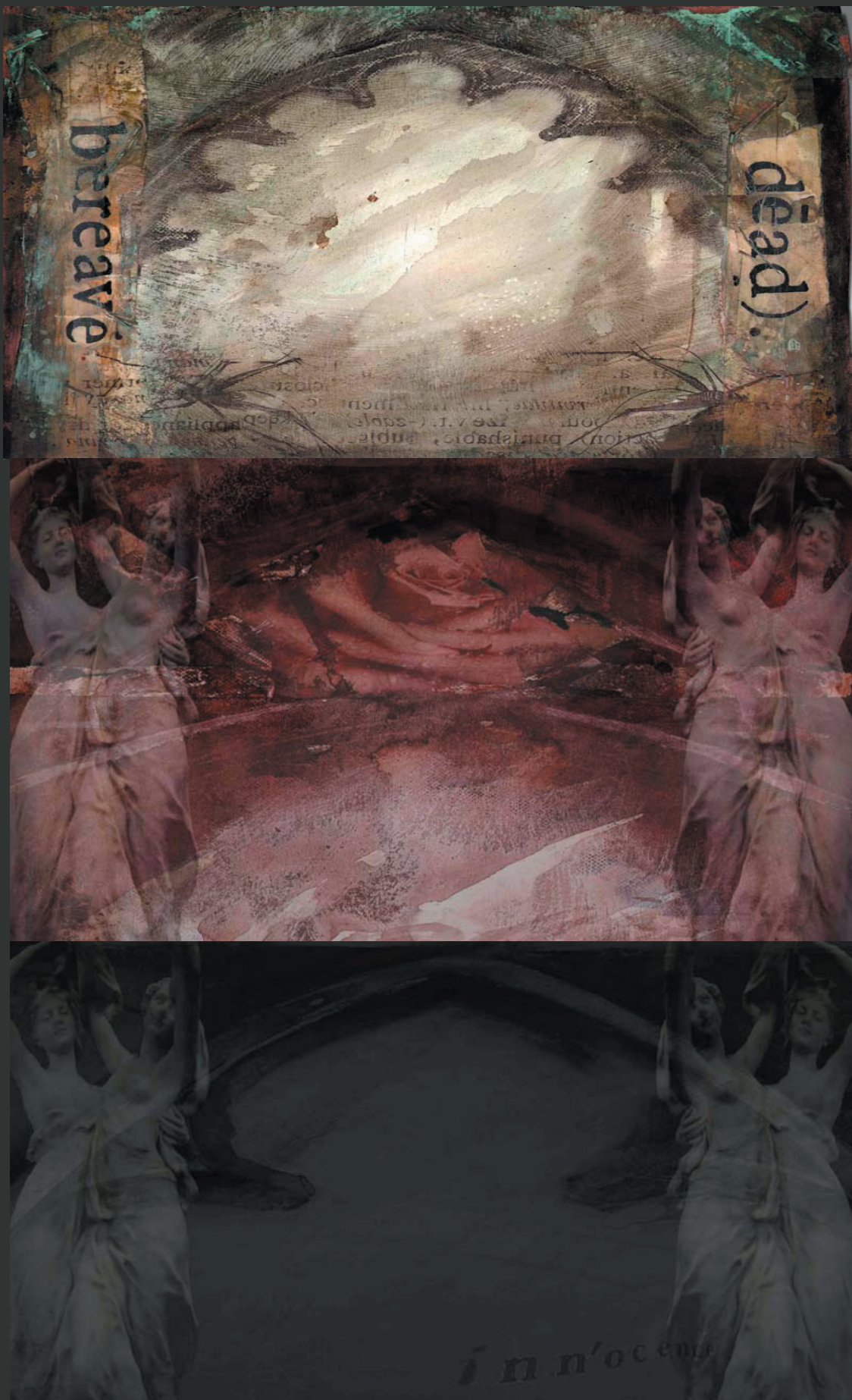


Fig. 1:21
Trialed shrine backgrounds as painted and collaged sketches.
 This second set of sketches was developed for a more painterly, gothic approach to the shrines. They may be read as Goel's (1995) vertical transformations, as each sketch seeks to apply and refine versions of the same idea. These sketches trialed violent forms of collage over which images of the characters were to pass. The hypothesis tested was that this form of background might contribute to a turbulent discourse between the world of imagination and the world of reality. It was a refinement of this idea that finally appeared in the film.

Fig. 1:22 Indicative sketch of hitchhiker's costume (2002). This sketch is designed to suggest style, print pattern and movement potential of the costume. However it is not heavily prescriptive.

Fig. 1:23 Early indicative thumbnails (2002). These very quick sketches suggest possible shots in the opening scene of the film. Sketches like these were used in initial discussion with the director of photography.



Fig. 1:23

indicative sketching

Indicative sketching may be compared to Ferguson's *talking sketch*. On the surface this form of sketching might not be considered integral to the generation of new perspectives, especially when it is used as Ferguson (1992) suggests, "to clarify complex and possibly confusing parts of a drawing" (p. 27). However, filmmaking is often a discursive undertaking where as a director and designer, one is working closely with other creative participants. If a sketch simply operates as a system of clarification it can bypass the potential synergy in collaborative visions of a scene. Because indicative sketching in this project sought to suggest parameters as a means of stimulating discourse, its form is generally very different to the other two types of sketching. While contemplative sketching is often quite detailed, and processive sketching comparatively focused, in this project, indicative sketching is often profiled by its vague, incomplete and generic¹² style. (See figs 1:22 & 1:23).

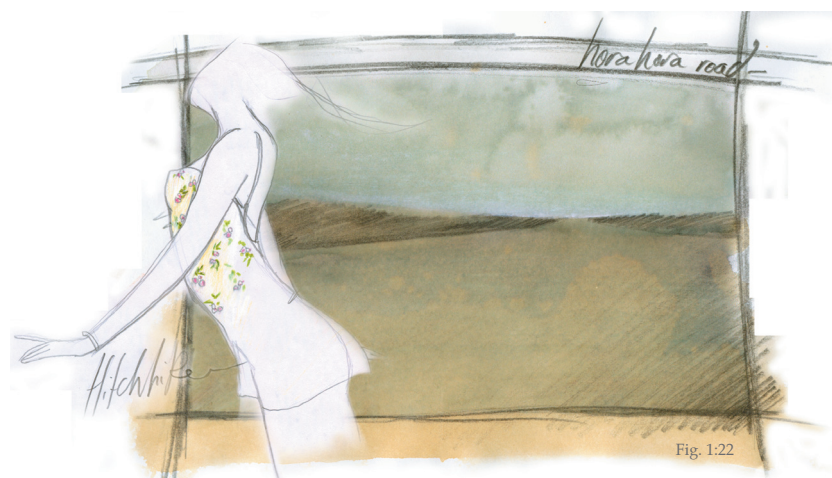


Fig. 1:22

¹² By generic I mean having little specific attention paid to personality or emotion. Unlike other forms of sketching, I use indicative sketches as guides and catalysis for discussion and reflection. Rogers (2000) suggests that discourse that moves too quickly into vertical sketching can often result in fixation. This idea may be similarly applied to moving overly prescriptive drawing into the realm of synergetic discourse. Too much focused detail can often prove restraining and because of this, this form of freehand indicative sketching differs substantially from the self-explanatory representations of product artifacts and product sub-assemblies employed by many engineers and product designers.

narration

Closely related to, but as an extension of indicative sketching, is the use of narration in the development of creative projects.

Schön (1983) says

drawing and talking are parallel ways of designing, and together make up what I will call the language of designing. The verbal and non-verbal dimensions are closely connected. (pp. 80-81)

In this project narration as discourse, both with self and with others was significant, because it was used as a method of reframing situations.

Schön (ibid., p. 141) discusses this reframing as the way a designer “conducts reflective conversations with their situations”. Three forms of narration can be seen in the development of three specific arenas contributing to the development of the present project.

plot development

The first is the questioning, testing and resolution of the film’s plot. Unlike most film, the script was not written but developed through multiple tellings. This grew out of my professional background as an actor and storyteller. The narrative grew from a series of described pictures that fleshed out and trialed incidents against the central idea of a collision between a young boy’s over-ground and underground worlds.

The initial story began one afternoon when homesick, I had returned from England for a week and my partner and I visited a dilapidated set of hot pools in the district where I grew up. In the afternoon light the elderly matriarch who ran the complex, served us tea on the verandah of the hotel. She gave us a plate containing four small, damp, cucumber and tomato sandwiches. We drank the tea on the porch and as we sat there a boy rode past on his bike....

From this small core, I began telling and retelling a fictional story to friends. With each telling they would ask questions and I would fill in details, trialing events against the emerging narrative and refining and editing past tellings. This process of inventing and reinventing



Fig. 1:24 Above and opposite, photo-shopped indicatives (2000-2002) trialed against ideas of Sam's recollection of his mother's death with metaphoric references to the loneliness of a lonely journey.

a narrative called on both the listener and the designer to ask questions and reflect on the tapestry of details that emerged.

Schön (ibid.) describes this as "talk back". He says, "*the situation talks back, the practitioner listens and as he appreciates what he [sic] hears, he reframes the situation once again*" (p. 131). As sections of the story began to take shape I started concurrently testing areas of the narrative through sketches and photo-shopped indicatives. (Fig. 1:24)

Showing people these images and weaving the story through them, enabled me to test and design new boundaries of meaning and relationships between composite bodies of information in the narrative¹³.

Schön says

once a story has been told, it can be held as datum, considered at leisure for its meanings and its relationships to other stories. Transient events, widely separate in time can be held steady and juxtaposed with one another to permit exploration of such phenomena... Some stories can be ignored, or reduced to mere outlines, while others are expanded or elaborated. By attending to a few features which he considers central, [one] can consolidate the main thread of a story from the surrounding factors he chooses to consider as noise.... Trying now one interpretation, now another, he can make his experimental moves reversible and design his own learning sequences. (ibid., p. 160)

¹³ During this stage in the process of the creative production I was talking with Don McGlashan and applying to funding bodies for support. In both these cases the story (in either its told or tentative synopsis) was accompanied by these images. The advantages with told versions, however, were that they were discursive. It was during this process that Don brought out an unreleased, instrumental version of his track *Anchor Me*. Listening to the story and looking at the indicatives, he discussed the music's potential in terms of supporting the emerging diegesis of the film. (This asymmetrical track became the dominant score in the work, and likewise affected not only rhythms of cutting in the film but also the move away from very symmetrical framings of much of the imagery).





Fig. 1:25 Preparation for filming the groping of Sam's sister. In this scene I asked the women how they would react if a man interrupted their conversation in a pub by groping another woman to whom they were talking. None of the women in this image had ever acted before but all had experience of the type of situation the film was dealing with. After discussion about the scene, the women chose to regroup themselves and further directed the actor [skinhead] in how he would need to approach the situation. The telling of the scene became their telling and I moved from the role of director to documenter. The first take of this scene was the only one necessary.

plot performance

Another method of maximising Kleining and Witt's variation of perspectives, in heuristic research, is the employment of narration as a discursive system in the styling of performance. This profiles clearly in the collaborative approach taken to actors' portrayals and specific technical approaches adopted in the generation of imagery for the film. Most of the actors I cast for *boy* were local people. They knew the over-ground diegesis of the film and brought with them a rich source of experience. By treating film direction as a discursive form of narration I was able to achieve a high level of credibility in the performance from a cast of whom none were professional actors¹⁴. Because there were no lines to learn, generally a scene was discussed with the actor and details tested through a short series of interpretive performances. Through this process, new details surfaced that could not have been present had I simply been directing a predetermined script. (Fig. 1:25)

In the film the policeman was in fact the local community constable, the minister was the husband of a vicar, and all of the cast were able to locate specific memories of the loss of loved ones. While I explained that I wanted the shot to track across them in a stylised tableau, I also talked with the actors and got them to talk among themselves about how they might feel in such an event and how that might change the way they reacted to each other.¹⁵

In the shot we produced there are subtle details of what Barthes (1981)

¹⁴ While some of the cast had histories of performance in local theatre, the majority (including Jesse Lee who acted Sam) had never acted before. Of those who had acting experience, only one (Francie Grey, who performed the role of the grandmother) had ever worked in the medium of film.

¹⁵ The technique of accessing "on the spot" data from the personal experiences of participants, exposes the research to an even wider variation of perspectives. However, in working with actors or crew, suggestions have to be quickly evaluated against a broader understanding of the role of the sequence, (this often being substantially outside of a participant's awareness). Because of the dislocated nature of film making, it is generally only the director who has a complete understanding of the text's emerging visual ethos. With *boy* this situation was compounded because of the limited budget we had available. We could only afford a limited amount of film stock and this meant that we could record at the most, only one or two takes of any scene.

calls punctum. This may be understood as a detail that has “*more or less the power of expansion. This power is often metonymic*” (p. 42). The funeral scene in the film is embedded with a small detail of the drivers’ calculating affection. It is an unobtrusive pose where his hand is resting on the dead girl’s mother’s shoulder in a duplicitous display of consolation and control. This occurred only because one of the actors recounted a situation in her past where she saw a man, who was later found guilty of the abuse of a small girl, comfort her mother in the same way at the child’s hospital bedside.





Fig. 1:27 Scene framing. Spare lenses were often used to enable the director and cameraman to simultaneously frame a scene before discussing details of ways that it might be recorded.

narration in imagery design

A similar approach was adopted in the development of imagery in the film, especially when I was working with Nic Finlayson (camera). Because he had a level of knowledge about what a camera could do that well surpassed my own, we generally told and re-told the scene before we shot it. Sometimes this was done while looking simultaneously through camera lenses to test how a image might be framed (fig. 1:27), sometimes by pacing through a scene, reflecting on its nuances and the potential of camera and lighting to capture or extend these feelings (fig. 1:28), and sometimes by reference to contemplative, process, and indicative sketches.

However, significantly as we approached filming, the role of the sketch diminished¹⁶. By moving to a more discursive, shared narration of the scene, both the director and crew were able to interact with the specifics of the location as it was presented on the day. Because an unpredictable feature (like the soft lighting in a break between showers at the time we were filming the funeral scene), can be advantageously imported into a text, systems for rapid reflection on, and adjustment to, the design of this project needed to be well structured in to the methodology. Schön (1983) points out that, “*the practice situation often changes rapidly and may change out from under the experiment*” (p. 144). To maximise the potential of this instability, discursive modes of narration in the production of the film were embedded into collaborative areas of the project so a more effective and synergetic flexibility was accessible, when needed.

This process also shifted the ground away from reference back to other film texts as a method of solving a problem, because we were trialing move-testing experiments inside a construct of sketches and shared narration.

¹⁶ This approach tends to run contrary to much professional practice where, especially in television commercial design (and some film), carefully constructed storyboards are used to prescribe camera angles and technicalities of the shot.

Eckert (2000) suggests that

sources of inspiration play an important role in the design process, both in defining the context for new designs and in informing the creation of individual designs. Previous designs and other sources of ideas furnish a vocabulary both for thinking about new designs and for describing designs to others. (p. 525)

However, it was an aim of this research to create a body of work that did not simply reconstitute structures and re-acknowledge established approaches to cinema into another short film. Realising that film and television are highly intertextual on both deliberate¹⁷ and less conscious levels, this research sought to import a higher degree of signature into the work. It did this via concentration on a rigorously considered diegesis and a discursive form of narration that continually reflected back against the project's own synthesised data.

technical capture and synthesis of data

Discursive narration between the designer and the work, and the designer and other participants in the project, continued through production and post-production phases of the film. Telling and retelling the style and content of the narrative became important in terms of technical processing of gathered data. It was important that the film should not be driven by uncritical applications of new technology. However, I also realised that decision-making needed to be aware of new and emerging software functions, so that data was able to be tested against the richest possible platform of potential.

Boy was shot on 35mm film, and used the HD format for all intermediate stages of post-production¹⁸. This digital format allowed

¹⁷ See Goldman and Papson, (1994). Advertising in the age of hypersignification. In *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2 (1): 23-53

¹⁸ The film was finally taken back to 35mm print for projection in cinemas. It has a screen ratio of 1:1.85 with a Dolby mix soundtrack. It is printed on to one 1340 ft reel with a 150 ft leader at the front. Because of the range of formats required by international festivals, the film is also formatted as Beta SP [16.9 letterboxed], DVD [PAL and NTSC] and VHS [PAL and NTSC].



Fig. 1:28 Narration reflecting on the arrival of mourners at the cemetery. Narration in this part of the project was irrecusably linked to physical position, so both the director and the cameraman walked through different approaches, testing hypotheses against the ethos of the scene and earlier tellings they had shared of it.

Fig. 1:29 Still from *The Last Supper* tableau.

An example of the influence of discursive narration can be evidenced in the final treatment of the closing sequence of the film. This is treated in a comparatively stylised manner, with a gradually desaturating palette and short, dramatic movements. These came as a consequence of an experimental editing of the scene to Nikolai Korniev's *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh*. The formal structure of this 17th century Russian choral work, with its deep tones and brooding undercurrents was applied to footage recorded during the principal shoot. However, the sequence filmed at this time was too conventionally cinematic to work with the formality of the music. After talking through alternative versions of the film's closing sequence with post-production crew, I discovered the potential of software like Flame to gradually desaturate images as a continuous flow. As a result of this, I reconfigured the film's closure. I changed the original approach by referencing the formality of Del Castagno's *Last Supper*¹⁹ (with Judas [the betrayer], seated opposite a low relief line of apostles). By doing this, I was able to pull the styling of the narrative away from the filmic approaches of the previous scenes and develop a treatment more subtly in concord with the brooding ecclesiasticism of the film's opening titles.



for complex treatments of the images, not easily accessible in an analogue environment. Although the principal photography was completed within a week from 20-24 January, 2003 at locations in the south Waikato of New Zealand, two other sequences, including titles, blue-screen elements and re-shoots of the rape scene and the closing sequence of the film were shot four months later in Auckland and in Arapuni respectively. These extra sequences were filmed during the period of the offline edit, which meant that discussions and experiments developed in the first phase of post-production (grading, editing rhythms and integration of stills), could be used to determine specific approaches to the filming of the remaining scenes and composite sequences in the film. (Fig. 1:29)

Post-production on the film took eight months. Much of the digital intermediate process was very exacting because it profiles a highly coloured style with large composite and graphic elements. Still images, originally shot on 35mm film were re-shot on medium format cameras so that a higher platform of detail was available before I began layering them and converting individual elements to Alpha channels.

Thus, throughout the post-production, data was continually subjected to a range of experiments, enriched by the accessing of expertise from other professionals. The system of discursive narration, fluctuating constantly between words and treatments of images, was a primary method of testing the potential of new media on the emerging text.



¹⁹ Detail of *The Last Supper*. Andrea Del Castagno. 1447. Fresco, 15' 5"x32'. Cenacolo of Saint Apollonia, Florence.

conclusion

Kleining and Witt (2000) see qualitative, heuristic research processes as being “*specially suitable to discover qualitative relations such as structure patterns and structural changes*” (p.1).

Within this project, heuristics acts as an effective approach to questioning and discovery. The unique application of this methodology is profiled by a variety of systems used to maximise the structured variation of perspectives²⁰.

Essentially the research method for this project needed to be discursive and reflective because the project was required to locate effective synergies between disparate bodies of information (both physical and human) and also construct and test cohesive patterns emerging in the data (and in the application of this data) inside the developing creative text.

The dialogic designer’s journal, narration and the use of sketching, at times in concordance and at other times as separate arenas, all activated this discourse through their ability to accommodate exploratory, move-testing and hypothesis-testing experiments. These were the primary devices used for keeping the project in a state of irresolution while suggesting effective relationships between ideas that can be assessed against the cohesion of the final artifact.

²⁰ Other devices brought to bear on the heuristic nature of the research method have also been imported into the project. However, these have been discussed in two other locations in the exegesis. The methodology employed in the development of the lexicon of bog-speak is discussed in the introduction to *appendix 2* and methodological experiments relating to hypothesis-testing experiments related to the shrines are discussed in *appendix 5* [CD Rom].

section two
narrative structure
and aesthetics





narrative structure and aesthetics

The writing of stories: the hidden frame, the hidden harmony.
Okri, 1997, (p. 121)

introduction

Kellner (1995) argues that the postmodern view of television is that its image often decenters the importance of narrative. In music video and certain types of television commercial,

the signifier has been liberated and image takes precedence over the narrative, as compelling and highly artificial aesthetic images detach themselves from the television diegesis and become the centre of fascination, of seductive pleasure, of an intense but fragmentary and transitory aesthetic experience. (p. 235-6)

There is clearly evidence of this profile in music video, and indeed because of it, the media form was a source of much postmodern analysis in the 1980s and 1990s. However, such broad descriptions can be misleading. This is because within the medium, there are significant variations of form. In many cases, where music video deviates from the flat, one-dimensional flow of superficial, detached signifiers, devoid of referent or meaning, its diverse forms have often been ignored by theorists¹.

Obviously, different viewers watch television videos in different ways. For some audiences, music video may be a continuous flow of fragmented images that they fitfully scan in pursuit of saturation. However, it is an exaggeration to claim as Baudrillard (1983) does, that television, relentlessly undermines meaning and collapses signifiers without signifieds into a one-dimensional hyperspace devoid of depth, effects or meanings. While music video does include texts that string together images of little apparent meaning, it is also profiled by other forms, including the straight, edited performance (the song performed by the artist without added footage) and the narrative

¹ Influential theorists whose genericised analysis of music video has failed to address this lack significant divergence within the media form include Acland (1988), Aufderheide (1987), Burns (1988), Kaplan (1998), Jones (1998), Kinder (1984), Rubey (1992), and Straayer (1990).

short². It is this latter form that is of particular interest to this study. The decision to locate the research inside a consideration of television advertising and music-video-storytelling (and not cinema), comes from a questioning of the commonly espoused belief that music videos have borrowed their ways of telling, primarily from the movies³. This I would suggest is an over simplification. Many features of music videos and similarly styled television advertisements, have been significantly shaped by television itself and the commercial, technological and programming environment associated with it. It is these features and their influence on the design of the short film *boy* that will be discussed in this section of the exegesis.

definition of narrative music videos

There has been little specific research into the narrative music video, and so from the outset it is important to define the media form we are discussing.

Because considerations of narrative come from fields as diverse as linguistics, semiotics, folklore, film theory, anthropology, education, business management, visual arts, and literature, definitions are often varied and inapplicable. In this present study, narrative is considered in three ways: the story, “what happens to whom”, the diegesis, “the world in which the story unfolds”, and discourse, “how the story is told”.

Rimmon-Kenan’s (1983) definition of a story as a “*series of events arranged in chronological order*” (p. 15), provides an insufficient basis for differentiating narrative music videos from those that either document an artist’s performance, inter-cut a performance with other

² The narrative short represents one of the diverse forms of music video. Gow (1992), discussing the proportional representation of music video on television, suggests that at the beginning of the 1990s, performance based videos dominated this media form. However, in his sample it is significant that twenty-four percent of these texts also contained embedded narratives.

³ While this research is primarily concerned with the influence of television on the music video, it does acknowledge the impact of cinema and the contributions of pre-television music promos (Soundies and Scopitones).

footage, or create a text of non-sequential images that operate as an environment for the sound of the music. Todorov's (1977) description of a minimal narrative as a move from equilibrium, through disequilibrium to a new equilibrium, while providing a platform for consideration, is also too broad. His definition could be used to describe a music video that documents a performer's rendition of a piece of music, beginning with an establishing shot of the artist, following the act and the audience response to it, and closing with the song's last bars and public applause. Therefore, in demarcating narrative music videos, it is Bal's (1997) description of a narrative as a series of connected events, caused or experienced by actors and presented as a finite, structured whole, that is the most useful. This is because it allows one to differentiate videos that are finite and sequentially structured, where performers (actors, objects or musicians) affect and are affected by the unfolding story and diegesis. In these videos the story and its diegesis are prominently positioned in the text and there is a clear transactional relationship between the performer and the unfolding storyline.

Although a consideration of narrative music videos is a complex undertaking, this exegesis is concerned specifically with aspects of the media form that have directly influenced the design of the short film *boy*⁴. The significant features of narrative considered in this section are therefore: image, space and time, enigma and closure, sound, and narrative voice.

⁴Significant features like intertextuality, reflexivity, and repetition, which are clearly evident in some of these texts, are not addressed by this exegesis. However, Goldman and Papson (1994), offer an interesting analysis of the first two features in *Advertising in the Age of Hypersignification*. Repetition is discussed in depth by Kinder (1984), in *Music Video and the Spectator: Television, Ideology and Dream*.

image

spectacle, secondary iconography, colour and character

The television image is substantially different to the one we generally experience in the cinema. Apart from scale⁵, it is of a much lower quality and lacking in the detail able to be stored on, and projected from a 35mm negative. Ellis (1992) suggests that,

being small, low definition, subject to attention that will not be sustained, the TV image becomes jealous of its meaning... background and context tend to be sketched in rather than brought forward... the narratively important detail is stressed by this lack of other detail. (p. 130)

Television's need to communicate its meanings with impact and clarity, to an audience whose attention is less focused, in an environment interrupted by environmental sound and activity, means that it has approached image construction in unique ways.

Ellis (ibid.) says,

[t]he broadcast TV image is gestural rather than detailed; variety and interest are provided by the rapid change of images rather than richness within one image. (p. 131)

This use of rapid change in imagery is indicative of much narrative music video and narrative television advertising. Images are generally short and carefully woven into a continuous flow, where spectacle and transition present information in tightly edited sequences. While Ellis suggests that television's images are generally not rich, this observation could not be extended to a description of narrative

⁵ Ellis (1992) suggests that television has a greater tendency to emphasise close-up and intimate framing of its story than cinema. This is partly due to the fact that on television, the close-up presents to the viewer a nearer approximation of human dimension. Conversely, cinema's treatment of the close-up accentuates a dramatic difference in scale.

music video or advertising. In these areas one is generally relying on spectacle to appellate and maintain the attention of the audience. As both forms of text exist in visually, highly competitive environments, one often sees within them, powerful iconography used in a very intense fashion.

spectacle

Darley (2000) suggests that music videos, *“are definitely conspicuously about image: about creating an image for a sound, a performer or performers and (often as not) for a performance”* (p. 116).

Narrative music videos exist as stories, embedded in a continuous flow of other (television) texts. Videos are reliant on the power of the image to excite a level of spectacle that will not only hold the glance of the viewer, but also call them back to repeated screenings⁶. Common devices used in this form of storytelling include the performer who moves back and forward between identities, the narrative that oscillates between familiar and fantastic environments, and story-lines that contain illogical relationships between events.

Stories told in the world of the music video channel work constantly to demarcate themselves from the highly competitive texts that surround them. While there is a high level of conformity in these videos, there is also a constant need to make each text distinctive and memorable. Sometimes this is achieved through the use of technological spectacle, sometimes through the use of unique imagery or arresting camera work, but rarely through the power of the story itself. Commercially driven censorship (that applied by the marketing companies) excludes highly controversial subjects that may lead to the non-distribution of the video.

⁶In New Zealand a very successful music video can have an initial airplay rotation of up to eight weeks. An unsuccessful video, can have anything between three and five screenings. The effectiveness of a clip is affected by a range of variables, including the marketing company's relationship with the programmer, the amount of mobile telephone text message requests a programme receives, voting on websites and the success of the song on radio. After the initial exposure, music videos tend to be scaled down in decreasing levels of rotation.

Reiss and Feineman (2000) suggest that a

video has to be densely textured so it can hold up over repeated viewings. It has to be edgy enough to be noticed, but palatable enough to satisfy the often divergent demands of the performer, the record company and the public. (p. 11)

One of the methods employed to meet the limiting requirements of these diverse interests is the relatively safe approach of increasing the level of spectacle in the imagery. Both music video and television advertising are renowned for utilising or developing new imaging technologies as part of their currency.

In the last twenty years music video has profiled a range of hi-tech effects. The use of ADO (Ampex Digital Optics) in videos such as *Only the Lonely* (Mulcahy, 1982) illustrated the potential of optical distortion and movement; new developments in Paintbox, which enabled an image to be painted over live action, were developed in work Michael Geoghegan directed for Enya between 1991 and 1998. The transformation of live-action characters to and from animated characters, was first presented in the video *Take On Me* (Barron, 1985). Michael Gondry's direction of *Like a Rolling Stone* (1995) profiled the first public use of modeling movement from still camera shots⁷, four years before the technique's more celebrated appearance in the film *Matrix* (Wachoski & Wachoski, 1999).

secondary iconography

Narrative music videos establish their impact through a unique construction of rich, enigmatic, and spectacular imagery. However, within the environment of the music channel, a less discussed

⁷BUF Compagnie developed this technique by using two synchronised, still cameras and modelling intermediate forms employing a virtual computer camera (a process based on stereophotogrammetry). To achieve the effects he wanted in *Like a Rolling Stone*, Gondry worked with the company as a model for the experiments. The six minutes of effects in the video were constructed from several freeze sequences and over a thousand morphings. Details of this initiative are available at: <http://www.director-file.com/gondry/Dxxxii.html>

method of demarcation is also achieved by understatement. Videos or television commercials with minimal edits or simple imagery, often seek to draw attention to themselves through this stylistic antithesis. A distinctive example of this is the use of embedded, secondary iconography⁸. This technique is sometimes used to ensure the non-fatigue and revelation in the narrative. It is also designed to create a greater sense of engagement with the text as it begins to expand its meaning over repeated viewings⁹.

Reiss and Feineman (2000) believe that because videos are produced with the aim of holding attention over heavy rotation, a director must embed multiple levels of meaning, into densely textured texts. They say, *“because many videos harness these embedded and often deceptively sophisticated layers of texture and meaning into their veneer, watching video is not a passive experience”* (p. 27).

The viewing of *boy* was not designed to be a passive experience. In the narrative the use of spectacle is more restrained, but it is still clearly evident. For the film to maintain interest over multiple viewings I employed dramatic imagery in the opening title sequence, the shrines and in the images of dolls, whose portraits punctuate the story. This approach was also profiled in the strange sets designed for Sam’s bedroom.

However, it is the film’s less obvious detailing of images that creates its densely layered visual profile. These images often contain elements, not noticed on first exposure. The details subtly connect to upcoming material, creating a cohesive undercurrent designed to become evident over repeated viewings (fig 2:1).

⁸ By secondary iconography I mean features inside an image that appear insignificant at first, but may take on a greater level of meaning when the video is examined over repeated viewings.

⁹ Secondary iconography may be likened to Barthes (1981) concept of “punctum” in photography. Punctum describes the non-central signifier that one notices outside of the main message of the image. This detail in the picture, when it becomes evident, enriches the image by opening it up to an expansion of meaning.



Fig. 2.1 The silenced sign.

Themes like silence are subtly woven in to the text of boy, using an integrated system of signifiers embedded in typography, sound and image. The muted, covered road sign, blinded and silent in the film's establishing shot, references the New Zealand's practice of shrouding signs with old cloth at sites of road-ing disruption. However, in boy it is this secondary iconography that subtly transfers the title sequence's poetic reference to silence out into the environment where the hidden accident will occur. Details like this are generally missed on early viewings, but as undercurrents, these signifiers contribute to the sense of brooding silence that infiltrates visual and audio voices in the film.



Fig. 2:2 Comparative stills from *The Coopers* (1997) (above) and *boy* (2004) (opposite). Although I am not driven by a desire to establish auteur signature in my work, it is noticeable when comparing treatments of iconography used in *boy* and *The Coopers*, that despite the significantly different subject matter, both films make visual and textual reference to angels and obsessive construction. Interestingly, these texts also feature two of the same actors. The childhood Sam on the road also played the baby boy in *The Coopers* and Tammy Warwick who was cast as the barmaid in *boy*, acted the part of Peachy in the earlier film. (Her image appears in the photograph embedded in the tracking collage above).

Using signifiers that gather meaning over multiple exposures or through intertextual references that may surround a video during its release, is a common method of heightening the impact of the artifact. The use of secondary iconography has also enabled music video directors to establish levels of signature and continuity across their work¹⁰.

While Reiss and Feineman (2000) have argued that despite directors working with feature-film scripts having more flexibility with developing signature in their work,

video directors have compensated by becoming extremely good with the time they have. Despite the compressed format, they have managed to stamp their videos with personalized styles, looks and themes. In the process they are increasingly treated as auteurs. (p. 24)

Simmons (2004) suggests that between the auteurism of certain directors and the marketing and aesthetic requirements of the medium, music videos have continued to develop an escalating aesthetic of the spectacle. These images she suggests,

have to work harder to hold attention of an audience that is easily distracted and already saturated by spectacle. As a result videos tend to over-tell and repeat themselves so that the seduction of the image often becomes more important than the story being told. These images are often over-blown to almost operatic proportions so they suggest more than they say. Rain looks wetter, shadows darker, wealth is richer, sex more seductive, and the world in which this happens, full of intense,

¹⁰ Directors noted for this approach include Russell Mulcahy whose work is heavily embedded with intertextual allusions to cinema. Mulcahy also used actors from other videos as a form of intertextual, "in-house" reference. In *Total Eclipse of the Heart* (1983), he cast Michael Baldwin, (the wardrobe supervisor) in the role of the Headmaster. This continued a series of appearances by this member of the crew in videos like Billy Joel's *Pressure* (Mulcahy, 1982) and ABC's *The Look of Love* (Temple, 1983).

In terms of iconography, Chris Cunningham is noted for his recurring use of dogs as motifs in his videos. Significant examples are, *Come to Daddy* (1997) *Frozen* (1998), and *Come on My Selector* (1998).

strange possibilities. The picture has to both soothe and excite the audience and keep them coming back for more. (p. 25)

conclusion

Boy has therefore been affected by two distinctive approaches to iconography in narrative music videos. Television's embedding of arresting imagery, offset by relatively simple backgrounds, has developed as a way of compensating for the medium's inability to effectively transmit detail. Its use of spectacle has also been employed as a way of capturing and maintaining attention in an environment of constant distraction. Although neither of these situations impacts on



Still shot (above) and set design (below) for Sam's room from boy.



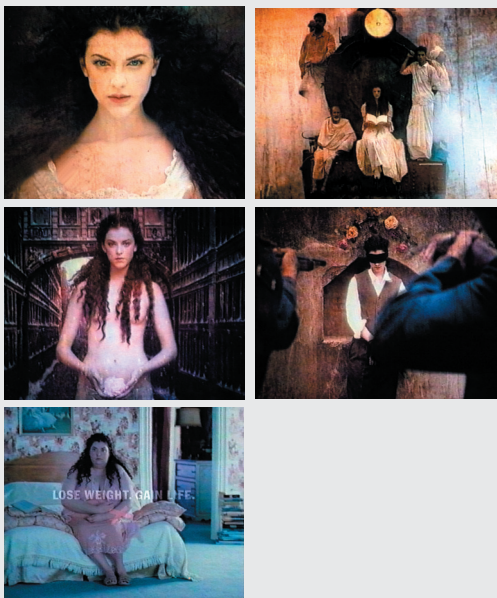


Fig. 2:3 Example of grading used to create continuity in Melanie Bridge's *Xenical* (1999). This commercial employs a blue/umber palette. When demarcating the "reality" from the fantasy sequence, the advertisement dislocates the palette, removing the brown and leaving the blue/pink sub-palette exposed. The blues and browns, running through the narrative also give it a visual cohesion.

the cinema projection of *boy*, the film's marketed version as a DVD, is generally screened in environments where there are distractions. As a way of addressing this situation, the film uses strong imagery in its opening sequences and continues the approach intermittently throughout the text.

Music videos and films like *boy* also share a common concern with durability of narrative over repeated viewings. As a result in both media forms, significant levels of secondary iconography are embedded. This operates as a device for developing visual themes and as a technique for creating density of iconography that will continue to unfold over repeated viewings of the text.

colour as a transitional device

Because music videos need to maintain impact over heavy rotations, these texts offer a level of colouration that might generally be perceived as heavy handed in cinema. Although grading¹¹ is used to enhance the impact of the image, it is also employed to effect smooth transitions between scenes, (fig. 2:3-4).

A comparison of grading transitions between scenes in *Xenical** (1999) and *boy* (2004), demonstrates how both narratives use subtle colour transitions to link sets of images.

The selection of palettes in *boy* was partly influenced by early sketches completed during the film's development. The consistent use of bruised greens, graphite greys and coffee browns in these drawings produced indicatives (profiling vastly different parts of the film's narrative), which presented a clear graphic cohesion. Because the film uses so many, stylistically diverse images, these sketches caused

¹¹ Grading is a technical term for the manipulation of light and colour from a film negative. Density and hue are altered in a digital environment. In *boy*, grading was done using an ITK Millennium scanning system with a *DaVinci* grader. Grading was used to develop an unique contrast range so the film would work equally well in cinema and on a television monitor. Because the film was shot in daylight, without filters, on tungsten film, specific approaches like crushing the blacks and converting daylight scenes to nighttime (as in the skinhead's running through the trees down to the hot pools) were achieved using this process. Grading was also used to create palettes for different sections of the film, to change levels of colour saturation, and to produce subtle blends of pigment across scenes.

me to look more carefully at ways colour was used in television commercials. This was because TV advertisements often condense a large number of spectacular images into visually concordant narratives. The use of consistent sub-palettes and the transporting of colours from the mid-tones of one scene into the background tones of another were subtle measures that profiled in many of these texts.

baseline palettes

Another determiner of colour that broadcast television brings to music video and advertising (and, by extension, to *boy*) is its ability to transmit certain palettes. Although 35mm film is capable of holding colours more effectively than video, the palettes I used for the film referenced the aesthetics of television. Television has difficulty maintaining stability¹² when it transmits bright reds and close patterned fabrics onto lower grade receivers that have had their chroma turned up. Effective palettes are also constrained because of television's limited contrast range. The level of differentiation available in terms of tone, is more compressed than on film or in RGB.

Music video and television commercials coming out of the United States may also be influenced by the country's use of the NTSC system. NTSC will generally hold its greens, greys and yellows but its reds and oranges have a tendency to be unstable. Therefore, in television texts designed for international markets, it is a logical decision to gravitate towards those palettes that offer a greater assurance of reliable colour transmission. Colour combinations that do tend to broadcast well are tertiary hues, pastels, greens, blues and golds. These colours are often evidenced in television commercials and music videos and, collectively contribute to what Aufderheide (1987) identifies as hermetic and global settings, *"locked in to colour schemes in which colours complement each other but no longer reference the natural universe"* (p. 126).

¹² In the 1970s and 1980s when videos and television commercials were assembled on analogue systems, certain colours, inside what were called "illegal colour space", could not be used without potential damage to the transmitter. These colours were identified during the grading of the images.

Currently, colour space on television is still smaller than the RGB space. With computer-generated imagery, this can result (if colours are set in the 250 range) with details in white, being burnt out of the image.



Fig. 2:4 Example of grading used to create continuity in *boy*. Where there is a smooth transition required in the story between scenes demarcated by warm and cool palettes, colours from one are often subtly transferred in to the first images of the other. In the scenes illustrated here, cool blues from the first shot are tinted with green in the next, and this green is embedded in the shadows of the scene at the dump. This transitional approach to grading produces a smooth undercurrent to the flow of images. This helps to de-emphasise the staccato effects of the rapid editing.

Within this distinctive colour profile, certain multi-national companies have adopted “brand palettes” that transmit seemingly high production values, which give brand continuity, and demarcate their narratives from the flow of other commercials. The National Bank of New Zealand uses a grading system, that employs a heavy use of greens in the mid-tones and shadows, offsetting relatively colour saturated, warm hued iconography.

The colour constraints imposed by television transmission have been influential in the design of *boy* because of their powerful role in determining how commercials talk about New Zealand identity through advertising’s distinctive colour reconstruction of our environment.

Boy uses two basic colour palettes. The first is a burnt golden brown (reminiscent of the parched, late summer sunlight). This palette is generally indicative of the over-ground of Sam’s world. The palette colours the road accident, scenes at the pub, and images of the small town where the boy lives.

The opposing palette employs a group of greens, ranging from cool, hospital tints (used antithetically in the toilet scenes) to the dense, gritty mid and dark-tones used in the angry world of flash-shots, the dump and its environs. Between golden-brown and green palettes, runs the spectrum of colours used in the scenes of the school.

Outside of this baseline nexus, there is a distinctive blue palette that demarcates sections of the film that have to do with Sam’s enigmatic behaviour with the coat. These blue areas of the narrative are essentially worlds of imagination.

None of the palettes used in the film are “natural”; they are indicative of the mediated colouring that music video and television advertising feed us about ourselves. These coloured images propose a kind of homogeneity that I have imported into the film to act as discord. This is a story about the “other”. It talks about a part of New Zealand culture that is never referenced in television advertising and music video’s hegemonic construction of our identity. The use of their colour systems is therefore transgressionary. We see an unfamiliar iconography, brushed with the smooth, transitional palettes that are used to assure us about who we are. The colour schemes of aspiration and desire are now used antithetically, to speak for the abject and the marginalised.

character

Because *boy* is a text that is cut very tightly and has a narrative that moves at a very rapid pace, characters are depicted very clearly. Shots are used that quickly tell us about an incident, then we are moved on to new bodies of information. As a result, the film has a method of character description very similar to that employed in highly compressed television texts. None of the characters in *boy* is deeply developed, and in general the main character is surrounded by almost archetypal portrayals. The cynical teacher, bullying students, red-necked skin-heads, doting grandmother, and benign minister are all cutout characters that undergo minimal transition during the film. Rubey (1992) argues that,

[c]haracter backgrounds and motivations that would require lengthy development in conventional Hollywood films are condensed into seconds in music videos... since videos move so quickly they have to refer to iconic themes and images to avoid degeneration into random incoherence. (pp. 242-243)

The characters in *boy* are clearly described, but they are in low relief. The glimpses we catch of them are concerned more with the movement of the narrative, than with revealing character through discourse (as is often the case in cinema).

In dealing with the effects of compression on character, music videos and television advertisements often build character profiles by structuring their appearance, so they are able to generate additional meaning off the back of other characters. In other words, character development is often achieved through its relationship either with the narrative, or with opposite archetypes. In *boy*, bad characters tend to be clearly demarcated and in many cases have their opposites in the story. The calculating driver has his antitheses in the innocent, non-descript, hitch-hiker's parents. The cool, innocence of the driver's twin daughters is also used, often in close proximity to his actions, to heighten the sense of his brutality.

Burton (2000), suggests that often on television, "*characters or words or behaviours are seen to be opposed to one another. The meaning of one, gains strength from its oppositeness to the other*" (p. 114).

Additional to this building of character through reference to its opposite, is the technique of revealing personality through the story line (rather than through discourse). A character, like the young woman who works at the hotel, is defined as much by the incidents that happen around her, as she is from information we glean from dedicated appearances. The exposed thread of her story is very short. Yet we understand her need to be liked, the routine of her life, her low self-esteem, her promiscuity and the vulnerable nature of her isolation. We know how the men in her world think about her, and we know about her almost childlike relationship with those she loves. We know she will probably not do anything about the rape. We suspect incidents like this may have happened before. We know all of this, despite the fact that in the film, she is on the screen for less than thirty seconds.

If one was to take the concept of ellipsis, used to describe the spaces left out in cinema's compression of time, and apply it to her character, one would say that there was a high proportion of what we know about her, that develops between the presented signifiers. Like most people in the story, the spaces between her exposures to the audience are also employed to embellish her character.

conclusion

Thus, treatments of imagery in the film are distinctive and draw influences from the nature and constraints of television. There is a proportionately high use of spectacle in the narrative. Small pockets of high-impact, pared-back imagery operate in a self-contained text that is designed to orchestrate narrative, iconography and technology into a film that generates a high level of curiosity.

Signifiers within images constructed for the text do not have to work in the same way as in cinema. This is because the film (like music videos and advertising) is designed for multiple viewing. As a result, imagery is constructed to avoid fatigue after repeated viewings. *Boy* is designed to keep unfolding nuance and detail, long after the first exposure to the text.

The way that images are coloured is also significant because grading works as a method of disguising the rapid pace of the narrative. This is achieved by bleeding colours subtly, between separate sections of

the film. The distinctive grading of *boy* also references palettes, partly determined by the physical limitations of television transmission. These palettes have become part of the way advertising presents the world to us, and the film exploits the cohesive and sometimes seductive properties of these schemes to add a tension to the way the story is presented.

space & time

vignettes, direction, linearity and compression

If colour and iconography contribute to the distinctive profile of *boy*, it is further affected by treatments of space and time employed in music video. Music videos are often described as presenting a rapid, profusion of unrealistically coloured iconography in sequence, but not necessarily in order.

Kinder (1984) said that it was this “*series of incongruous visual images, stressing spatial and temporal dislocations*” (p. 5), that made rock videos resemble dreams.

While at the time this view held some currency, its difficulty was that it failed to consider, in its generic discussion of music video, distinct forms like concert performances and videos where the music accompanied simple, linear narratives. Narrative videos promote music by using a series of connected events, composed of language signs, caused or experienced by actors. These events are presented as a finite, structured whole. Although their particular way of telling stories may contain dislocations and unusual treatments of time and space, one cannot realistically describe these videos as “*series of incongruous images*”.

Two distinctive treatments of space profiled in narrative music video (and also evidenced in some television commercials) have been influential in the design of *boy*. They are the vignette, and directional movement.



Figs. 2:5 Low relief, theatricised spatial treatments. Playing on the artificiality of the medium, both Melanie Bridge: *A better world* (1998) and *The glass is half full** (2002), and Tarsem Singh: *Losing my religion** (1991), tell stories inside shallow space that references the flattened dimensionality of the stage. In music video, these spatial treatments, with their artificial backdrops and compressed perspective, owe much to the studio sets designed for the television shows of the 1960s.

the vignette

While we have already considered Ellis' (1992) observation of simple, "sketched in" backgrounds in much television imagery, this aesthetic in some music video has been taken beyond the pragmatic need to draw attention to a dominant element in the frame. In shows like *Miami Vice*, Gitlin (1987) noted distinctive compositional features where,

place is a backdrop for free-hanging sound and velocity, as in the high-tech car commercials. In Vice's Miami, the players are regularly composed into fashion tableaux, and sequences of disconnected stills, as in the music videos that inspired the series. (p. 152)

These low-relief tableaux, designed as stills in which action occurs, have become a feature in the work of more recent advertising designers like Melanie Bridge and music video directors like Tarsem Singh (fig. 2:5). These designers tell stories by connecting a series of theatricised, low relief environments (vignettes). In each of these environments a small gesture occurs, the camera pauses or cuts to a detail, then moves on. This tends to establish a highly compressed, spectacle-saturated method of storytelling. Here, the feature of the shot has high visual impact but very short duration. The environments these shots use often reference the low-relief structure of stage sets. Through this aesthetic, both the artificiality and theatricality of the content is emphasised.

The use of powerfully graphic vignettes in which a brief action occurs, helps to create pictorial intensity in the film. Generally the low-relief scenes are used to heighten a sense of claustrophobia or disorientation in the narrative (fig. 2:6). These tableaux draw on television's tendency to focus on central action, rather than hold attention on detailed shots. Like the vignettes used in advertising and music video, with *boy* we are often taken into a dramatic space, only for a moment, shown a world, directed to a detail and then progressed into another scene.

Images like these serve to offset more open, cinematic sequences in the film, where heightened detail and perspective are integral to the film's more expansive ethos.

Fig. 2:6 Scenes in boy that use a low depth of field.
The film opens and closes with these types of image. Both the titles and “Last Supper” sequences are treated as shallow, desaturated spaces. The scenes in the bogs are also filmed in low-relief. This device gives a slightly claustrophobic uniformity to the episodes, where attention is focused specifically on the action inside the scene.





Fig: 2:7 Spatial treatment of the shrines.



theatricality

The tableau-like treatment of space was also influential in the design of the two shrine sequences in boy. Each theatrical vignette is viewed as if through a proscenium arch (fig. 2:7). The eye moves into the central figure(s) on a subtle zoom, and each character makes a single gesture within the frame. The approach is a graphic translation of the literary device, *dramatis personae* (the listing of characters that generally precedes a play). However, I chose to compile these glimpses of personality as a visual chorus inside the story. Each actor was shot against a blue screen, clear-cut, then inserted between layers of the



illustration. By doing this, I was able to create a dreamlike world where characters were both contained within and separate from the surrounding space.

Each of these tiered spaces used in the film is unique, although at first glance they are designed to appear similar. Flanked by different statues I drew and photographed in the Auckland Domain, they contain desaturated palettes made up of layers of translucent flowers and small individual signifiers of identity.





Fig. 2:8 Theatricalised design in images. Sam's bedroom, the dump, and his angry flash shots, all profile a sense of drama through their use of cluttered detail or powerful iconography arranged across low-relief backdrops.

Low-relief set design was a feature of early, studio-produced music videos. This distinctive approach to space is referenced in the treatments of interiors associated with Sam's intimate world. In general, these scenes are constructed using backdrops behind the dominant action (fig. 2:8). However, in a break from television's avoidance of complexity, these backdrops are also festooned with detail and lit in a manner that increases their theatrical impact.

experiments

heterodiegetic spaces

The journey to the film's final spatial treatments moved through a range of experiments.

Initial designs for Sam's heterodiegetic narration at the opening of the film drew inspiration from the spatial features of pared-back studio sets often used in music video.

These sets are normally designed as blank or contain minimal detail. This is so focus can be brought to bear on the performing artist after narrative episodes in the video that contain other characters. In terms of design, these almost two-dimensional sets often contrast markedly with the deeper perspective images used in the narrative's diegesis.

In early experiments with the film's introduction, I compressed space to almost one dimension (fig. 2:9). Initially, I intended to make his site of narration almost one dimensional, in marked contrast to the more filmic perspectives adopted in the movie. An early idea was to show Sam talking across layers of imagery. The difficulty with these designs however, lay in their complexity. Typographical voices would not work well on them and although spatially they were simple, the detail in the imagery was too distracting. Rather than being passive spaces, they began to compete for attention with the subject of the frame.

These images considered Sam's prostitution by exploring stylistic references to money. When early trials using New Zealand currency became too cluttered I began working with more generic references. However, the overall outcome still remained problematic.



Fig. 2:9 Experiment 1. Highly compressed space.

These designs also trialed a pictorial translation of Sam’s existence as a boy who passes between worlds. In the film this happens in two ways. In terms of the narrative discourse he exists as the narrator in the heterodiegetic realm and also as a character inside the story. However, he also exists as a character who, because of his closeted lifestyle, fades in and out of the over-ground world of the town and the underground world of the bogs. While the idea of dissolving spaces was interesting, it was not in concord with the more hard edged aesthetic that was emerging in the rest of the film.





Fig. 2:10 Experiment 2.

Less compressed space.

For this trialing of compressed space in the film's opening I took photographs of funerary angels and studio shots of a model of Sam writing.

Originally assembled in Photoshop, separate channels were later animated so the sequence presented illogical movement, with the angels and type moving but Sam's hair and body quite still. However, the treatment of movement, detail and space was too overworked and the design's increasingly Victorian aesthetic was moving too far away from the ethos of the film.

When these experiments failed to produce effective results, a second approach using slightly less compressed tiers of imagery was trialed (fig. 2:10). Layers of imagery were used to form a montaged backdrop, reminiscent of Victorian packaging. The typographical voice, designed to be carried on translucent strips of tape, made the written text very subtle. However, the sequence was still too heavy-handed and lacked the clarity I was seeking in an appellation. I was compressing space and filling it with detail, rather than compressing it and simplifying it.

Because both colour and space are used to demarcate the film's episodes, the opening sequence (as heterodiegetic) was designed to contrast with the deeper perspectives used in the rest of the story. All of these early designs with their flattened perspectives and reduced colour palettes aimed to achieve this, but they became too complex. As a result I decided to experiment with the close-up, monochromatic, broken-doll sequence that eventually opened the film.

spatial concerns in a film set

The decision to treat Sam's world in lower relief also resulted in the rejection of a complete film-set.

I constructed the initial environment for the dump scenes in the corner of a paddock in Putaruru. To build this I used window framing, corrugated iron and the husks of two old tramcars (fig. 2.11). This set was dressed so it appeared to be overgrown and neglected. The interior was littered with the flotsam and jetsam of Sam's presence; toys and curios were hung on walls, left on shelves, or scattered on the floor amongst the other debris. I tried to make a world that showed neglect and brooding resentment.

However, the design was not successful because it relied too heavily on perspective to effect its sense of watchfulness. The cramped, structure of the set also limited the flexibility of equipment needed to light and film effectively. As a result, images taken inside it emphasised the corridor-like space. These shots profiled too much perspective to work cohesively with Sam's low-relief worlds of the bogs, bedroom and Last Supper.



Fig. 2:11 Set developed for Sam's world at the dump. The interior with its tiered spaces referenced the structures of early studio sets for music videos. However, again the environment was too cluttered. To overcome this I redesigned the set in an old shed and blacked out large amounts of detail. By doing this I was able to create the sense of paraphernalia without large areas of distracting detail. Scenes were then filmed in a way that flattened the perspective, with the one exception being the climax where the driver finds and smashes Sam's trolley.

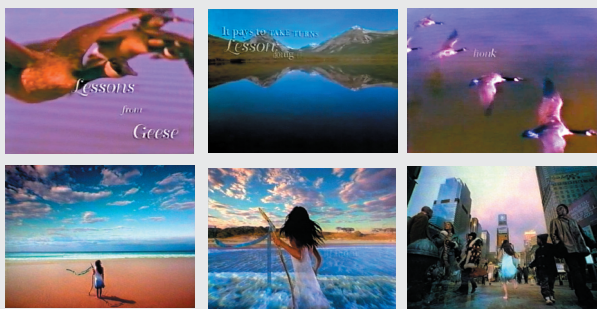


Fig. 2:12 Saatchi's *Lessons from Geese** (1995) and *Ribbons** (2000). *Lessons from Geese* employs a simple left to right directional emphasis, interspersed by subtly zooming images of Milford Sound. Over these pictures type is animated. The commercial is designed to flow smoothly towards Saatchi's brand association with caring values. *Ribbons* uses a strong emphasis on directionality with shots being dissolved into each other on a continuous flow inwards. Left-to-right movement occasionally disrupts this strong sense of direction, but these anomalies are rendered cohesive through the prominent use of dissolves.

direction

Narrative music videos demonstrate unique methods of achieving rhythmic cohesion in their stories. Directional flow of imagery is a technique used by some designers, to replace cinematic formulae for indicating spatial relationships. Vernallis (1998) says,

[i]n traditional Hollywood narrative, the editing techniques work to suggest the viewer's mastery of the space (through shot/ reverse shot, 180 degree rule, eye-line match and point of view, (Bordwell 1985, pp. 55-57). Music videos forego such mastery in order to create the sense of a continuous line. The editing attempts to keep the eye moving fluently through the space in a way that supports the directionality of the song. (p. 157)

In *boy* vignettised spaces like the shrines are linked cohesively and by the similar movements that occur within them. The characters in the space glance up, or they look from left to right in the same direction as we might read a book. The camera creeps subtly in and out of each picture like a rhythmic kind of breathing.

Vernallis (1998) has noted in videos like *Cherish* (Ritts, 1989) and *With or Without You* (Avis, 1987), the audience's disposition for reading left to right is used by directors to construct a text where images flow smoothly in the same direction. The use of this technique is common in advertising narratives where imagery is orchestrated into a flow towards a brand that will eventually appear in the closing frame of the commercial. These texts are profiled by a graceful sense of movement where spaces seem to logically follow each other in concord (fig. 2:12).

In *boy*, directional movement through space tends to be read from left to right; scenes are generally designed so that events flow towards the right hand side of the frame. This dominant flow of direction is then disrupted by "against the grain" movements that tend to occur at times of approaching conflict. These include scenes where the skinheads enter the hot pools prior to the rape, the boys leave the school changing sheds prior to the queer bashing, Sam scratches the car, or the young bar maid is watched by the men in the pub.

time

linearity

Directional flow through space is a device some narrative music videos use for giving a sense of unity and cohesion to their plethora of images. However, the treatment of time in narrative music video can also be seen as directional.

Burton (2000) suggests that

[i]f one takes on the idea of flow, television is a continuous narrative from the moment one cuts into it with the remote control and with one's consciousness... [however, it] has coherence and a structure for each viewer which makes it more than a collection of sounds and images. (p. 95)

Within this flow, videos and commercials seek to demarcate themselves as unique texts because they are not seeking to simply entertain, but also to sell. Narrative music videos while sometimes referencing the look of cinema and television drama, generally contain less complex narrative structures. Their story lines are comparatively simple and chronological, although they are often intersected by appearances of the performer singing in a heterodiegetic space.

The proliferating storylines evident in soapbox and television serials are generally absent from narrative music video, because videos cannot explain themselves in upcoming episodes. The story has to be self-contained. These videos also tend to be concerned with one main character, (either the artist or the group), and their heroic engagement with the narrative.

Video director Paula Simmons says,

[i]n three minutes you don't have the time or level of audience concentration to deliver a complicated story. People don't watch these things; they look at them. If you tell them a story you have to do it in a straight line. It's the images and the artist they expect to see. You can get away with jumping the singer around the video, but not the story. A story is there to carry memorable pictures. If people have to think about stream of consciousness or flashbacks in the middle of the video, they are just going to switch off. (Simmons, 2004, p. 26)

Like these videos, *boy*, is a simple, chronological story. It unfolds over four days during which it moves, in small bites, gradually forward. There are no flashbacks. Each scene occurs after the one before it. The only disruptions to this flow are the pauses for the shrines and the sporadic appearance of damaged dolls.

compression

Because of their simple, linear storylines, narrative music videos and television advertisements are able to elide significant amounts of time and still suggest cohesive meaning. Ellis (1992) argues “TV compensates for the simplicity of its single images by techniques of rapid cutting” (p. 131). This rapid cutting allows a director to link small, condensed nuclei of information into a story, told in a very short time. Ellis (1992) suggests that

[t]he standard attitude is that an image should be held on screen only until its information value is exhausted. Since the information value of the TV image is deliberately honed-down, it is quickly exhausted.
(p. 132)

While this is a valid observation, in television advertising, the rapid movement of images is also evidence of the need to compact, into a short segment of expensive¹³ broadcast time, a narrative capable of securing brand identification and message. Therefore, tightly edited stories¹⁴ profiling a high level of ellipsis, have become a ubiquitous form, because of the financial and programming features of the medium.

¹³ The cost in December 2004 of running a 30 second television commercial on prime time TV2 (6.00 pm-10.30 pm) ranged between (NZ) \$13, 000.00 and \$1, 500. 00 per screening. While many factors come into decisions regarding the life of a commercial, a client is normally aiming at three separate exposures to a viewer, to gain product recognition.

¹⁴ *Boy* contains on average 18.2 shots per minute. Fry and Fry (1987) in their comparison of edits per minute on television programmes, indicated a significant difference between the image change rate in broadcast drama and television commercials. Television drama averaged out at 9.9 shots per minute, while television commercials averaged 28.3 shots per minute. Music videos combining performance inter-cut with other imagery, averaged out at 22.90 edits per minute. For a full discussion of the methodology and structure of this research see: Fry and Fry, *Some Structural Characteristics of Music Television Videos*, (pp. 155-162).

The segmentation of highly elided sequences in music video and television advertising narratives, Ellis (1992) suggests “correspond to the regime of the glance”(p. 143). He argues that they are “relatively coherent and assume an attention span of relatively limited duration” (ibid.).

This form of narrative compression, designed explicitly for short periods of time, proved a challenge in the design of *boy*. This was because I was uncertain how long I could maintain the pace and intensity of this level of compression before the audience fatigued under its density. As it was, I believe the approach could not easily be extended to a full-length feature without embedding longer periods of “rest” in both the pace of the narrative and duration of some sequences. Audiences both in New Zealand and overseas, have tended to react in a relatively stunned manner at the end of the film (fig. 2:13). They comment after seeing the work, on its unusual density, strength and intensity of imagery. Further research will be needed into this form of narrative compression and potential adaptations necessary to it, if it is to be applied to longer texts.

The use of short, closely cropped episodes in *boy* draw their inspiration from a feature evident in many of television’s narrative forms. Kozloff (1992) says that

television narratives depend on ellipses. The habit of eliding routine events or non pertinent stretches of time allows television to present a story that supposedly has a duration of several hours, days, weeks, or months within the confines of a half-hour or hour long text. (p. 87)

While her comment relates to television drama and documentary, it can also be applied to music videos and television commercials. *Boy*’s four days of story engages with a range of disruptions to “real time” telling. Although ellipsis works in ways employed in cinema, the film also draws on a technique common in television advertising. In this, the editing style trims time off both the head and tail of a shot. This means that audience exposure to a scene is cropped back tightly, so that only what is necessary to tell the story, and secure a fluid edit change to the next sequence is used. As a result the average duration of a shot in this film is 3.2 seconds. *Boy* contains 277 edits in 15 minutes compared to the same number that might normally appear in a

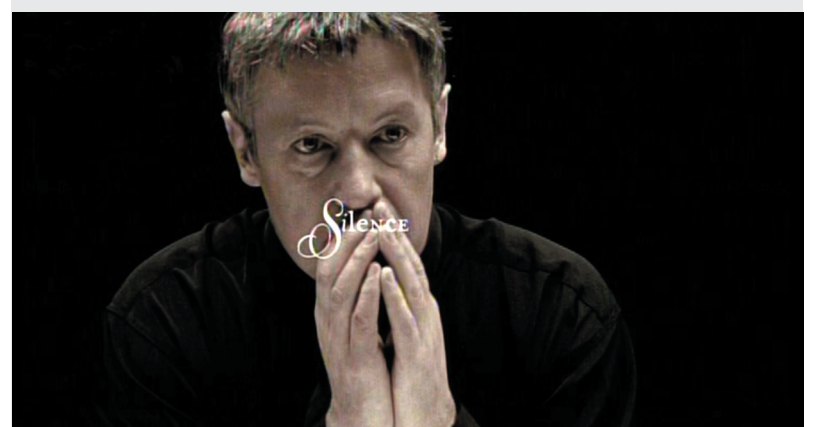


Fig. 2:13 Closing image from the story.

At the end of screenings in the New Zealand International Film Festival, the Montreal World Film Festival and at festivals in Hamburg, Chicago, Prague and Sweden, there was no applause until long after the credit roll had ceased. In general, the audience sits in silence for a few moments after the close of the narrative.

This behaviour breaks the normal response to festival film, where applause generally occurs at the beginning of the credit roll.



Fig. 2:14 Transition between a time-lapse of the evening sky and supper. To smooth out the time transition, several devices are brought to bear on the ellipsis: a doll from Sam's world revolves across the scenes, the two sequences are graded off the same colour palette, and a typographic voice (interfacing with the lyrics of the background song) fades in and out, over the transition. While acting collectively as narrative and decorative devices on the ellipsis, these graphic features also help to smooth out the transition across several hours in the film's story. (In this transition, secondary iconography is evident in the subtle inclusion of replicas of the revolving doll, placed on the table).

television drama, twice its length¹⁴. This gives *boy* an almost muted, staccato effect that requires obscuring devices in sound and rhythm to temper the sense of visual fragmentation.

Two time devices used in narrative music videos, to achieve this end, are time lapse and jump cutting¹⁵. Both of these are compression systems that condense time in decorative ways.

Time lapse is employed in scenes like the cloud shift after the car accident, and the moving of evening into night when the policeman discusses the accident with the grandmother and the hitchhiker's parents .

In the car accident sequence, the sky is coloured grey against a burnt sienna foreground, time is momentarily dislocated from experience

¹⁴ For research in to comparative editing rates in different forms of television see Porter, (1983). Applying Semiotics to the study of selected prime-time television programs, (p. 73).

¹⁵ A jump cut is an abrupt transition inside the same shot. For example, a scene showing a woman walking in a straight line may have the middle section edited out. The result is that the woman appears to have jumped from one place and time on the street, to another. As a time-compression device, jump cutting is gen-

in a way similar to the unreality of shock. In the second, a bronze doll turns in the foreground, in a clockwise rotation during the transition from one scene to the next (fig. 2:14).

Both episodes appear to slow the narrative momentarily, despite the fact that they are just as tightly cut as other images in the film.

The other system for compressing time, borrowed from narrative music videos, is jump cutting. This is evidenced in the scene when Sam enters the John's cubicle for sex. While a common decorative device in music video, jump cutting is generally seen as poor editing technique when used in cinema and television drama. However in *boy*, it gives a halting fluidity to the movement while allowing the action to occur in half the time that the scene actually took.

conclusion

This film has employed a range of approaches to the design of space and time in the telling of its story. These methods allow for a high level of compression, tempered by illusions of fluidity.

Graphically powerful vignettes containing small actions that either cut to a detail or quickly move on, is a feature borrowed directly from television's method of storytelling. In *boy* these images tend to be low-relief constructions where attention is focused on a central action. A variation on this approach is the use of theatricised sets where the shallow depth of field is treated like a heavily decorated, low-relief backdrop.

Fluidity in the film is achieved through a range of devices. The generic movement of images is either inwards or from left to right. This method of constructing direction in the film is a device borrowed from television advertising, where the technique is used to create a relaxed and graceful forward motion. Against this subtle directional flow, the film often uses reverse-direction in scenes where a level of anxiety or discomfort is required.

Because of its compressed nature, *boy* has been constructed as a simple, linear narrative. This common feature of narrative music video allows for more enigmatic occurrences in the storyline or diegesis, without the text becoming overloaded and losing coherency. With a simple base-line narrative, running chronologically through the text, one is able to elide time and closely crop information into very tight bites of information. This enables a far more expansive, image-driven narrative to be presented in a limited amount of time.



Fig. 2:15 Still from *All I Want is You*, by Merit Avis (1989). This video, shot in Rome for U2, was based on an idea by Barry Devlin. It did not receive as much airplay as the earlier (non-narrative) version first broadcast on March 12th 1987. However, queries about the video's enigmatic ending still profile prominently in FAQ sections on U2's websites.

enigma & closure

enigma, irresolution, bracketing and retrospection

Darley (2000) suggests that digitally constructed texts like music videos and television advertising profile

an aesthetic based on dense and complex forms of spectacular, playful and rococo-esque image effects. Such texts are designed to encourage multiple viewing on the part of the spectator, the formal tropes and devices, and the mise-en-scène produced, being just too elaborate to apprehend in a single screening. (p. 119)

While writers have discussed the distinctive imagery and dreamlike look of music videos, there has been very little attention paid to why these texts have been deliberately designed this way. Narrative music videos profile a comprehensible but often enigmatic form of story telling. Not all lines in the story are closed off and internally there is often a dislocation between signifiers that appear to suggest meaning, but then become disconnected and are left floating in the text¹⁷.

enigma

Narrative music videos tend to present chronological storylines that run cohesively through events, in a closed space of time. They generally profile the performing artist(s) within the diegesis of the video, but are distinguished by disruptions of event-logic. In Merit Avis's 1989 video *All I Want is You**, we follow the story of a circus dwarf who falls in love with a trapeze artist (fig. 2:15).

Although she has a lover, the dwarf seeks to declare his affection by buying her a ring. However, although she is clearly attracted to him, she is frightened of her current lover and when the dwarf's declaration of love is made, he is rejected. Up until that point, the story is relatively straightforward. However, the images that follow the rejection, suggest that the dwarf then commits suicide by falling from a trapeze, in front of the woman. The people in the troupe then bury

¹⁷ Indicative of narrative videos that use this approach are, *All I want is You** (Avis, 1989); *Vienna** (Mulcahy, 1980); *Oh Father** (Fincher, 1989); *Karma Police*, (Glazer, 1997); *Union of the Snake**, (Milne, 1983), and *Jeremy**, (Pellington, 1992).

him. However, as the camera pulls away from the graveside at the close of the video, we see the dwarf physically standing among the mourners and there is no sign of the woman. We are left with questions. “Who died?” and, “What does it mean?”

The device of asking questions inside advertisements is very old and is commonly employed as either a form of appellation¹⁸ or as a method of eliciting a higher level of personal involvement from the viewer. If a designer can get an audience to question a narrative, it is much more likely that the text will elicit a greater level of concentration the next time it appears on the television.

Russell Mulcahy, the director of *Vienna**, quoted in Gow (1992) says,

I always stay away from a literal approach to a song and take it to another level, where people can take it wherever they want. You build that abstract, noncommittal quality in there to give it a more universal appeal, because if people can figure it out, then they get bored with it. You want to keep them intrigued. (p. 64)

Narrative music videos are deliberately designed so they do not fatigue. To avoid exhaustion they often embed enigma inside the diegesis, discourse or story. The disruptions these enigmas create are designed to continually call the viewer back to the text. Because in many cases narrative videos are so densely embedded with disruptions, the viewer may continue to search across a heavy rotation of the text for a level of resolution that may not be there. The aim of many of these videos is not eventual elucidation, but continued non-closure.

Enigmatic treatments of the diegesis often appear as illogical, protean changes of location or as rich, dream-like imagery. Changes in the position of the primary narrator, through shifting emphasis on the song’s lyrics or imagery, and sudden shifts in the performer’s

¹⁸ Appellation is a term used by Judith Williamson (1978) to signify the ways that advertisements “call out to” or address consumers. The idea is based on Althusser’s concept of interpellation, (describing how cultural artifacts hail and position social subjects). In this exegesis appellation describes the way that specific images reach out to, and arrest the attention of the viewer. In doing so they also help to position the audience inside the film’s developing narrative.

role between actor and heterodiegetic-storyteller, can all heighten the sense of enigma in the narrative discourse of these texts. However, in the actual story, the most common device employed is the disruption of event logic.

With this technique the flow of meaning established in the early part of the narrative, remains disconnected and unresolved at the end of the text.

Newcomb (1974) argues that in popular entertainment, interactions between content and form, to which audiences respond positively,

are widely copied by those producers who hope to cash in on the commercial success that accompanies them. The formulas that survive have wide appeal in a massive audience. (p. 36)

This may help to explain why it was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s that there was a sudden increase in a new form of music video that contained seemingly, cohesive storylines, disrupted by an enigmatic treatment of events¹⁹.

Boy, while constructed as a simple linear narrative, embeds enigma into the text²⁰. Because shifting points of narration will be discussed later, it is the discordances within the logic of the story line that are of interest here.

When Sam takes the driver's coat and hands it to a memory of himself as a child, we are presented with an act that contains a distinctly different kind of logic, to the pattern constructed for the rest of the film (fig. 2:16).

¹⁹ Influential, enigmatic, narrative videos during this period are, *Love is a Stranger* (Burbidge, 1983); *I Don't Like Mondays* (Mallet, 1979); *Let's Dance* (Mallet & Bowie, 1983); *Union of the Snake** (Milne, 1983), *Vienna** (Mulcahy, 1980), and *Allen Town* (Mulcahy, 1982).

²⁰ This film is designed with a dual purpose. While it has exhibitions internationally in festivals of short film and cinema (2004-2005), it is primarily designed as a text for multiple viewings. In this regard it has been formatted on DVD, for sale commercially from May of 2005 (US. Distributors, Film Movement: New York, European distributors, Canal+ and Universal.) It is its design as a text for multiple viewing, that influences many of the decisions taken regarding the subtlety and enigma embedded in its structure.



Fig. 2:16 Still of Sam handing the coat to his childhood. The two sequences in the film dealing with this relationship are demarcated from the rest of the text by their blue palette. In these sequences, characters dissolve into time and space, dead people are alive, the grass is static but the sky and people move, and a memory tells the audience about the death of Sam's mother.

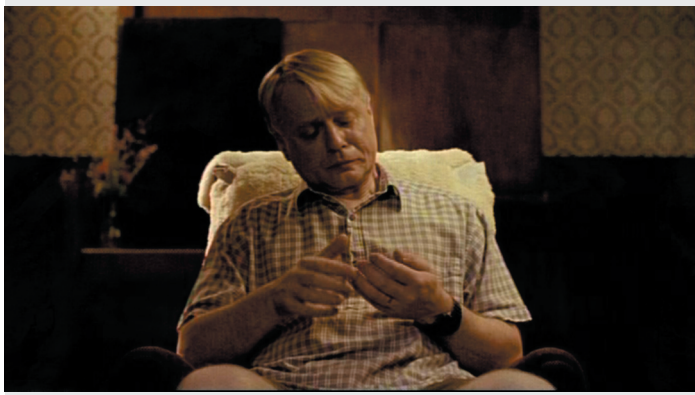


Fig. 2:17 Transitions from “real” to enigmatic sequences. By separating key shots in to layers, elements of the “real world” were sampled, then integrated into the ornamented world of the shrines. This technique is applied throughout the film as a method of smoothing over transitions between the film’s logical story and its enigmatic sequences.

Although there is a strong intra-textual reference to the site of the original car accident in the background of these scenes, the actions that occur in them are not normal. Kinder (1984) suggests that these types of image in narrative music video provide “the spectator with a prefabricated day-dream with varying degrees of space left for personal elaborations” (p. 5). However, because the coat handling episodes in the film do contain distinct developments of the story, Kinder’s space “for personal elaboration”, may be more clearly evidenced in the film’s use of shrines and the stills of sentient doll’s faces.

The shrines and stills appear to have no obvious purpose in terms of adding information to the story. However, they do serve to embellish the diegesis of the narrative.

Characters in the shrines dissolve smoothly, in and out of the film’s story (fig. 2:17), but they do not add information to the developing narrative. In the shrines, ellipsis is treated differently from the rest of the film. Normally, a substantial shift in time employs cinema’s visual grammar of a short fade to black. However, where shifts in reality occur, *boy* tends to *dissolve* the “real world” into the enigmatic. This enables the two worlds to meld together, into a more concordant flow.

irresolution

Narrative music videos (as texts designed for multiple viewings) often employ enigmatic constructions in their narratives. However, they also profile unique methods of closure quite different to those used in classical Hollywood cinema.

Ellis (1992) sees television narratives as essentially open-ended with certain segments containing internal coherence. Music videos and advertisements are among these texts. However, they exist inside the medium’s dispersed narrational form whose characteristic mode “is not one of final closure or totalizing vision; rather it offers a continuous refiguration of events,” (p. 147).

Burton (2000) argues that “soaps” represent one polarity of television’s continuum of narrative closure. These dramas are structured using a never-ending succession of enigmas and a never-complete solution. News on the other hand moves in the other direction, frequently describing events as facts and closing small segments off as

resolved stories. Because music videos and television commercials recycle their narratives through repeat screenings, their stories do not necessarily need to employ systems of closure indicative of the classical Hollywood cinema text. Videos and advertisements often have narratives that are profiled either by their cyclic nature or their open treatment of “ending”. Within this media form there are two types of closure that are of significance to the design of *boy*. They are bracketing and retrospection.

bracketing

Neupert (1995), in his study of narration and endings in cinema, offers a useful consideration of the role of bracketing in film. Bracketing describes the employment of similar opening and closing sequences in a narrative. While cinema texts are generally designed for a single reading, in music video, bracketing is a significant device because the text may be seen as repetitive. These videos exist in an environment of competing texts that appear stylistically to flow into each other. The employment of an essentially cinematic device like bracketing, allows a narrative video to demarcate itself from other texts that are generally less absolute in their approach to closure.

Although the technique is not ubiquitous it is employed in Fincher’s *Oh Father*,* (1989), Gondry’s *Cibo Matto* (1996), Lauper’s *Sally’s Pigeons* (1993), and Yukich’s *Do You Remember* (1990). (Fig. 2:18)

In *boy*, bracketing is used as a form of bookend on either side of the text. It appears as poetic text that opens and closes the film’s story. The written narration is almost identical and the worlds in which it unfolds both feature colour-desaturated images referencing a strangely distorted ecclesiasticsm²¹.

However, such temporal closure in the film is not necessarily as absolute as it may appear. The enigma and dense imagery inside the developing narrative is designed to call the viewer back to repeated screenings of the text. So, although structurally *boy*’s opening and closing appear to bracket the narrative, the film’s internal iconography offers moments of irresolution that invite continued viewings as a way of creating meaningful connections and similarities.

²¹ The ecclesiastical ethos of the opening and closing sequence can be seen in the damaged angel-dolls and stylised Last Supper.

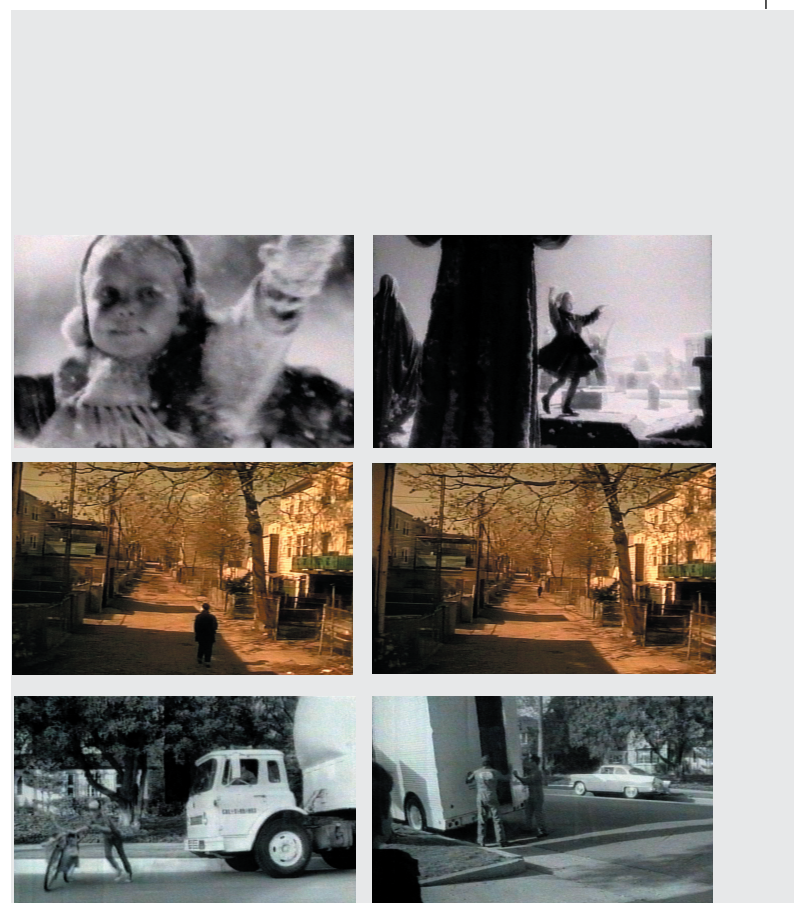


Fig. 2:18 Stills from bracketed narrative videos.

Fincher’s *Oh Father*, Lauper’s *Sally’s Pigeons* and Yukich’s *Do You Remember* all employ similar uses of bracketing. The narrative discourse in these texts opens and closes with scenes that are similar but have been affected by developments in the narrative. *Oh Father* begins and ends with a child dancing in the snow. However, following the narrative’s revelation of a death and relationship discords, at the close of the video the child appears, not in an open field, but in the confines of a cemetery. Lauper’s self-directed video about the pregnancy of a friend begins and closes with her at different places on an empty street. *Do You Remember* is a narrative that opens and concludes with images of a truck; the first, bringing a childhood friend’s family into the story and the last, taking them away.

retrospection

Another form of closure, profiled in narrative music videos is the use of imagery from the narrative, compressed into prologues or epilogues at the poles of the text. Vernallis (1998), in her analysis of music video observes that often a narrative video's dominant imagery is represented in the closing shots. This, she suggests,

achieves its effect partly by providing a thematic payoff in the absence of any conclusion to the narrative. The enigmatic character of the final series of shots asks the viewer to return to the beginning and watch one more time, in order to see how the video could have arrived at this ending. (p. 173)

origin

Although this kind of visual overture is used memorably in videos like *Thriller* (Landis, 1983), and *Cherish* (Ritts, 1989), there may be a technical reason for the origin of the feature.

Allan (1990) says

[i]n music television, videos are analogously linked to the unfolding of programming; their beginnings often remain imprecise and they frequently do not quite end. As disc jockeys cross-fade music with similar beats to make a sound transition as nearly seamless as possible, so broadcasters use visual and sound techniques to bridge the end of one video and the start of the next. (p. 6)

This approach was evident even in videos from the 1970s. Goldstein, quoting Williams in 1983, says,

Mulcahy and other British directors have gravitated towards such a surrealistic visual style because the BBC has tended to arbitrarily cut off the beginnings and endings of videos to fit them into the show's time slot. So everybody figured if the BBC was going to ruin the narrative of the video, why not make a video that didn't make any sense anyway. (p. 19)

The decision to open *boy* using an extended title sequence that did not contain a significant event in the film's story came from this

convention of protecting music video's narratives from programming edits. The technique, while inspired by the limitations imposed on these music videos by television's pursuit of continuity, was employed in *boy* to create a distinctive appellation. Using reflective narration, set against unusual imagery, the sequence preceded the story with a first person reflection that only reached its elucidation in the closing sequence of the film²². This is a device Neupert (1995) calls retrospection.

The term may be understood as a form of re-viewing where "*connections and similarities are illuminated, and the reader perceives that seemingly gratuitous or random events, details and juxtapositions have been selected in accord with certain principles*" (p. 120).

In *boy* we do not know why there is a reference to dolls, or if broken wings and terms like "rejected pieces of other people's lives" will have any meaning. These signifiers only suggest connection as the narrative progresses. In classical Hollywood Cinema, retrospective patterning works towards a particular type of closure where "connection and similarity" are generally part of an expected resolve. In music video, however, signifiers may not necessarily suggest a pattern in the first screening of the text.

Fiske (1987) says

[t]he relative openness of the finish of each narrative leaves the viewer in a position of power vis-à-vis the text. She (the viewer) is invited to participate actively in the construction of the narrative and, using the same knowledge and the same conventions, as did the makers of the video, to write her own script from the narrative fragments provided. (p. 65)

Narrative fragments in music video, unlike in cinema, are generally repeated. The viewer encounters them in a manner that allows for connections to be made either at the close of one screening or part

²² As a text designed for cinema and DVD, it is highly unlikely the opening or closing sequences of *boy* would ever be disconnected or disturbed. Discussion of the stylistic decision, therefore, relates to the inspiration for, rather than the purpose of, the technique.

way through others. This means that signifiers embedded in a text, may offer “connections and similarities” that are more obtuse, subtle or enigmatic. This is because narrative music videos do not need to reach the same form of closure expected of a cinematic text designed for a single exposure.

Music video’s particular application of retrospection operates as a method for continually calling the viewer back to repeated screenings of the text. It treats narrative as a unique patterning of information that reveals itself, both through single and multiple readings.

conclusion

The comparatively enigmatic nature of many narrative music videos is a result of both stylistic and pragmatic decisions. These decisions are born out of the need for a music video to hold the attention of an audience through multiple viewings. Narrative videos often profile inconsistent applications of event logic, and because of this, they pose questions to audiences. These questions encourage a greater level of curiosity and involvement in repeated viewings of the text.

However, because narrative videos generally exist inside a flow of more open-ended texts, they often employ cinematic devices to suggest levels of demarcation and closure. Bracketing is sometimes used to create a sense of visual conclusion, even when events are not brought into complete resolution. Where these devices are used, they often protect the narrative from disruptions to the opening and closing of the main story. This disruption is due to programmers conventionally deleting or broadcasting over the beginnings and endings of these texts.

The use of retrospection is another way that narrative videos protect their main storylines. This technique is generally used in one of two ways. First, sometimes narrative music videos will open or close with iconography that will be explained, or has been profiled, in the main body of the narrative. If this imagery is lost, then the narrative is only marginally compromised. Second, retrospection also creates a greater sense of cohesion inside these videos because it suggests patterns and connections within the story. This device, set against deliberately embedded forms of enigma, creates a tension designed to affect a greater attention to the text.

sound

homodiegetic sound and rhythm

Image and sound in *boy* are inextricably linked. While the film's use of silence is a dominant feature of its style, this silence is emphasised by its relationship to both the music and homodiegetic soundscape²³ that permeates the film.

Rubin, Rubin, Perce, Armstrong, McHugh, and Faix (1986) suggest that music performs three functions in film and television: it supplies essential or additional information, establishes a mood or aesthetic energy, or supplements the rhythmic structure of the screen event.

While music and sound serve all of these functions in *boy*, this exegesis is concerned with unique applications that have grown out of two specific profiles of sound in narrative music videos.

Sound operates in different ways in music video and cinema. Television receivers have inferior speakers and the transmitted signal carries a lower level of information due to the imposed restrictions of its broadcast band. Conversely sound in cinema is projected off the film's negative, read by a Dolby decoder and passed through a six channel system containing a front, left and right speakers, two side speakers and a sub channel for low-frequency audio.²⁴ Ellis (1992) says, "*TV sets come with speakers that are massively geared towards acceptable reproduction of speech. Music, especially rock music, does not reproduce at all well*" (p. 128).

²³ By homodiegetic sound I mean sound generated by characters, events or environments inside the story. The song is normally something laid over the story and as such is generally considered to be heterodiegetic. The use of homodiegetic sounds, compiled as a system of signifiers inside the narrative, I refer to as a "soundscape".

²⁴ There is a significant difference between sound that is broadcast, and sound that is projected off a 35mm negative in cinema. Broadcast sound passes through a transmitter and a receiver and both pose limitations on the amount of information received by a television audience at home. To keep the cost of this consumer electronics competitive, the bandwidth through a television receiver is generally lower than what is transmitted. To accommodate this loss of information, sound is often compressed before transmission, (the quiet areas increased and the louder range, flattened). This technique is used in a lot of music video and television commercials and is the reason why, although the volume has not been technically increased, these texts often give the impression of being louder and richer than the programmes surrounding them.

Broadcast sound operates in an environment of constant distraction when it appears on a television set. One is not seated in an acoustically designed theatre, but subject to visual and aural distractions that create particular needs for television to design sound as an effective method of holding attention. Ellis (1992) says, “*sound can be heard where the screen cannot be seen. So sound is used to ensure a certain level of attention, to drag viewers back to looking at the set*” (p. 128).

One of the methods narrative music videos use to draw attention to themselves is by embedding in their music tracks homodiegetic sound.

homodiegetic sound

In narrative music video, sound appears in two forms. The first is the music itself. This is normally the dominant feature in these texts and is embellished by images designed to arrest the glance. The music normally defines the length of the video and runs as an uninterrupted flow determining the editing rhythm and graphic atmosphere of the text. However, some narrative music videos also introduce homodiegetic sound that either precedes the music or acts as a form of atmospheric embellishment, coinciding with particular events within the story. While this technique surfaced in narrative videos in the early 1980s²⁵, it continues to function as an appellatory device that calls for additional attention to the text. If one is listening to a video as background noise and the music’s expected audio-scape is disturbed by sound that is clearly not part of the song, it suggests that something curious and additional may be happening. This encourages renewed attention to the visual text.

In Spike Jonze’ *Da Funk** (1997), and *Praise You* (1999)²⁶ this approach

²⁵ Significant early examples of these include, *I Know* (Cole, 1983), *Wild Boys* (Mulcahy, 1984), and *Material Girl* (Lambert, 1985).

²⁶ Both of these videos feature slice-of-life narratives set in unmodified urban environments. The first follows a talking dog (actor Tony Maxwell), around on a lonely night in New York. The second, *Praise You* features Jonze directing/performing with the “Torrance Dance Group” as “Richard Koufey”. The seemingly impromptu dance sequence is performed before a group of unsuspecting patrons waiting in line at a theatre. During the video, the artist for whom the video was made, Fat Boy Slim (aka Norman Cook) can be seen in the background watching.

is taken to a level where the homodiegetic sound begins to supplant the music in terms of importance. In these works dialogue and atmospheric soundscapes introduce, conclude and permeate the musical event.

The film *boy* was concerned with a convention in these types of video, where audio is not recorded onto the original footage, but homodiegetic sounds are foleyed over the music during post-production (fig. 2:19).

isolated homodiegetic sound

Drawing on Jonze's renegotiation of the proportion of homodiegetic sound in narrative video, I sought to create a soundscape made up of both music and foley work. The sound design was very important in the film because there was no dialogue. The aim was to communicate aurally both the isolation and disconnection of the main character's world.

This disconnection builds as the film progresses and reaches a stylistic climax in the scene where Sam walks down to the hot pools to find the barmaid. At this point in the film, for a moment, all sound ceases. Something is wrong. We begin to travel through a time where revelation of the rape is punctuated by the desolate, echoing drip of a tap. These sounds are set against the silence.

This scene forms the anagnorisis of the film; the time when Sam realises that by doing nothing, the community's persecution of the marginalised, will become his story too. Because I wanted to show rape as a completely alienating, non-sexual horror, something that tears the humanity off a person and leaves them broken, I built this unusual approach to sound subtly through the film. It was designed to reach its most obvious dislocation at the most brutal part of the narrative. From this point on, the use of homodiegetic sound significantly decreases. As Sam follows the young woman up to her caravan, a hollow, tuneless wind drifts into the soundscape and gradually blends with the anonymous choral work, *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh*²⁷. It is this music that then flows, unbroken, through to the film's conclusion.

²⁷ This piece of liturgical music, performed by the St. Petersburg Chamber Choir, was directed by Nikolai Korniev and recorded in 1997. It is taken from the album *Russian Easter* (Philips #446662).



Fig. 2:19 Clanking chains.

Boy was recorded without sound. This meant that any atmos (atmospheric sound), or action-specific effects were created as foley. Often in the film, a third-level sound that might normally pass unnoticed is heightened and other more dominant sounds remain mute. In the build-up of tension in the scene where the driver follows Sam into the dump, we hear the tiny sound of the gate's latch amplified, but do not hear the driver's car arrive, nor its door slam. Inside the dump we hear chains clank but not the sound of the driver moving. We see the driver speaking but do not hear his speech. This approach to homodiegetic sound creates a disconcerting audio logic and becomes a method of building an atmosphere of dislocation and tension in the sequence.

rhythm

Whitely (1997) says,

with regard to pop videos, it is suggested that the implied rhythmic synchronicity between visual and musical content impacts upon the viewer to inform both the underlying structures and the surface details. As such, it is integral to the effective functioning of the narrative. (p. 261)

The fundamental relationship between rhythm in sound and rhythm in image is a recognised feature of both music video and television commercials. Cubitt (1997) discussing Fincher's (1990) video, *Vogue*, notes that this video often presents poses containing minimal movement that "succeed each other in time, thereby achieving motion" (p. 301). In these sequences, this non-narrative video employs the technique of cutting to the beat of the music and, in doing this, emphasises audio rhythm by making distinct the transitions from one tableau to the next. This technique is common in many rapidly-paced conceptual videos. However, the approach is not widely used in narrative music videos because as Whitely points out,

cutting to the beat is regarded by many editors as a cliché. Many prefer to use movement and action within the frame to monitor cuts or to employ more subliminal ways of marrying pictures to the beat. (p. 274)

Narrative music videos often employ movement within the frame as a method of complementing the rhythm of the audio track. This technique was significantly profiled in 1967, when Peter Whitehead directed *Lady Jane** for the Rolling Stones. In this video, the original film footage was slowed down so that movement within the frame emulated that of the audio track. This gave the video a seductively, dreamlike motion that belied the violence of its content. While this was not a narrative video, its longer sequences suited narrative approaches to music video because it allowed the rhythm of the story more freedom in terms of pace.

Boy generally employs this form of editing. In the film, there are very few cuts made on the beat²⁸. Events like Sam slamming his locker, the towel flicking at his legs and the ash-fall on the barroom table, are emphasised by synchronising actions to the beat, rather than edits. This synchronicity places additional emphasis on each of these images rather than on the cutting that separates them.

While audio rhythm generally forms a synchronistic relationship to the visual text of *boy*, the film is also marked by a dislocation of this relationship. The shrine and road sequences exist in a soundscape that has no discernable structure. There is no audio-influenced rhythm to either movement or editing.

When mixing the music for this film, I sought to bring together two almost antithetical pieces: a modern New Zealand pop song²⁹ and a piece of 18th century choral music. One piece represented the known world of a small town and the other, the strangely ecclesiastical distortions of Sam's vision. I sensed that in a potential synergy between these very different pieces of music, could be found a "harmonious discord" that paralleled the content and typographical treatments³⁰ of the film's story.

In the shrine and road sequences, sounds are sampled and disconnected from their original songs. In these scenes notes float into and across each other like a tentative form of breathing. As with the images, these sounds do not connect to the narrative structure, they are disengaged and are reconstituted as a remixed sequence with only tenuous references to the developing story.

²⁸ Where the film is cut to the beat of the music, it generally occurs in instances as Cubitt (1997) indicates, where a series of tableaux follow each other in close succession. An example of this is in Sam's early morning ride past a series of vignettes containing watchful locals. The approach is also employed irregularly during the stylised treatment of the film's Last Supper. In both sequences the technique helps to punctuate the iconography rather than the action contained inside each edit.

²⁹ I used two forms of the song *Anchor Me*. The Mutton Birds, released the lyric version for Virgin Records in 1994, and Don McGlashan produced the instrumental version in 1995. Don McGlashan composed both pieces.

³⁰ This consideration of type is discussed in the next chapter of the exegesis.

This approach to sound helps to demarcate these sections of the film. Yet, simultaneously it also serves to bind them into the greater narrative. This is because the mix used in these sequences is composed entirely of notes and atmos sampled from the preceding tracks.

conclusion

Whitely (1997) suggests “*the majority of videos with their sequencing of images, seem to respond to the underlying rhythm which appears to lead both the ear and the eye. The primacy of rhythm would thus appear to be fundamental to the functions of the narrative*” (p. 260).

This underlying rhythm is a significant concern in the design of *boy* because of the need to harmonise antithetical features like dislocation and continuity. In *boy*, sound and image are interwoven, each contributing in different and complementary ways to the flow and emphases in the narrative.

The arena of sound in music video is very broad and many of its features, unrelated to the design of *boy*, are not addressed by this exegesis. However, the project has drawn two specific features into its creative consideration. These have grown out of television’s need to create emphasis as a way of compensating for its comparatively limited spectrum of sound and the medium’s surrounding environment of distraction.

The use of homodiegetic sound is a method narrative music videos often employ to draw attention to themselves as dramas. In this film, homodiegetic sound and music operate side-by-side. But they also seep into each other. This approach allows one to orchestrate sound in unique ways and to heighten the intensity of specific moments in the film. By bringing these two forms of sound into discourse one is also able to develop more sophisticated rhythms within the flow of the narrative. Sound, and its absence, are therefore used to build tension, heighten a sense of dislocation, accent imagery, and draw cohesion between different worlds within the narrative.

The employment of an editing style that cuts scenes around the beat, means that one is able to emphasise action within the frame. This device borrowed directly from narrative music video, works against a convention, where images are often edited on the beat. Although

editing on the beat is effective when one is attempting to accentuate iconography presented as tableaux, the technique has a tendency to distract from action occurring within the frame. Editing on the beat however, is used occasionally in *boy* as a way of altering the rhythm of the story or subtly demarcating sequences within the film.

narrative voice

heterodiegetic, homodiegetic, embedded heterodiegetic, and oscillating narration

Narration in music video is a complex consideration. In this section of the exegesis I am primarily concerned with the oscillating position of the narrator and how this feature of the media form influenced design considerations in the film *boy*. Because the next chapter of the exegesis discusses typography's narrative voice and how this is applied in the film, this section concerns itself with the use of heterodiegetic and homodiegetic spaces and how these are used to position music video's storyteller³¹.

The terms homodiegetic and heterodiegetic are taken from Gérard Genette's (1988) terminology. Homodiegetic narration may be described as narration that is situated within the world the story tells us about. Thus a performer, acting a role in a story and singing in that role would be said to be narrating homodiegetically.

Heterodiegetic narration is that which occurs from another realm. In television it may be illustrated by the presenter of a documentary who introduces and narrates the story from an unmistakably different time and place.

While most television texts present clearly demarcated narrative sites, music videos are an exception.

³¹ The term diegesis has varying definitions, but in this exegesis it refers to "the world constructed by the story." Thus the road accident, bogs, pub, town, dump, school, funeral, and last supper scenes all lie inside the film's diegesis. What may be argued as lying outside of the diegesis, is the opening sequence and certain elements of typographical narration. This is because they do not occupy the same time or have a transactional relationship with the story.

The lyrics of a song may either be situated inside the narrative's diegesis (be about the story), sit outside of the diegesis (have nothing in common with the story), or tangentially intersect with it.³²

The music itself can normally be presumed to be homodiegetic because its sound and ethos have a transactional relationship with the narrative. This can be seen when the story is clearly edited to rhythms and emphases within the score.

A performer may move positions within the text, appearing at one point as an actor, or at another as a dislocated commentator on what is occurring in the narrative.

It is this oscillating relationship of the narrator with the story that is of interest to the film.

heterodiegetic narration

A few narrative music videos employ this system of storytelling. The performer, as the storyteller, only appears outside of the unfolding narrative. Kozloff (1992) suggests that heterodiegetic narrators are often omnipresent and *"merely observe from some more or less Olympian vantage point"* (p. 82).

The heterodiegetic position normally allows the artist to be portrayed uncluttered by the video's narrative. They can be lit more individually, shot with greater emphasis and often shown in the context of musicianship that might clash with the normal content of the story. This position also allows them to be associated with the diegesis, while simultaneously distanced from abject imagery or negative events that may occur inside the story's telling.

Heterodiegetic narration often employs direct address. Ellis (1992) says, *"direct address is recognized as a powerful effect on TV. Its most obvious form, that of an individual speaking directly (saying 'I' and 'you'), is reserved for specific kinds of people"* (p. 134).

³² Connections between the song and the visual narrative are often effected by synchronising images and words or hook-lines in the song. Thus if the word heart appears in the lyrics, a picture of a heart may appear in the visual narrative, although the image may be located in an obviously unrelated context.

He points out that the relatively objective status of heterodiegetic narration is one of empowerment, generally reserved for anchor-men and women and sometimes for politicians, but rarely for people being interviewed³³. Performers in narrative music videos who occupy the heterodiegetic site of narration, address the audience from a position of knowing. They often appear to be remembering or dreaming the sequence and are generally unaffected by developments within it.

Yukich's *Do You Remember?** (1990), is indicative of this form of storytelling (fig. 2:20). Phil Collins, for whom the work was directed, performs outside of the narrative. He does not appear in the story nor take part in its world. His heterodiegetic site of narration is coloured, but the story is presented in black and white. Cuts between these worlds operate as slow dissolves. When characters inside the story speak to each other, they do so without sound. Apart from the homodiegetic sound of the truck at the opening of the video, Collin's singing is the only voice in the text.

homodiegetic narration

Purely homodiegetic narrative music videos are also not common, despite the predilection for artists appearing as actors in their videos. In purely homodiegetic videos, the song is laid over the narrative and may be considered homodiegetic because its lyrics are actually telling the story. The artist is an actor inside the diegesis and may or may not sing as part of this role. The artist is in a transactional relationship with the diegesis; they cause or experience a series of connected events and do not engage in any commentary outside of the narrative.

³³ It is general practice on television that people interviewed are shot at three-quarter face. While the interviewer's introductions are often front-on, convention holds that the interviewee does not acknowledge the camera (thus the presence of the viewer). Dual discourse (with the audience and the interviewee) is normally reserved for the person in the position of power.



Fig. 2:20 Heterodiegetic and homodiegetic spaces in Yukich's *Do You Remember?* (1990). This video tells the story of a young boy's relationship with a girl who comes to live in his neighbourhood. In a simple linear fashion it traces episodes in their relationship, ending with her parents leaving and moving to another location.



Fig. 2:21 Still from Doyle's *Cloudbusting* (1985).
The lyrics from this song interface with the unfolding narrative.
The story concerns a girl and her father who experiment with a rain-making machine. His experiments cause him to be arrested by the authorities and taken away in their car. When the girl is too late to prevent his capture, a psychic connection causes her to help him by restarting the machine.

The reason this form of narration is not more widely used, Simmons (2004) suggests is because

generally the artist is the hero of a video. As a director one is required to elevate them to star status, completely immersing them in a narrative normally compromises that. Stories have a lot of other elements all vying for attention. If one confuses the star with other actors in the story, one has lost the purpose of the video. The story has taken over and we do not have an advertisement for a product anymore. Unless the star is already very well known (as with some brands like Coke) we need to position their brand (face) prominently. The product of the video cannot be confused. A great video, with interesting characters and enigmatic treatments can lose the whole battle if people remember the story and forget the artist. (p. 23)

Generally, videos with purely homodiegetic narration are produced for artists who have an already established following. While these may reach cult status amongst fans, they do not tend to launch careers or stand up to heavy rotation on television. Often, as in the case of Avis' production of U2's *All I Want Is You** (1992), the text is a follow-up version of a song, pre-released as a concert video.

Doyle's *Cloudbusting** (1985), is an example of homodiegetic narration. Both the performer and the song are embedded in the diegesis. The song tells the story and images are used to expand the narrative and give it more linearity³⁴. The singer, as an actor does not lip-synch the lyrics to the song. All of her appearances are related to developments in the narrative. At no time does she step outside of her character's role in the story. Because she plays a heroic role within the text, and is the only woman in the story, we associate the female singer's voice with the character.

³⁴ The song's lyrics remember both the spirit of her father and his innocence at the time of his arrest.

*You could see them coming
You look too small
In their big black car
To be a threat to the men in power.*

embedded heterodiegetic narration

The spatial separation of diegeses is a convention in television. This is because the remoteness of the narrator generally helps to reinforce the sense of objectivity or knowingness in relation to the text. However, some narrative music videos disrupt this practice by embedding the heterodiegetic site of narration inside the world of the story. The site remains heterodiegetic because the narrator, while appearing inside the diegesis, does not interact with it. The artist(s) are generally unnoticed commentators, and events and characters inside the story are unaffected by their presence. Often, while sharing the same space, the artist appears in it, at a different time.

This compression of homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration into the same space generally creates a densely layered form of story telling. It also affords greater opportunity for the artist, while remaining separate, to appositionally absorb the values or aesthetics of the narrative. Two influential examples of this approach, released in 1991, are narrative videos by Fincher, *Who Is It?** and Yukich, *No Son of Mine** (figs 2:22 & 2:23).

In both of these texts we see narrators occupying the same space as the story. In Yukich's video, the story is narrated through Phil Collins' performed lyrics. Collins sings about the conflict that unfolds around him. He is situated in the same living room at the same time as the argument. However, he sings about it retrospectively.

In a similar way, Fincher places Michael Jackson inside the world of *Who Is It?* The artist, while singing a song with lyrics that tangentially connect with the narrative, does not interact with any of the characters or events. He is narrating inside their world, but remains separate from it, occupying the same spaces but not the same time as the narrative's events.

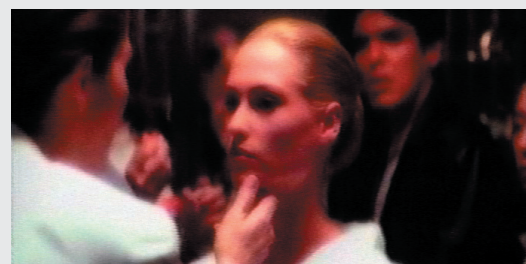


Fig. 2:22 Stills from Fincher's *Who Is It?* (1991). This story concerns a high-class call girl involved in espionage, who undergoes identity changes as part of a series of contracts. When she eventually refuses to fulfill an assignment, the people with whom she worked cast her out. Jackson inhabits many of the rooms where the story unfolds. He also picks up objects from the unfolding story (business cards) and contemplates them while he performs.

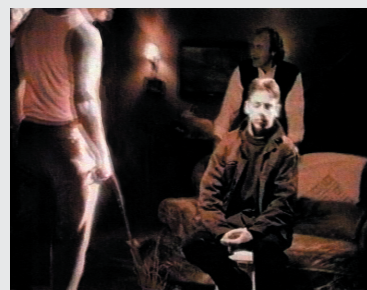


Fig. 2:23 Still from Yukich's *No Son of Mine* (1991). This story tells of a young boy's violent upbringing and his rejection by his father. Collins stands behind the child victim in the story.

oscillating narration

The final form of narration moves its narrative voices between heterodiegetic and homodiegetic sites in the text. Simmons (2004) says that in music videos,

the narrative element is not fixed. It not only moves between audio and visual registers but also between ways of telling. Often an artist will relate the story in more than one role, as both a commentator and actor. While this technique generally gives more video time to profiling the artist, the boundaries between what is observed and what is experienced become blurred. (p. 25).

Oscillation between these sites of narration not only helps to increase the textual density of a video but also allows the artist to deliver two quite different forms of narration; one more removed than the other. Glazer’s *Karma Police** (1997), illustrates how this transgression of conventionally divided spaces operates. This video opens with an unpopulated homodiegetic space, showing the empty back seat of a car. Across this image we hear a performance of the song.

The heterodiegetic site of the musical performance is invisible and remains so for the duration of the video. We hear the band but cannot see them. The lyrics of the song suggest a form of retribution³⁵ that corresponds with the video’s unfolding theme of punishment. However, the song is not about the story and remains coolly dislocated from the mounting tension in the narrative. As the video progresses, the camera observes, through the driver’s window, a man running along an open road. Our attention is then returned to the back seat of the car and we suddenly see the performer, Thom Yorke, sitting alone. He indolently lip-synchs a few of the song’s lyrics and at this point the heterodiegetic positioning of the audio narration slips in to the homodiegetic space of the visual narrative. The singer and lyrics are in the story and appear to be telling us something about it.

³⁵The song’s opening lyrics are:

<i>Karma Police</i>	<i>Karma Police</i>	<i>This is what you get</i>
<i>Arrest this man</i>	<i>Arrest this girl</i>	<i>This is what you get</i>
<i>He talks in maths</i>	<i>Her Hitler hairdo</i>	<i>This is what you get</i>
<i>He buzzes like a fridge</i>	<i>Is making me feel ill</i>	<i>When you mess with us.</i>
<i>He’s like a detuned radio</i>	<i>And we have crashed her party</i>	



However, this is only for a moment as Thom Yorke soon tires of the narration and the lyrics slide back out into the heterodiegetic space. Videos like Mallet & Bowie's *Let's Dance* (1983) and Lambert's *Like a Prayer* (1989), also oscillate between sites of narration. However, in these videos the heterodiegetic site of the performance is not invisible and the artists are seen narrating the story both heterodiegetically and homodiegetically. The oscillation between these worlds gives the performers the ability to position their narrative, at different times, on a continuum of intimacy and dislocation.

conclusion

This continuum of intimacy and dislocation was an important consideration in the film *boy* because I needed to create both a sense of confiding with, and distance from, the audience. Sam is not an intimate person, he trusts nobody and lives in an underground and overground that do not acknowledge each other. Although his retrospective voice shares insights with the viewer at the opening of



Fig. 2:24 Stills from Galzer's *Karma Police* (1997).



the story, his character in the film survives by being closed off from things that might hurt him. Only once, fleetingly, does he show any spontaneous affection.

From the outset of the film, I was looking for a way of structurally dealing with this disjunction. My first approach was to simply place a heterodiegetic narration outside of an unfolding homodiegetic narrative. This is a common convention in television series like *Star Trek* and *The Waltons*, where a voice-over is used to introduce and occasionally comment on the narrative.

For the heterodiegetic site of Sam's commentary, I designed a world of clouds and out-of-focus shots of the boy (fig. 2:25). Sam spoke the story inside this space and these scenes were designed to be interspersed through the unfolding narrative. The visual theme of moving clouds was also to seep out into the diegesis of the story. Vestiges of this approach remain in *boy* and can be seen in the time-lapse sequences of clouds on the open road.

After experimenting with the balance of a single heterodiegetic voice commenting on the film, I abandoned the approach and began experiments with something a little more complex and enigmatic.

As a result, the final narration in *boy* can be seen as primarily as a homodiegetic model communicated through actors who experience or cause a series of connected events. These occur inside a story that is presented as a finite, structured whole. However, three heterodiegetic voices intrude upon this narrative.

The first belongs to Sam. It occurs in the opening sequence of the film and talks about the broken angels that inhabited the silence of his childhood. This narration is in the past tense so we are aware that it belongs to a diegesis outside of the present-tense narrative that forms the core of the film. However, this written voice slides into the homodiegesis at the end of the film when it effectively brackets the text. The words, now subtly altered, have gathered meaning through the film and relate to the angel in the torn cloth on the table and the culture of secrecy that has surrounded the driver's involvement in the accident.

Fig. 2:25 [Opposite]

Indicative of Sam's heterodiegetic site of narration (2001).

An early experiment with narration used blue-screen shots of Sam telling the story. Footage was clear-cropped and layered over billowing skies that gradually changed with the time of day. While the technique helped to underscore the changing time zones in the film, it lacked subtlety and created too high a level of intimacy with the boy's character. The use of the spoken word also undermined the theme of silence in the film.

The second heterodiegetic voice belongs to the song *Anchor Me*. While the lyrics of this song have nothing to do with the film's narrative, at two points hook-lines from it intrude upon action in the story. Once, when the words "anchor me" appear over Sam being mocked in the classroom, and once at the dining table, when the words "shivering skin" surface in the shot of the policeman discussing the car accident with the hitchhiker's parents and Sam's family. This leakage from the heterodiegetic voice of the music into the interior thoughts or internal narrative of the film, occurs as a form of underscoring of words or hook-lines in music videos. Vernallis (1998) notes that this technique causes words to have performative functions in the text. In *boy* they are used to emphasise interior thinking in the film.

The final heterodiegetic voice belongs to somebody we do not know, possibly the unseen narrator, or author of the text. This is the narrator Lasswell (1948) suggests pervades messages whether or not a visible presenter exists. It is the narrator beyond the heterodiegetic realm we have identified. This voice flickers words about Sam over his cruising in the bogs. It uses a language most of the audience does not know and makes comment on something that is happening in a way that is only partly accessible. Thus, "cottage", "gloryhole" and "trade" are descriptions that come from somewhere beyond the heterodiegetic sites occupied by Sam and the lyrics of the music. The typeface this narrator uses is the same one used to list the actors in the film.

Significantly, this credit sequence is not demarcated from the text as in normal short films, but simply flows into the film's development as a natural progression of the story. It draws our attention, at the end of the story to its construction and positions itself as part of the diegesis.

summary of influences

Music videos are essentially television texts. They have developed inside television's limitations and compensations, and their structure and aesthetics have been substantially affected as a result. While aspects of video's aesthetics may reference cinema, essentially their way of telling stories is designed to operate with television's world of the glance, the spectacle, and continual flow of information.

Boy draws heavily on television's way of constructing narratives. However, rather than simply borrowing them, the film tends to treat them in unique ways or contrast them against more cinematic approaches.

colour

Technological limitations within television have resulted in distinctive profiles of both colour and sound. Colour in *boy* has been influenced by television's need to create palettes that can be transmitted stably through local and international broadcast. As a result colours tend to be selected from specific areas of the spectrum and often hues from one scene are embedded into the palettes of another. This technique contributes to the richness of iconography and helps to demarcate sections of the narrative. The approach is also employed to create a greater level of continuity across diverse forms of imagery.

Boy's appropriation of euphoric colour systems, used in television advertising, is also a form of political transgression. The film's unfamiliar iconography is brushed with the smooth, colour-saturated palettes used to create identity, aspiration and desire in this medium. However, these palettes are used in *boy* to tell the story of the "other"; a story that sits outside of music video and advertising's hegemonic construction of gay identity.

sound

Sound in music video also works to compensate for its loss of quality as broadcast information. Often music videos and television advertising intensify the position of sound in their texts by disrupting demarcations between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic realms.

In *boy*, apart from the typographical intersections between the lyrics and the unfolding narrative, there is no significant bleed between

these areas of the audio. However, the film extends music video's practice of embedding specific sounds foleyed over the homodiegetic soundscape. In *boy* this results in a design where silence and third-layer sounds, dislocated from those that might normally surround them, are occasionally used to heighten attention to details in the text. They are also orchestrated in specific ways to build tension or pathos in the story.

rhythm

Synchronisation between audio and image in the film is also a feature borrowed from music video design. Images and events within the story are often emphasised by being linked to specific changes and rhythms in the accompanying music. By synchronising specific features of the visual narrative with emphases in the music, one is able to draw greater attention to specific actions in a shot. The opposite technique of using the beat of a song to accentuate changes in scene, is employed in *boy* as a counterpoint to this technique. Editing on the beat is generally used where attention is being drawn to the look of an image rather than the action occurring within it. The rhythm these approaches create in the film is used to temper the fragmenting effect its highly cropped imagery.

Creating a directional flow between the images also emphasises rhythm in the text. As a feature of many television commercials and videos, this technique is used to create a graceful, forward-motion that moves the action almost hypnotically towards the narrative's conclusion. In *boy* this technique is used to smooth together stylistically diverse sections of the narrative, and create a veneer of grace against which the more abject sequences in the text are contrasted. Movement against this smooth directional flow is generally employed as a way of heightening tension prior to conflict.

imagery

The use of imagery designed to capture the attention of the viewer, is a feature of both television and cinema. However, because television operates in an environment of distraction, it tends to use imagery in a different way. Television's pictures are generally less detailed and

shorter in duration than those in cinema. Because these images are often rapidly exhausted, they tend to last for a comparatively short time.

The use of highly cropped images in *boy* resulted from an analysis of this technique in both music video narrative and advertising. By adapting television's momentary attention to the image, one can condense a large amount of information into a very short space of time. To do this without fragmenting the text into a dislocated and frenetic clutter, one needs to carefully orchestrate devices like colour bleeding, audio/image rhythm, directional flow and distortions of time and space to create a seductively smooth appearance to the text. With these compensatory devices one is able to create an expansive, image-saturated narrative that tells a story in a limited amount of time.

Boy borrows from music video and television advertising, the use of vignettes that contain small actions. These vignettes are strung together in sequence and either act as one-off shots or as images that cut to a detail before quickly moving on. This particular method of storytelling is used as a way of intensifying the density of imagery in the film. In *boy* these images tend to be low-relief constructions where attention is focused on a central action.

character

Because characters cannot be built in this film through dialogue, they are constructed and portrayed as images that accumulate meaning from their surroundings. Narrative music videos tend to employ simple, linear storylines populated by archetypical personalities. Characters in the text are designed in such a way as to draw information about themselves from the unfolding narrative, or through comparison with archetypical opposites within the story. The people who live in Sam's world are generally painted in low relief and (apart from the driver's exposure) do not undergo significant transformations in the story.

enigma and closure

The need for music videos to hold interest over multiple screenings has also significantly affected the way they tell stories. Narrative videos often profile inconsistent applications of event logic and because of this, they pose questions to audiences. The use of events and iconography that may not be completely explained, are used in *boy* as a method of encouraging a greater level of curiosity and involvement with repeated viewings of the text. Closure is often treated differently in music video and television advertising because the purpose of these texts is more concerned with appellation than explanation. While *boy* adapts some of these devices, it is also employs some traditional systems of closure, including bracketing and retrospection.

Short films like *boy* are designed for marketing after the film festivals. At this point some are released through distribution companies as DVDs. These are generally bought and played a number of times. It is appropriate in the light of this growing domestication of the short film³⁶, that the changing use of these texts considers alternative methods of storytelling. Television advertising and music video as media forms, have developed specific techniques for preserving the durability of their stories over repeated screenings. Their structures, aesthetics and positioning of the storyteller, have been influential in the design of *boy*.

While these structural and aesthetic features are of significance to the text, in the next chapter I consider the typographical treatments developed as the other major profile of the film. These written words create the silent voice of the movie.

³⁶ In 2004, twelve New Zealand short films were sold for release beyond the cinema festivals. They were *boy*, *Kitty*, *The Platform*, *From Where I'm Standing*, *Fly*, *Infection*, *Water*, *His Father's Shoes*, *Two Cars One Night*, *Kitchen Sink*, *Signing Off* and *The French Doors*.

section three
typography





the voice of type:
context and considerations

*The written word can illuminate or destroy.
Like still waters, the danger is in what lies
beneath the veneer.*

Morton, 2003, p. 27

introduction

Boy is a film that speaks with many voices. The way that television, through its distinctive orchestration of sound and imagery tells stories to the viewer has already been discussed in this exegesis. However, the use of typography, as a form of narration in the film requires consideration.

The design of the written voice in *boy* draws considerations from a culture in which Sam lives, a culture that is widely spread across New Zealand, but rarely acknowledged. This is the world of the bogs and the language form associated with cruising in this world is called bogspeak¹.

This chapter is therefore introduced by a consideration of how typography is used to marginalise. It then looks at the literary and demographic profiles of bog-cruising and follows with a discussion of social impacts on the language form.

From this basis, an analysis of the language is considered in terms of its deployment in developing and refining the typographical voices in the film *boy* with specific reference to two thematic profiles, detachment and ecclesiasticism.

The chapter concludes with a consideration of spatio-temporal typographics as a narrative voice and the ways this form of narration has been embedded in the text.

¹ Bogspeak is a specific type of argot that has developed to meet the communicative needs of a historically marginalised, socio-political group. Men who use public toilets for sexual contact with other men, constitute this criminalised sector of society.

Bogspeak is a specifically New Zealand anti-language that has been influenced by both British Polari and gay slang.

For a fuller discussion of argot and anti-language see Baker, P. (2002 b) *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. London: Routledge, pp.11-13 and Cage, K. (2003) *Gayle: The Language of Kinks and Queens. A History and Dictionary of Gay Language in South Africa*. Cape Town: Jacana, pp. 1-2.

another face

typography and the marginalised

Much contemporary discussion on typography has focused on the role of typographic form in conveying meaning and the contribution of formal elements like leading, kerning, letter form and kinetics to issues of readability and legibility². While these physical concerns are pertinent to any discussion of meaning, they tend to avoid addressing the wider, contextual concerns relating to the way spaces of cultural inclusion and exclusion are mediated via typographical treatment³. Otherness, as presented in the written word, may be considered not only as a construction of word meaning but also as a construct of form. Salen (2001) in her essay *Surrogate Multiplicities: Typography in the Age of Invisibility* suggests that “the display of otherness relies on the historicizing mechanics of cultural standardization” (p. 1).

Her hypothesis may be supported by a consideration of the development of standardised typefaces that have been used to profile a national or international environment. Typefaces like Interstate, Bell Gothic, Arial, Univers, Century Schoolbook, and Times New Roman, have become ubiquitous voices to which we have become accustomed. They are utopian and generic, belonging everywhere and nowhere in a mediated, global environment. They have no dialect and no affiliation to region, and as seemingly non-aligned they have become representations of a graphic form that while inclusive, also acts as a kind of cultural border.

² Indicative of significant writing in this area is Bellantoni, J. & Woolman, M. (2000). *Moving Type: Designing for Time and Space*, and Mealing, S. (2003). *Value added text: Where graphic design meets paralinguistics*. *Visible Language* 37 (1).

³ It is significant that international organisations like *Typeright* whose *Guide to Ethical Type Design* published in 1998 (www.typeright.org) states “Our aim is to answer some of the ethical questions you might confront when designing type.” However, ethics only addresses the most pragmatic of issues: originality, revival, respect for other designer’s work, remixing, auto-tracing, renaming and piracy.

These typefaces may be considered as part of the process by which a standardised “voice” is applied across an entire range of cultural profiles while simultaneously representing only one dominant and generic form. Salen (2001) suggests that when one considers both the syntactic and semantic elements of the written word,

an analysis of the systems of subjectivity at play within typographic discourse can reveal a myriad of ways in which visual form supports structures of cultural standardization, marking exclusionary distinctions between standard and non-standard speakers. (p. 2)

An emphasis on standardisation has been asserted from the earliest days of printing. These demands became highly profiled in the nineteenth century when notions of order and decorum became prominent social values⁴. Michael North (1994) suggests in *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language and Twentieth Century Literature* that between the 1880s and 1920s, mass immigration and increasing urbanisation brought together a range of languages, dialects and idiolects previously separated either geographically or socially.

It is significant to note that in the early part of this period Parlyaree, the underground language of traveling circus men, showmen, and itinerant actors in Britain⁵ began to develop into Polari, the anti-language of gay men living working in England’s large cities⁶. Also, the development of the 1858 proposal for the Oxford English Dictionary was significant in this period because it ruled out consideration of dialect words more recent than the reformation, and in so doing, established what the dictionary itself cites as the first recorded use of the phrase “standard language”⁷.

⁴ North, M. (1994). *The Dialect of Modernism*. p. 12.

⁵ Baker (2002b) contends that parlyaree was possibly introduced into England in the 1840s with the influx of Italian Punch and Judy men, organ grinders and show-people. He also suggests that the language probably acted as a bridge between thieves’ cant and Polari.

⁶ See Partridge, E. (1970) *Slang Today and Yesterday*. p. 249.

⁷ North, M. (1994). *The Dialect of Modernism*, p. 12.

North (1994) suggests that,

the true purpose of the standard language movement was to focus attention on the alien, both foreign and domestic, and to provide a means of discriminating where other methods were beginning to fail. (p. 13)

However, while notions of correct form were being fiercely defended against the influences of urbanisation, class mobility and immigration, visual representations of non-standard “speakers” flourished in an array of idiosyncratic typefaces. These profiled as exaggerations and embellishments inside what Salen (2001) calls “the narrowly defined borders of the ‘exotic’ and the ‘abbreviated’” (p. 3).

Many of these alphabets were developed and positioned as distances from established and conventionalised notions of legibility and elegance popularised by typefaces like Bodoni, Baskerville and Caslon. In the mid-to-late nineteenth century a number of these “foreign” alphabets developed both through design and nomenclature to reinforce the exoticised other. The designers of these display-faces often employed devices like evocations of calligraphic brush strokes, Arabic writing, broken or disturbed letter forms, or elements of the bizarre or exoticised, (fig. 3:1) to reinforce the alien nature of the text.

Significantly, an analysis of popular “foreign” alphabets generated in the last ten years by Western designers has indicated little shift from this same emphasis on designing the “other” as exoticised and distanced from values of readability and legibility. Many of these faces are made up of orchestrated letterforms that are essentially dislocated from the philosophical and metaphoric values that are integral to the structure of the written language of the culture they purport to represent. In many cases the faces are imitations of culture as seen through the eyes of the west (fig. 3:2 overleaf).

As designs, alphabets like these may balance issues of semantics (meaning) and syntax (form) but because they cannot operate as body text, their use remains restricted to ornamental display faces. Their form is designed to overwhelm the message, so that any potential for



Fig. 3:1 Pseudo Asian type used to brand a range of products or services in the 1920s.
Chinese Mission Society Monthly Magazine, December 10, 1929, *Silk Fabrics*, May 25, 1926 and *Lamps*, December 17, 1929.

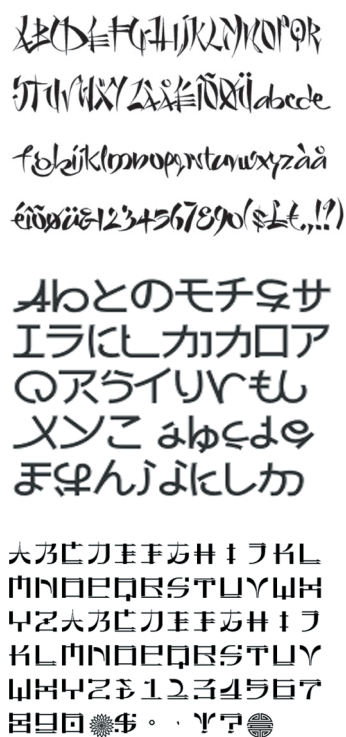


Fig. 3:2 Contemporary “oriental” faces. The first is Hans Bacher’s *West of China* (2001) AGFA Monotype, the other two by Roger Vershen are, *Faux Japanese* and *Faux Chinese*. Vershen’s are both decorative & display faces for *Page Studio Graphics*. The letterforms he suggests are based on actual syllabary characters (Katakana & Hiragana). It is significant to note, however, that serious legibility and readability issues emerge when either of these faces is applied to significant bodies of copy. The last two designs contain no lowercase alphabet and no accented letters. Differential spacing structures are also tied to traditional western constructs with the letters in Bacher’s typeface completely dislocated from the *chiu-kung-ko* [nine palace squares] construct that gives uniformity and harmonious stability to Chinese letterforms.

use in lengthy discourse becomes prohibitive. They operate simply as what Bellantoni and Woolman (2000) call “*temporary stimulation for the eyes*” (p. 5). On the grounds of being temporary and exoticised they can be accommodated by the dominant culture as the other. They represent difference that is at once sensational and impractical and as a result can be used to reinforce the ideals of inclusiveness and exposure while simultaneously remaining disabled.

Despite an intensive critique of nineteenth century practices and a cultural reevaluation of modernism, the relative explosion of typefaces resulting from technological shifts in the last two decades of the twentieth century⁸ has surfaced a plethora of culturally thematic and exoticised alphabets that continue to reinforce the invisibility and marginalisation of the other through parody and pastiche. Salen (2001) argues that,

this practice, dramatized by contemporary type designers’ love affair’ with appropriation and reinscription of subcultural forms, has rendered the term vernacular both formally vacuous and semantically vacant. (p. 5)

Indicative of this are “alternaculture” typefaces like Crackhouse, Junkie, (fig. 3:3) and Sissyboy, (fig. 3:4) that merely give the appearance of inclusion. They remain culturally marginalised and continue to reinforce stereotypical constructions of ineptitude and otherness.

⁸ Prior to the release of Fontographer, the design of new typefaces was an expensive and rudimentary undertaking with individual weights of a typeface costing over £100.00 (U.K.) each and even then lacking crucial characters like fractions. Fontographer challenged this situation by providing font modification systems on the desktop. It enabled different weights to be created from a single master and also the editing of individual characters. As a result of its introduction, many new, inexpensive fonts emerged in very rapid succession. However, the work involved in designing new fonts was still time consuming. Constructing each symbol in a character developed by laboriously setting bezier curves, and then working out the ideal font metrics for spacing and kerning pairs soon disillusioned most small, independent designers. However, many type foundries did use the software and as a result a large number of third-party fonts quickly became available.

Sissy boy’s play with tensions between bizarre decoration and writhing contortion, its recurring structural contradictions and built-in kerning inconsistencies, contribute to a design that cannot function as body text. This causes it to operate solely as an unstable and relatively illegible display face⁹. Thus, typefaces like this cannot be used to present any significant body of information. They are employed to adorn and appellate but not as part of any extended discourse. If they are deployed for communicating large bodies of text, the content of the written communication is generally overridden by an atmosphere of congestion and confusion.

While representations of otherness in culturally thematic alphabets like Sissy boy might be relatively overt, there exist more subtle instances of written convention being used to indicate ideology through typography. A significant example is the non-capitalisation of the word Negro. In “standard English” usage, the proper names of national groups are traditionally marked with a capital letter. However, up until the ideological debates surrounding the American Reconstruction, the word was always written with a lower case initial¹⁰. The relationship between ideology and typography can also be illustrated by the Nazi resurrection of the black letter type Fraktur, as the national typeface in the 1930s. The Nazis first considered the face as the natural expression of the Aryan soul because it symbolised the totalitarian nature of the politics and carried references to historical precedents underpinning the perceived glory of the Third Reich. However, on January 3, 1941, claiming that gothic type had been invented by Jews, German National Socialism chose to replace

⁹ In a search of the Adobe, Agfa-Monotype, Berthold, Bitstream, Elsner+Flake, Font Bureau, FontFont, ITC, Letraset, Linotype, P22, Identikaland, Type Associates and URW++ font libraries (<http://www.identifont.com>), sissy boy was the only typeface available containing a gay or gay related branding. Key words used in the search included a list as diverse as: *gay, gay boy, camp, queer, homosexual, homo, queen, quean, drag, fag, faggot, fairy, faerie, bent, pansy, Nancy boy, Nelly, sissy, pouf, poof, pillow-muncher, sodomite, trissy, and bugger*.

¹⁰ Allen, I. (1990). *Unkind Words: Ethnic Labelling from Redskin to Wasp*, p. 74..

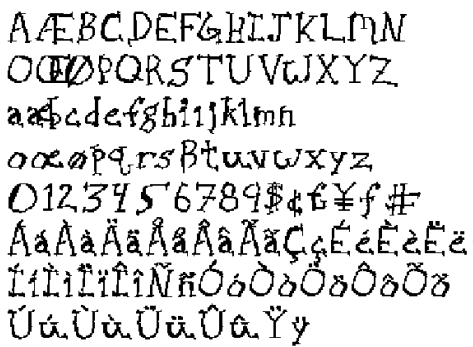


Fig. 3:3 *Junkie*, designed by Dan Ibarra for the T26 Type foundry in 1995.

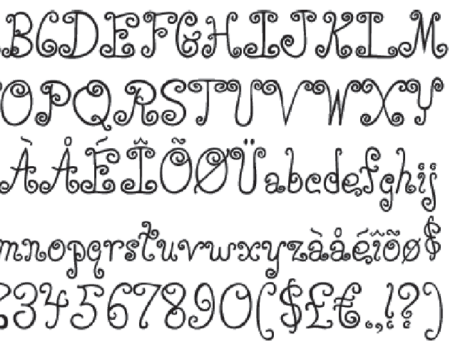


Fig. 3:4 *Sissy boy*, designed in 2001 by Peters for Bitstream, may be considered as pandering to and reinforcing the dominant heterosexist culture’s perception the gay man in contemporary society. The dominant culture’s perception of the queer sissy is that he “operates as the ornamented party boy of the urban environment, fun yet unstable, an avid consumer and performer, obsessed with make-overs and style, a foreigner to stability and function whose ornateness is excessive and indiscriminate” (Morton, 2003, p. 14).

the face with a small selection of Roman fonts. Ray (1998) suggests that this decision was related to the early victories that “*encouraged them to look beyond Germany’s borders*” (p. 430). Fletcher (2001) argues that the rejection was related to the typeface’s lack of practicality for use in propaganda. Whatever the reason, decisions regarding the use of typographic forms are intimately connected to the ways that societies communicate essential values, including marginalisation of the other.

Consideration of sociolects¹¹, argot¹², slang and anti-languages¹³, by dominant cultures often profile as typographical forms where we are directed to make immediate value judgments about social class, ethnicity, gender, or regional background. Designers often label letterforms that fall outside of the dominant pantheon of standard typefaces “vernacular” although the term is problematic. This categorisation of form is one based on notions of deviance, although linguistically, dialects are not considered deviant forms of language but different systems with distinct subsets of form¹⁴. Vernacular letterforms often present a loaded but intended *faux pas* that, in drawing attention to orchestrated, exoticised elements, become simultaneously part of the communication of marginalisation.

Because ideas concerning the sanctity and regularity of language are closely entwined with notions of social order, typographic forms that exist outside of privileged or prescriptive constructs can incite suspicion.

¹¹ Wardhaugh (1986) uses the term *sociolect* to describe the speech characteristics of members of specific social groups, as opposed to idiolects that represent the speech characteristics of individuals.

¹² Baker (2002b) defines *argot* as language varieties associated with group membership where specific words are used to conceal either the users, or aspects of their communication, from non-members.

¹³ Halliday (1978) uses the term *anti-language* to define a language generated by anti-societies. In its simplest form anti-language is partly a relexicalised language, often consisting of the same grammar as the dominant language, but a different vocabulary.

¹⁴ Wolfram, W. (1991). *Dialects and American English*, p. 4.

Levi-Strauss has noted, “in certain primitive myths, the mispronunciation of words and the misuse of language are classified along with incest as horrendous aberrations capable of “unleashing storm and tempest.” (Hedige, 1987, p. 118).

The classification of these letterforms under the relatively benign category of vernacular, has afforded many designers a comfortable and under-critiqued avoidance of the subtle yet cumulative effects of their generation and use.

Ignoring the implications of type-form might have been argued as the dominant state of practice, in the closing decade of the twentieth century.

However, in the 1990s surfaced typographical experiments, (both in print and moving image), that violated authorised codes. They did this by utilising “standardised typefaces” in disruptive contexts. These designs sought to give “voice” to marginalised dialects and argots by creating new approaches to typographic form. Significant among these are the advertisements developed by John Barnbrook for the 1995 B.B.C. Radio Scotland campaign* (fig. 3:5).

These short television texts used established type, disrupted and re-orchestrated, to aggressively capture the colloquial nature of the spoken dialect. Letterforms were animated over a pre-recorded audio monologue. The typographic designs were successful in translating not only the ethos of aural accents, but also their unapologetic profile as confident, marginalised voices.

summary

Typographic design as a system for conveying meaning, may be seen as contributing to cultural exclusion. Historically, otherness has been demonstrated in the establishment of standardised typefaces. These alphabets have profiled national or international values against which the exotic has been demarcated and defined.

Alphabets designed to represent the other have normally been developed by people inside the dominant order. These depictions have often disrupted conventions like readability, legibility, and elegance. Generally these alphabets tend to be dislocated from the philosophical and metaphorical values of the groups they purport to represent.



Fig. 3:5 Stills from *Foggie Bummer** (1995)

The conversation is between two men discussing words used in Scottish dialect. The animation was generated by letrasetting directly onto a combination of found footage and footage Barnbrook had filmed himself. Each frame in the piece was hand made. This work was made for the BBC and was aired nightly, just before the station went off the air. Barnbrook's discussion on this work is available at: <http://www.barnbrook.net/films/bbc%20radio%20scotland/radioscotland.html>

Because of this they may be seen as imitations of culture. In general their purpose is limited to ornamentation and display. This is because their decorative nature disables them from presenting any significant body of information; they become unreadable when used as body type.

As token representations, these alphabets are often used to portray the marginalised inside the graphic language of a dominant culture. However, because of their exoticised physical form, they simultaneously represent difference as decorative, difficult and impractical.

Recently, academic and professional discourse has begun to question the nature of this marginalisation. This discourse has raised issues for the present project. This is because the world in which Sam belongs, is generally seen as indicative of the other. Alphabets developed to represent male prostitutes either do not exist, or more importantly, do not draw on any in-depth understanding of these men's language and culture.

The following section of this exegesis therefore, examines the culture and language form of Sam's world. It seeks through this analysis to develop typographical treatments that might more articulately present the subtle and complex nature of his character and the story he tells.

bog culture and anti-language

introduction

In the story, Sam's world is a composite of two conflicting diegeses. The first comprises the over-ground. It is the evident world of the small town, with its socially demarcated school, watchful streets, local hotel and undercurrent of comfortable brutality. This is the world in Sam's recollection where *"things were bound by tradition and silence."* Here the boy exists as the beloved child of his grandmother, as a mildly eccentric loner with a strange penchant for collecting broken dolls and junk from the dump. Like many young gays he exists in this world as a performing character, feigning nonchalance or retreat, as needs dictate, but above all covering all traces of any parallel life. He is fifteen, in year eleven at the local high school; he rides a bike and dresses the same as everybody else. He is seen as relatively inconsequential.

The film's second diegesis enfolds a completely separate world to the first, although like the language form that is used within it, it contains elements recontextualised from the over-ground.

Here Sam cruises in the weekends and after school. He turns tricks for money, knows many of the men in the town, the police and a world of networks, language and innuendo that is beyond the comprehension of most of the community.

In Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand a core of the language he uses in this world is called Polari. Though in most urban centers it has all but died out now, Polari is a secret language mainly used by gay men in the first seventy or so years of the twentieth century, however in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand it sits within a context of broader, culturally specific argots. Cage (2003) has recently termed the South African form of this language Gayle. However, in New Zealand and Australia the argot still remains relatively undocumented and certainly unnamed. As an underpinning for this research, specifically the informing of design decisions surrounding the development of typographical treatments for the film, I spent four years collecting and documenting a lexicon of specific New Zealand bog cruising argot (appendix 2). This lexicon contains words related

to, and emerging from, the criminalised culture of bog cruisers. The language variety appears to be made up of three forms, Polari, an anti-language used by gay men in the United Kingdom over the past hundred years, gay slang, and finally words relating to specific locations, events or groups of people involved in the criminalisation or marginalisation of men who operate within the bog cruising community.

bog culture

literary profiles

Documentation relating to the world of bog cruising demonstrates a long, sparse and little publicised history. Theo van der Meer's (1994) study of the use of public toilets as sites for same sex encounters in the Netherlands in the eighteenth century, provides records of some of the earliest western European profiles of this culture. George Chauncey's *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (1994), discusses the historical profiles and meanings of public sex in that city and provides an interesting consideration of both ethnic and class issues impacting upon them. Unlike other aspects of sexual engagement, the subject of bog cruising has not profiled highly in the literary arts. Angus Wilson's *Hemlock and After* (1952) features a memorable scene centered on arrests in toilets in Leicester Square and Roger Peyrefitte's, *The Exile of Capri* (1961), contains one highly comic scene set in public toilets. Bog cruising features in Larry Kramer's, *Faggots* (1978), and in Andrew Holleran's, *Dancer from the Dance* (1978). In theatre the subject profiles in Michael Wilcox's play *Rents* (1979), about two rent boys in Edinburgh and brutally in Nigel William's hard-hitting attack on police entrapment, *WCPC* (1982). In film, cruising in public toilets has been significantly profiled in Fassbinder's *Fox and His Friends* (1975), Ripploh's *Taxi zum Klo* (1981), Stephen Frear's *Prick Up Your Ears* (1987), Ana Kokkino's *Head On* (1998), and in Simon Shore's comedy, *Get Real* (1999).

In New Zealand literature the subject remains relatively avoided, although it features briefly in Barry Nonweiler's novel *That Other Realm of Freedom* (1983), in Welby Ings' short stories, *Pickup* (1980), and *A Matter of Convenience* (1987), and most recently in the documentary by Marion Evans, *Formally Known as James Mack* (2003).

demographic profiles

The language of bog cruisers, which I term bogspeak emerged as a natural consequence of the societal oppression of a group of men by both the dominant heterosexual community and also significant sections of the New Zealand gay community. Bog cruisers continue to exist as a distinct, clandestine and marginalised group in most towns and in every city in this country. In considering the profile and nature of bogspeak, it is useful to have an understanding of the legal and social situation that has accompanied, and to a certain extent shaped, this community in New Zealand. This profile appears as appendix 1 to this exegesis.

International studies in the 1970s gave the first significant profiles of the bog cruising community as one made up primarily of married men. Humphrey's (1970), *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*¹⁵, suggested that 54% of men using "tearooms" for sex were married men living with their wives. In his forward to the British edition of the book, criminologist D. J. West commented,

One might have expected that men indulging in anonymous sexual exchanges in lavatories would prove to be lonely, socially alienated, unmarried and possibly ageing homosexuals. In fact, it appears that the majority, were married and predominantly heterosexual. They were seeking an additional sexual outlet that was quick, undemanding and free from social entanglements. Fully committed homosexuals were in less evidence, perhaps because they had better means of making contacts and achieving satisfaction. (Cited in Burton, 1985, p.17)

In Australia and New Zealand, two more recent studies suggested that non-gay identifying men (heterosexual or bisexual) comprised somewhere between 40%-50% of the men who used bogs for sex.

¹⁵ This research was first published in 1970 although the data it profiles was the outcome of evidence gathered in the 1960s. Humphrey's research focused specifically on behaviour in toilets. Related research in 1978 by fellow sociologist Edward Delph, *The Silent Community: Public Homosexual Encounters* considered a wider range of public sex encounters in New York City. A traditional sociological model of "deviance" characterised both of these pieces of early research.

The Westmead Hospital study (cited in Goddard, 1990) suggested that 9% of men doing the beats “regarded themselves as heterosexual. Another 39% ... said they were bisexual. Just over half (52%) identified as homosexual” (p. 26).

In New Zealand, Chetwynd’s report (1990a) stated that 36% of her research sample identified as either bisexual or as both gay and bisexual, however the most common identity of toilet cruisers was gay (64%). (It is significant to note however, that her report omitted a category for men who considered themselves to be heterosexual despite the fact that her research of the previous year in conjunction with Horn and Kelleher (1989)¹⁶ stated, “a slightly higher proportion of respondents using bogs in large urban as opposed to provincial areas may be heterosexual identifying”(p. 17).

Her findings also appear to sit uncomfortably against related statistics like Desroches (1990), and Moore (1995), both of whom suggest that “the majority of men who cruise urban and highway beats are ostensibly heterosexual married men with families” (Nardi, 1999, p. 26).

Reid, Hughes, Worth, Saxton, Robinson, Segedin, & Aspin’s, *Male Call, Waea Mai, Tane Ma. Report 4, Casual sex between men* (1997), was an outcome of the first nation-wide survey of men who have sex with men in New Zealand¹⁷. This report, described among other things,

¹⁶ Horn, Chetwynd, & Kelleher, J. *Changing Sexual Practices Amongst Homosexual Men in Response to AIDS: Who Has Changed and Who Hasn’t and Why?*, p. 17.

¹⁷ The *Male Call, Waea Mai Tane Ma* project was undertaken because no large scale baseline data on this population was available and at the time men who had sex with men accounted for 80% of New Zealanders who had developed AIDS (Reid et al, 1997, p.1). The method used was a nationwide telephone survey that was conducted over a six-week period between May and June 1996. All men who had sex with another man in the previous five years were able to participate. 1852 men completed the questionnaire in full and the survey attracted a broad cross-section of men who had sex with men through a recruitment campaign that included both mainstream and gay media.

the demographic characteristics and social milieu variables of a sample of 1852 respondents who were men who had sex with men.

The research found that 35% of the 1362 men who said they had casual sex with another man (msc) in the previous year had been to a bog at least once in that period to look for or meet male sex partners. The demographic and social milieu characteristics of these 477 men when compared to the remaining 885 msc who had not been to public toilets to look for male sex partners was characterised by higher proportions of men who:

- were aged over 35 (51%:43%) $p=0.006$
 - identified as Maori (12.6%: 5.8%) $p<0.001$
 - did not have any school qualification (15%: 9.7%) $p=0.006$
 - were not gay community attached (37.3%: 30.7%) $p=0.02$
 - were in a relationship with another man (29.6% : 24%) $p=0.04$
- (report 4, p. 15).

Their report also found that ninety of the msc (6.6%) in the survey had been paid to have sex in the previous six months (*ibid*, p. 7), that unlike gay bars and saunas which are generally patronised by gay community-attached men, bogs often are not (*ibid*, p. 11), and that Maori respondents were more likely than New Zealand Europeans to have gone to public toilets in the previous year to meet male sex partners (*ibid*, p. 12).

These results called in to question some of the findings of Chetwynd's *Profiles of Gay and Bisexual men- report no. 6; The Toilets* (1990) that suggested that ... "there were no real differences between the toilet cruisers and the non toilet cruisers on age, ethnicity or sexual identity," (p. 22).

Thus, research would tend to suggest that bog cruising communities are something very different to the wider notions of "gay society". Demographically they have a distinct profile that includes a large proportion of married, non gay-identifying men, who are not gay-community attached.

In this next section of the exegesis we will consider some of the dominant social attitudes evidenced in these communities and how they are expressed in the language form they have developed.



the silent language

The bog-scene as presented in the film *boy* is encoded with a range of linguistic and behavioral features indicative of a scrupulously unacknowledged world. Almost every town and certainly every city in New Zealand has an active bog culture. Because gay and bisexual men are denied the usual support and affirmation from family and society that is available to heterosexual people, Cass (1979), argues that their sexual activity takes on a greater personal meaning. Due to the limited opportunities available to men who have sex with men to meet each other, especially in small towns and rural environments, some of these men make use of public bogs and their surrounding environs for sexual contacts. Risks of exposure or criminal charges are outweighed by the need for affirmation, intimacy and belonging through sexual and social contact.

Hollister (1999), in his analysis of highway rest areas in New York suggests that,

[o]nly in the most secure sites is conversation likely to be routine, casual and refer to sexual contact. Since tearoom cruising involves so little spoken language, and is so rarely spoken about by its participants, there is no commonly recognized language to talk about it. (p. 61)

However, his assertion is not supported by the majority of men interviewed as part of this present project. Hollister's belief is not consistent with a very full and descriptive lexicon that surfaced during interviews and conversations with many New Zealand men who use bogs for establishing contact with other men (*see appendix 2*). While for some people who use these facilities there is a strong emphasis on anonymity and non-verbal discourse, for many others there is a rich and colourful language that affords an exclusive and highly descriptive profile not only on the culture of bog cruising but also on its histories and social emphases¹⁸.

¹⁸ In this research, the idea of there being no commonly recognised language was generally expressed only by people living in large urban centres that have seen a diminishing of the numbers of bogs suitable for cruising and the increasing availability of "sex on site" clubs. The opinion also profiled among heterosexually identifying men whose use of the bogs is generally fleeting and silent. Conversely, the language form appears to be very full and in use in many small towns and rural areas of the country. Here smaller numbers of men cruise and exist in loose networks that are often more likely to be known to each other.

Fig. 3:7 Opposite, publicity shot of Sam in the bogs (2004)

the family

Smith (1993), argues that the bog-scene forms part of a dynamic that exclusively privileges the heterosexual concept of the family. He says

the underside of the family is that it is highly resistant to tolerating the existence of social relations outside of its reach. A man desiring sex with another man is not easily integrated into the rigid sexual ideology of the nuclear family. Beats can therefore be seen as an effect in part, of mandatory heterosexuality. The visible, acceptable face of heterosexuality is the institution of the family. But the rigidity of its heterosexual orientation has the effect of producing the beat. (p. 20)

If the bogs/beats exist as a covert phenomenon running parallel to, but outside of, socially sanctioned notions of the family, it is fear of exposure to this same family that causes the men in these communities to build up the systems of practice that ensure secrecy and anonymity. This fear may be seen as one of the reasons why sentences of diversion (with their inherent non-recording of a criminal record) of prosecutions for offensive behavior, are so keenly sought after by arrested men. Notions of the family as the polarity against which the otherness of the bog cruiser is measured, can be seen in the way that the news media encodes information regarding bog cruising behavior as a fundamental attack on this unit.

Smith (1993), suggests, “in the vast majority of newspaper articles on beats, the legitimizing cry was that the beat activities posed a threat to the children and the family” (p. 20).

This notion of the beat user as encroaching upon the space of the family can be seen in numerous police justifications for arrests of men with other men. *The Northern Advocate's* report on the arrest of two youths aged eighteen and nineteen at 11.00pm on Friday 2 August 2000, for performing indecencies on each other in a car parked near the toilet block of the Whangarei Aquatic centre, quoted Sergeant Murray Stapp's justification for the arrest as:

Children and teenagers use those toilets and they are entitled to use them without being confronted by these people. We have had a number of complaints about the activities that go on there and the only way to stop it is to give the place a good check out. (Dinsdale, 2000, p.1)

Although the article questioned whether any children would have been around the toilet block at 11.00 pm on the night that the two men were arrested (in their car) and a request was made for evidence that any children had been approached (by men) at the toilet, no response was forthcoming. A question as to why heterosexual couples who have sex in cars were not similarly arrested was also left without a response.

Yet possibly because of this marginalisation, the culture of bog cruising in rural towns has developed many structures and terms that relate directly to a notion of the alternative family. Nic Andronis (1991), the Rural Outreach Project Officer for the AIDS Council of New South Wales states,

discussions and observation at beats revealed that there is a loose network of local beat users within a given area. They generally tend to know each other and over time develop a social relationship which includes discussion about aspects of their lives that would not be disclosed elsewhere. This process is extremely important for these men who, for the most part, are in a relationship with a female partner. (p. 2)

Andronis discusses rural beats as being active day and night with regular peak period patterns known to local users. Within these patterns there exist times when a strong sense of community is evident.

Men who have sex with men who use the beat during the day are very wary of being exposed and may not acknowledge others. The night time users of town beats tend to become more relaxed and social, with men sitting in their cars and much more social integration (ibid).

Ulo Klemmer a BEAT volunteer who grew up in the bog scene in the early 1980s, talks about the family structures that existed at that time.

A young person would be 'adopted' by older, more experienced men, not for sex necessarily, but because the young needed to be shown their way around a society that had its own rules. (Goddard, 1990, p. 28)

The notion of the alternative bog-cruising family is clearly identifiable within bogspeak's vocabulary. An *Aunty* is the term for an older gay man, generally whose approach to life is conservative. A *mother* generally refers to a gay mentor, protector or advisor who in a community cares for, or is surrounded by younger, gay men with whom he generally does not have a sexual relationship. A *daddy* is an older, generally sexually attractive man. Among more khamp bog cruisers the term *sister* refers to a close gay male friend.

Describing an unfamiliar man as *family* indicates that he is either gay or has sex with other men. The concept of family also permeates derogatory terms like *fish-wife* (the wife of a gay man), *breeder* (a heterosexual man) and *miscarriage* (a discharge of air and semen after anal sex).

Bogs exist as a phenomenon caught in a social tension. Clearly they provide an outlet for sexual satisfaction that involves no on-going commitment to sexual partners, they afford quick sex with some protection from exposure. Within this, the networked and protective environment of bog cruising serves another significant purpose.

The bog cruiser operates in a society where a range of active and substantial censures impact upon him. Ironically he is vulnerable to both criminal harassment (queer bashers and blackmailers) and to the police. Gay men who use the bogs for sex are also stigmatised within significant sections of the gay community, and both gay identifying men and those who identify as heterosexual or bisexual are all vulnerable to the media's construction of their natures and behavior.

the police

Men who use the bogs therefore act disobediently and in breaking the rules of the dominant culture, either accept the consequences of censure or develop systems of obscurification that enable their choices to exist unnoticed. Smith (1993) says,

[i]ndividual beats operate within a threshold of local community tolerance that includes local residents, police, the local council, the media and the courts. Once a threshold of tolerance is breached, a mechanism of surveillance is triggered or heightened against beat activities (p. 20).

When this threshold of invisibility is breached the authorities act accordingly. Vance (1984) argues that this is because,

the system of sexual hierarchy functions smoothly only if sexual non-conformity is kept invisible... For dominant sexual groups, the appearance of the sexual lower orders.... produces anxiety, discomfort, the threat of pollution, and a challenge to their hegemony. (p. 19)

It is therefore not surprising that the bog-cruising community has developed a range of words and warnings to alert fellow cruisers to signs of danger thereby maintaining its profile of discretion and obscurity. For men entering the bog scene, signs of police surveillance or entrapment are learnt very early.

Some observations and words are localised and some are more generic. In many cases the same phenomenon has terms or warnings that differ from country to country or across decades. Indicative of a regionally located observation is a term like *lace-ups*.

A *lace-up* meant a suspicious man and alluded to the fact that in the 1970s and 1980s in the Waikato, many plain-clothes policemen, acting as agent provocateurs still wore their uniform [lace-up] shoes when going in to public toilets. A glance under the partition of the *Garden Place bogs* (Hamilton), at the shoes of the person making overtures in the adjoining cubicle, often identified them as entrapment police.

On a national level the term *Commodore* in the 1980s also referred to police activity but more specifically to their cars being parked in the vicinity. The New Zealand Police bought the first of these vehicles in 1980-81 and often the cars were naively parked near bogs, inadvertently alerting cruising men to potential entrapment. In many small

towns, regulars knew the number plates of these vehicles. While the term Commodore appears to be national rather than international, an observant eye for specific vehicles is something that is generally imperative. Burton (1985) in his book, *Amongst the Aliens: Some Aspects of Gay Life*, in discussing men who cruise bogs in unfamiliar English towns says,

those who utilize them for sexual purposes know where to find them and most usually seem to know exactly which is currently popular, which is generally deserted and which is under police observation. There are those who can spot a plain-clothes policeman or unmarked police car with as much facility as any stamp collector could a Penny-black in a box of all-sorts. (p. 6)

Rogers has also recorded the naming of undercover police cars in America in his 1972, *The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon*. The term *ghost car* referred to an unmarked vice squad car generally involved in entrapment operations.

Warnings about the presence of police are also encoded in specific names that not only alert other bog users to activity but also carry insights into the fact that the user is a member of this particular community. Historically many of these names have been feminised and Paul Baker suggests that the feminising of the law was a way of removing some of the police's power, (see Gill, 2003, p. 4). Words like *Alice*, *Dora-D*, *Hilda-Handcuff*, *Lily-Lunchbox*, *Nelly-Law*, *Jennifer-Justice* and *Vivian Vice* all fall in to this category. However parallel to these forms of nomenclature are more brutal terms for the police that reflect the anger and mistrust with which these men are often viewed. *Hilda Boxrot*, *Petunia Pig* and *Tilly Tight-twat* were all in use in New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s. More current terms include *filth*, *demon* and *bitchsmacker*.

Terms like *urinal-sniffer* (referring to police getting down on their hands and knees at a urinal to look under the doors of cubicles to see if there are more than one pair of feet in them) and *crapper dick* appear to be more recent American imports¹⁹, and *Waitomo* (in reference to

¹⁹ Bruce Rogers, in his lexicon *The Queens' Vernacular* (1972), indicates that both of these words were known amongst American gay men in the 1970s although *crapper dick* was in more common use in the 1950s.

the large anuses of police in uniform) is directly related to localised knowledge about the caves in the area²⁰.

More recent words like *bagging* appear to have been imported from Britain but refer to an established technique of concealment. Bagging is a method of hiding a sexual partner in a toilet cubicle during sex, thus avoiding police detection. One man sits on the toilet while the other stands facing him with a plastic bag or coat pulled around his feet. If a policeman looks under the gap at the bottom of the door, only one pair of feet will be seen and the direction they are pointing will be obscured.

The term *shaker*, referring to a police officer engaged in entrapment refers to the technique where the officer stands at a urinal shaking his penis suggestively after urinating, in an effort to entice another man to make an “indecent assault” on him.

heterosexuals

Attitudes to heterosexual males and especially queer-bashers are also embedded in bogspeak. While men in the bog cruising community rarely use the word *poofte-basher*, the term *basher* refers to someone who visits gay cruising areas to attack other men. These bashers may engage in sex with a man in a bog and afterwards attack or rob him. It is common practice for men who use bogs for sex to warn other users about bashers and individual policemen who act as *agent provocateurs* by writing clear physical profiles of these people on the walls of individual cubicles. Queer-bashers on the other hand tend to operate in groups, waiting for an opportunity to attack an isolated victim. Generally a man cruising the bogs is cautious of slow moving vehicles containing groups of other men or of accompanying another man back to a location where a group of unfamiliar men are gathered. The phenomenon of queer-bashers is evident in a wide range of countries. In South Africa a term in current use for these men is *bunny-bashers* (Cage, 2003). In San Francisco in the late 1960s a word in common use

²⁰ A fuller, comparative description of these words can be found in Appendix 2.

Fig. 3:8 Sam's flash-shot assault on the driver.



was *four-doors*, (Rogers, 1972). This term related to the sound of more than one car door being opened and slammed shut in close succession, signaling the emptying of a car of bashers and the need for a potential victim to escape quickly.

The most familiar words used to describe a heterosexual man are *straight* or *het*, however more derogatory terms include *breeder*, *Carlotta*, *naff*, *naffarella*, *nanti omi*, and *NTBH*.

The noun *breeder* is both a bogspeak and gay slang term for a heterosexual man. The term is one of distaste and refers to these men's abilities being limited to siring children. In the film *boy*, bogspeak infiltrates Sam's world. Derogatory bogspeak words for heterosexuals are used in much the same way that homophobic language is used on gay men. When Sam is angry or insulted terms like *breeder*, *fish* (a word for women that references the smell of their genitals), and *smeg* are flung back angrily at an event. This language is as brutal as its heterosexual equivalent that uses terms like *pillow-muncher*, *pooh-pusher*, *faggot* and *arse-bandit* to insult gay men.

anti-language bogspeak

“No you won’t see that troll around for a while. The filth got him after a milk run. Poor thing dropped in to the Country Club for a bit of cut lunch and there was a demon on the other side of the glory hole, dressed up as the woofy trade of your dreams! Sprung him gutless. But what do you expect? That thing’s so brazen, it thinks because it swans around with the mullet in tow, no one will know it’s into trade! I tell you, a naff beard can only hide so much. You can bet there’ll be no full-house in that bog for a while!”

What you have read is a contemporary account of an unattractive, married heterosexual man being arrested in a public toilet in the Auckland Domain.

The same story in the late 1950s may have sounded something like this...

“Ooh sharda! Nada to vada in that cottage! That antique Auntie with the coddie eek tried to charver Alice in there. He thinks the fish and chips hide the fact he’s family. I tell you a ride in the dog wagon down to central and it’ll be all over for the straight and narrow!”

It is unlikely that a man who cruised the bogs during the two periods illustrated would have used or known all of the words listed in the appended lexicon of bogspeak, but he would definitely have understood at least one of the above accounts.

Put simply, bogspeak is a language form used by men who have sex with other men in public toilets in New Zealand. It has grown and developed significantly in the last eighty years and exists inside of a wider, non-verbal discourse that is used to communicate within this community.

Baker (2002) argues that,

[i]n the past, linguists who wanted to study what they deemed ‘gay language’ began with an assumption of difference- that gay people used language in a way that was different from that of heterosexuals. There was also an assumption that there was something intrinsically similar in the way that, as a group, gay men or lesbians used language, (p. 10).²¹

However, when I began compiling this lexicon as part of the underpinning of the film, I found that this assumption of “intrinsic similarity” was questionable. Many men gave conflicting assignments of meanings to words, different spellings and different contexts for use. My original assumption that that these descriptions were either correct or incorrect, proved to be too simplistic. Therefore, suggesting that bogspeak as a single, absolute, and uniformly defined language form may not be a viable assumption. While many men agreed on the meanings of certain often-used words like *naff*, *glory hole* or *beat*, it was rare that they agreed on every word, particularly if they had been part of the community at different times, had travelled internationally or came from different parts of the country. Similarly gay men who do the bogs often sample a broader gay slang vocabulary but appear less likely to use “straight” words like *slasher*, *wash and leave*, and *faggot*.

In this language form, many words have different spellings. Terms like *EEK* (*eke*, *eak*), *taaka* (*tucker*), *joosh bag* (*shoush bag*) and *bona*, (*bonar*, *boner*, *bono*) may have their differences traced to the fact that in general, bogspeak is an oral rather than a written language. Because of its relatively undocumented state, it exists as preferred and unchallenged written forms among its users.

²¹ Much research in this field has focused on the building of lesbian and gay lexicons: Cory (1965), Farrell (1972), Legman (1941), Rodgers (1972), Stanley (1970), and Young (1996). Other researchers have considered a range of impacting factors: Goodwin (1989), Moonwomon (1985), Moran (1991), and Gaudio (1994), *intonation*, Lumby (1976) *stress patterns*, and Webbink (1981), *code switching*. Accompanying these investigations are two more recent lexicons of gay speech, Baker (2002a), has provided a scholarly, in depth consideration of Polari as a language form and Cage (2003), has considered the origins and profiles of gay culture and its influence on speech in South Africa.

The question one is presented with then is how does one define such a language form?

First, unlike Polari, bogspeak is still a living, active language. It is also an argot that (unlike a broader New Zealand gay lexicon) has developed in a world made up entirely of men (both gay identifying and non-gay identifying)²² whose common community is specifically located in public toilets and their surrounding environs. Because of bog queens' pariah-like status in significant parts of the gay and heterosexual communities, the language is generally not widely spoken away from the beat (except in groups of men who share similar experiences). While bogspeak may have many words that can be also be found in Polari and broader, contemporary gay lexicons, it also has a distinctively New Zealand profile with words like *Taaka/tucker*, *kk's*, *Commodores*, *Waitomos*, *rental box*, and *smeg* all related to specific languages, incidents or locations indigenous to this country.

What is also significant is the difference in words used between men who have sex with men in cities and those who cruise rural or small town bogs. In general, Polari and older gay slang terms appear to be in wider use the further one moves away from the large urban centers.²³ This linguistic profile appears to parallel observations made by men working in the BEATS projects. Goddard (1990), in his essay *The Forgotten World* says of the rural bogs,

It seems sometimes as if the last twenty years has not happened and we are looking at a carbon copy of a homosexual society which existed in the forties or fifties but which many of us, preoccupied with our post-Stonewall lives, assume has vanished. (p. 25)

²² Men in the gay bars and clubs socialise in communities that often include a diverse range of women including lesbians, fag hags (heterosexual women who are friends of gay men) and transsexuals.

²³ As a result, in the film, words indicative of a more dated vocabulary are used to surround Sam's world and operate in the language of his insults. Fish, bona and smeg are terms that may be unfamiliar to boys his age in larger urban centres. Similarly Sam would probably not be so familiar with terms like docking, felching and barebacking unless he had been reading AIDS Foundation leaflets or accessed other young, gay men via the internet.

While laws impacting on the wider gay community in New Zealand have also affected men who have sex with men in public toilets, separate laws continue to keep bog cruisers' sexual activities and social patterns criminalised and therefore more clandestine. Consequently bogspeak still exists as an active, essentially underground language. Evidence of this fundamental difference between bogspeak and a broader gay lexicon can be seen in the increasingly frequent use of words and expressions from over-ground gay society in heterosexual language. This may be partially attributed to the increasing range of mediated images of over-ground gay identity in mainstream television and film. Words like *girl-friend*, *puhleeze!*, *naff*, *Helloooo?* and *tacky* are now used by many non-gay people. They appear in TV shows like *Will & Grace*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, *The Block*, *Queer Nation* and *Queer as Folk*. Outside of a few cross-over words between contemporary gay slang and bogspeak, it is unlikely that one would encounter many terms from this more underground lexicon anywhere outside of the community it serves.

language form

So, if we can describe bogspeak as a New Zealand, sites-specific, living, underground, male-only language belonging to a marginalised group, vulnerable to criminal prosecution of the law, we are able to measure its profile against a range of terms used to describe language.

Hudson (1980) discusses the concept of a *language variety* that he defines as "*a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution*", (p. 24). He notes that definitions of linguistic items are dependent on a specific theory that a particular linguist believes best supports the language structure. A disadvantage with this definition, Baker (2002b), argues, is that it is so broad that it includes phenomena such as languages, styles, and dialects.

The term *slang* has been used to describe many individual words in bogspeak and often, in discussions and interviews, the term bogspeak was used interchangeably by men with terms like *nelly words*, *gayspeak*, *code*, and *parley*.

O'Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamamba (1996) describe *slang* as a label often employed to “denote certain informal or faddish uses of nearly anyone in the speech community” (p. 555). However, bogspeak's core lexicon appears to have been very durable²⁴ and in this differs from the rapid changes indicative of slang. Classifying bogspeak as slang is also problematic because it cannot be said to be used by “nearly anyone in the speech community”. Although there are specific words in bogspeak that are familiar to its related (and sometimes interfacing) gay and criminal communities, bogspeak's broader lexicon contains many specific terms that are unfamiliar to men in these groups. The broader gay community would generally not be familiar with terms like *gardening*, *full house*, *shaker*, *joosh*, *glory hole* or places like *the Hanging Gardens*, *the Catacombs* or *Glowworm Grotto*. Similarly, unless they had mixed substantially in either the gay, prostitutes' or bog cruising communities, many criminals would be unfamiliar with words like *auntie*, *cottaging*, *troll*, *woofy*, *breeder*, *cut-lunch*, *HRU* or *docking*. Moreover, within the bog cruising community as a whole, many of the terms would be unfamiliar to all members because some are aligned with regions, sites or specific incidents.

The term *argot* may be a word that more accurately signifies bogspeak's nature. The word refers to “obscure or secret language”, (O'Grady et al. 1996, p. 557). However, Baker (2002b) adds, “*argot is essentially concerned with language varieties where speakers wish to conceal either themselves or aspects of their communication*,” (p. 13).

Thus, the term may be used to describe specific predecessors and contributors to bogspeak, including thieves' cant²⁵, fairground

²⁴ Words like *pick up*, *bona*, *troll*, *cruise* and *fish* all have documented histories of over two hundred years, as *parlaree*, thieves' cant, or as prison slang.

²⁵ Cant or pelting speech may be traced back to the eleventh century in Britain (Wilde, 1889), and was a secret language used by criminals in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It contained words for the different classes of vagabonds, criminal strategies, names for tools, spoils and legal consequences of being apprehended. Cant may be considered a technical language concerned primarily with a form of business.

parlyaree²⁶, Polari²⁷ and American slang²⁸.

Another term, *anti-language*, used by Halliday (1978) refers to language used by an anti-society within a society.

An anti society is a counter culture... a conscious alternative to society, existing by resisting either passively or by more hostile, destructive means. Anti-languages are generated by anti-societies and in their simplest forms are partly relexicalised languages consisting of the same grammar but a different vocabulary in areas central to the activities of subcultures. (Baker, 2002b, p.13)

The social values of words and phrases in anti-languages also tend to be more emphasised than in mainstream languages. This is what Halliday (1978) calls “*sociolinguistic coding orientation*” (p. 166). Bogspeak is profiled by many deeply antagonistic, highly loaded words that attack social, political, and sexual systems. It singles out specific groups for special attention, namely the police, heterosexual men and women, and significantly, other bog cruisers.

²⁶ Parlyaree, Baker considers acted as a bridge between Cant and Polari (2002b). It is a language form Partridge links with circus people and itinerant actors who until the end of the eighteenth century were a despised and marginalised group. Their language form used a number of words from Italian, Lingua Franca and the gypsies. Parlyaree also contains examples of backslang and rhyming slang, (Partridge, (1950). Parlyaree, Baker (2002b) suggests is the source of some early, twentieth-century prison slang and contributed words to bogspeak including *omee* and *nantee*. Parlyaree can also written *parlare*, *parlaree*, *palarie*, *Parlary* and *Parlary*.

²⁷ Polari is a term used by writers like Cage and Baker to describe a secret language, mainly used by gay men. Cage (2003) suggests Polari entered the speech of gay men with the disappearance of large numbers of travelling performers in the twentieth century. Polari as a language form used by homosexual men, adopted words like *trade* and *picked-up* that originated in the Molly houses of the eighteenth century.

²⁸ American slang began to surface significantly in New Zealand bogspeak between 1942 and mid-1944 when more than 100,000 U.S. servicemen spent various periods in this country. Jenkin (1997) cites an oral history recorded in 1993-4 by the New Zealand Lesbian and Gay Archives. It includes a description of an active cruising scene in Wellington during World War II. When the Americans returned home they left behind a legacy of words including *butch*, *dick*, *rim*, *blow-job*, *tea rooms* and *milk route*.

Thus, while accepting O'Grady's definition of argot, Halliday's concept of the anti-language may be more applicable to bogspeak. Because men who have sex with men in bogs have been stigmatised by heterosexual (and later gay) society they have continued to develop an anti-language as a way of creating and maintaining an anti-society. It is the tensions between two alternative constructions in a bog cruiser's life; the society of the over-ground and the secret, conscious alternative society of the underground, that creates the distance between the language and the anti-language. Baker (2002b) maintains that anti-languages are, "*concerned with the definition and maintenance of alternative (and often secret) identities, organized through ritual participation in alternative social hierarchies,*" (p. 14).

summary

While there has been some international academic and creative research into the phenomenon of bog cruising, the related language form has not been widely documented.

Investigations in the early 1990s in New Zealand provided a useful demographic profile of men in this community. However, beyond this research, their appearance in the literature and social history of this country is almost non-existent.

Research has shown that the bog cruising community is made up of heterosexual and gay-identifying men. These men have developed rituals and a language form to protect themselves and the world in which they operate. Bog cruising is still practiced widely in New Zealand but the language form associated with it, is now more evident among men in rural communities and small towns.

This language form profiles clusters of words related to specific issues. There are many words that parody concepts within the nuclear family, and a wealth of descriptions for women, heterosexual men, and the police. Significantly the language also contains many derogatory terms to describe men and their sexual proclivities within the bog cruising community.

The language form continues to change and develop over time. It is both national and location-specific. It is male-only and may be defined as an underground anti-language. This is because it is concerned with describing and maintaining alternative identities. These are organised within a community that has its own distinctive rituals and social hierarchies.

The next section of this exegesis will consider two significant themes within this anti-language and their impact on typographical treatments in the short film *boy*. These themes become evident when the lexicon of bog speak is considered as a whole.

The first theme is detachment. The second is the seemingly unusual profile of parodied ecclesiasticism. These themes are discussed in some depth, both in terms of their origins and profile. They are also considered in relation to experiments developed in the design of the film.

design considerations

detachment and ecclesiasticism

introduction

Boy deals with a subject film makers tend to avoid. While young men's emerging sexuality is commonly explored in film and television, their gay equivalent is generally avoided or portrayed as neutral (asexual but camp) or as a victim of paedophillia. Sam is neither. He is a phenomenon in nearly every New Zealand small town with a public toilet. Unable to get in to city pubs or clubs, secreting his lifestyle from the community, he finds contact through advertisements written on walls and through 'glory holes' burned or drilled through the partitions.

I grew up like this, as did many of my mates. We were tough, quickly matured and caught in a value conflict between what was preached and what was practised. We learned early that intimate relationships were something detached, silent, impersonal and anonymous. We learned the biting humour and the rituals that kept us safe from the police and the queer-bashers. We learned that invisibility and a double life meant survival.

Nobody talked about us and nobody told our stories, as a result our world remains a vacuum in the literary construct of this country.

(Ings, Feb. 2001, precursor to director's notes for *boy*.)

A fundamental design problem in this film was the effective translation of Sam's underground language into complementing typographical treatments. These treatments needed to operate effectively in both the over-ground and the underground worlds of the narrative. They needed to draw on the ethos of bogspeak but use this to make two distinctively different typefaces, one lyrical and one abject.

detachment and the underground face

Peter Burton (1985) in his essay *Tearoom Trade: public convenience or private grief*, discusses some of the implications of transgressing the protective rituals that surround bog cruising. He says,

one of the major tragedies of cottaging is the number of ostensibly straight men who find themselves arrested or confronting the horror and embarrassment of explaining their actions to wives (primarily) and employers; an equal part of the tragedy must be the same or similar situations which face gay men in the same position. (p. 16)

An example of the consequences of such exposure, cited in Jenkin is taken from a news story *Witch-Hunt Causes Stirling Suicides* that featured in *Scotsgay* late in 1996.

Eleven men have been arrested, two of whom have since committed suicide, following a cottaging blitz in Stirling. A third man has attempted suicide.... First to die was Michael Cummings, 60, a divorced rigger, who threw himself 200 feet to his death from the Forth Road Bridge after being arrested in the Beechwood toilet. A month later, Cameron Daisley, 48, a youth and community worker based at Balfron High School hanged himself in the woods on Sheriffmuir after police took it upon themselves to inform his employers, Stirling District Council, of his arrest. Despite his not having been convicted of any offence, his Equal Opportunities employer, a Labour controlled council, intended to suspend him. Mr Daisley was a member of the Dunblane Cathedral Choir and the Scottish National Orchestra Chorus as well as being an Elder of the Cathedral where his funeral service was held on 22nd November. He had lived with his partner, John Rooney, for 21 years. (1997, p.12)

This is a story from Scotland, though it has little publicised parallels in New Zealand every year. It is indicative of a miasmic fear that hangs over men who have sex with other men in bogs.

One set of ritualistic behaviours adopted to deal with this situation involves detachment. In general, sex between men in these sites is silent and rituals of contact, though complex, are enacted using a series of highly engineered cues and responses. The use of written notes, glances and displays through glory holes, the sounds of toilet-paper being rapidly pulled from dispensers, coughing, the shuffling of feet, all operate as cues for contact and all replace the intimacy of speech. Foucault discussing this detachment in the attraction of anonymous sex between men says, *“you stop being imprisoned inside your own face, your own past, your own identity. It’s not the assertion of identity that is important; it’s the assertion of non-identity,”* (Foucault, 1978, cited in Macey, 1993, p. xv).

This non-identity in bog cruising is embedded in rituals of detachment designed partly for protection. It is also evident in specific linguistic (and paralinguistic) profiles. It is these profiles that are of interest to this research.

Salen (2001) discussing the translation of invisibility into typographical form, talks about the importance of considering *“the phenomena of the typographic ‘voice over’ which constitutes a ‘national symbolic environment’*” (p. 132). She suggests that, *“the typographic voices we are accustomed to are utopian, belonging, nowhere, regionless, without accent”*(ibid.). Designing a typographical treatment for a double life that exists inside, yet separate from a dominant repressive culture, posed a complex and difficult problem.

the dictionary experiments

The first creative experiments I trialled worked outwards from a culturally empowered lexicon, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. This is a text that might arguably be considered to represent an established profile and conventional recording and styling of English. It is an accepted voice of a national symbolic environment, where all elements are standardised, and accompanying patterns of typographical treatment are absolute.

One of the significant profiles of bogspeak is its use of the third person singular pronoun to describe other men who exist within the community. Calling other men “it” or “that thing” or referring to a partner as a “trick” or a “number”, is part of a profile of oppression where the marginalised other self-represses through the detachment and dehumanisation of his peers. Mount in his introduction to Rogers’ (1972) *The Queens’ Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon*, referring to this American collection of gay words from the first two-thirds of last century says

Considering the ideas of detachment, anger and the potential for re-using the dictionary as a metaphor for established order, I began to experiment with disrupted treatments of letterforms, and pronunciation symbols used in the text. This was partially influenced by the range of pronunciations I had encountered when attempting to compile a lexicon of bogspeak.

in-nōc'uous orner. [per
Gael. *aingeal*] s against other
inglōr'ious (in-g-), a. Ignomini-
ous; obscure. [L] **informā'tion**
in'gōing (in-g-), told, knowledge
IN¹ (noceo hurt) news; charge
ing or (-ngg-), with court &
blong, of cast rition, instructive
silver or steel []
harmless person, esp. ch
n-grān'), a. Dyed in grain; (ng.
nveterate. ~ed (*bef. noun in'-grān*
else -ān'd') a. (*fig*) [var. of engrain
inn'ocent.
ingrate' (in-g- or in'-). 1. adj.
rare). Ungrateful. 2. n. Ungrate
ful [] (*ingratus*)
not guilty (~ of crime
oneself, get into favour (*with*).
phr. *in gratiam* into favour]
ingrāt'itude (in-o-), n. Want of
gratitude. **Sinless; ATE)**
ingrēd'ient (in-g-), n. Compon
ent part in mixture. [L *ingredie*
enter into]
innocuous
in'gress (in-g-), n. (Right of
entrance. [I] (cf. *EGRESS*)
inn'ocence n. jī-), a. (C
dail) growing into the flesh. [IN¹
ing'uinal (inggw-), a. **in-**
groin. **nōc'uous** n)]
ingū'r'gitate (-n-g-), v.t. Gul
one sily; engulf. ~ā'tion (-n-g-) i
TARGET 1900. *gurgit-* whirl
inn'ing person, esp. child
&c.) batsman
part of gam. **harmless. 2.**
is batting; a. adj. Sinless; not
political party e; windows ~ of
inn'ocent. 1. ~d); guileless;
guilty (~ of cri public, mind;
guileless; unglaze ighter of
harmness. 2. n. ~ perso); simple
(I-s' Day, festival of sla. in-
children by Herod, Dec. 28. ~uous
person; idiot. **inn'ocence** 1
nōc'uous a. harmless (*inno*
inn'ocent. 1. adj.
guilty (~ of crime; &
glaze ing unglazed



Fig. 3:10 Unaligned type with the inclusion of symbols. The disruption of the privileged grid was inspired by the particular disorderliness of written words as they appear on toilet walls. These, I noted, often flow in more organic, curved lines than in the mechanically leaded strips of formal writing.

Fig. 3:11-12 Large images above and right. Early photographic indicatives for *boy* (2001) showing applications of disrupted type. The word *innocence* in the first image was the original title of the film and appears dominantly in typographical trials during the early stages of the its design. The word alluded to the fact that innocence might be entirely relative, Sam's innocence, social isolation and prostitution being pitted against the embedded and corrupt traditions of a dominant over-ground society. The second image shows the use of the disrupted Oxford dictionary background. It was trialed as a metaphorical reference to the boy's dislocation, however the idea was too abstruse to be effective.

Letters were cut out of the dictionary, pasted together, enlarged and reduced on poor photocopiers to distress the edges (fig. 3:10). They were then scanned into the computer and laid up over thumbnail images, to assess their potential to operate as detached elements in the same pictorial environment (figs. 3:11-12).

The detached aesthetic of these typographical experiments in both their organic form and dislocation of identity is evidenced in the personal (but anonymous) bog wall writings and scrawled notes that pass back and forwards between participants during rituals of contact.



With these experiments I was wanting to capture something of the fleeting, disconnected contact indicative of Sam's world in the bogs. This is why the type is transparent and ill defined. It acts as dislocated whispers and gestures, rather than as clearly spoken language. Although these experiments with reconstituted type from dictionaries proved problematic²⁹, the image of small blocks of apparent and obscured writing was a powerful influence on the typographical voice

²⁹ The type was difficult to animate and failed to adequately capture the anger and bristling cruelty of bogspeak. The composite letterforms were also too passive when placed over the images.



Fig. 3:13 Bog writing, Te Awamutu.
The potential for translating the layout of bog wall writing with its apparently arbitrary positioning of text, its unusual and dramatic emphases and its obscured and sometimes over-written words, provided significant stylistic influences to the design of the underground typographical treatments.

adopted in the film. While this kind of writing is a ubiquitous feature of bog walls, (fig. 3:13) it has parallels in both the underground and over-ground of the film because Sam carries its language with him.

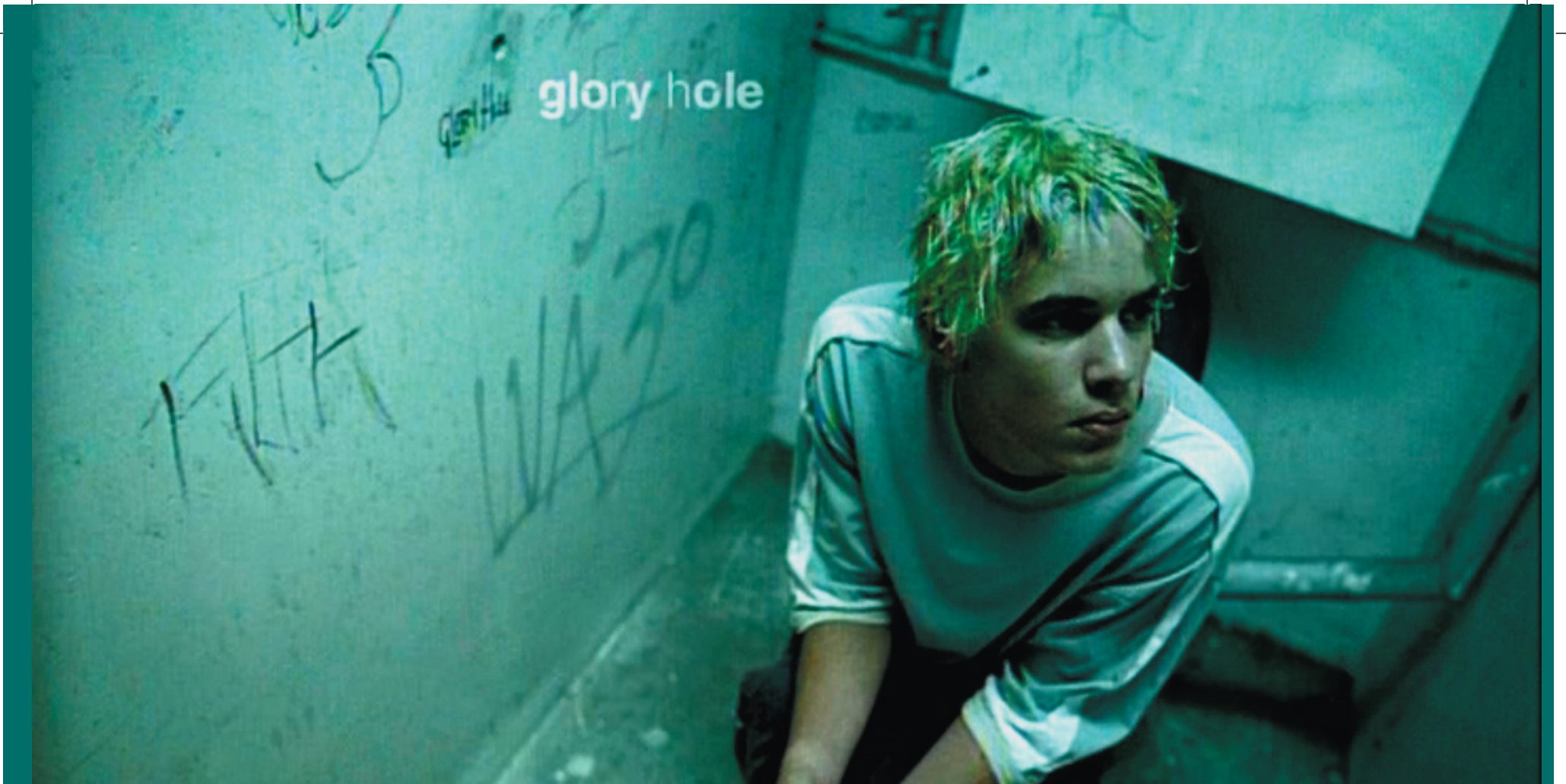
Type is used generally to express dislocated thought that is sometimes Sam's and sometimes so disconnected even from him, that it appears to be words coming from the environment itself, (fig. 3:14). In both of these cases, the type sits outside of the constraints of the grid. It flickers inside the image as a kind of angered dislocation, attached to the idea yet not integrated with it.

the anger experiments

The nexus between dislocation and anger that is evidenced in the language of the bogs was a challenge to interpret in type. This is especially because this feature of the language is often turned both outwards and inwards on the user himself. The anti-language of bogspeak demonstrates a clear hostility to regulatory and punitive agencies but the language is also scornful of intimate relationships of other men who also use the bogs for sex. Cage (2003) talks about this as a form of linguistic, dehumanised, detachment where,

people are not viewed as individuals when referred to... but are relegated to the level of sexually consumable commodities, without hopes, feelings and needs. They merely become featureless units in a noxious swarm of past, present and potential sex partners. (pp. 31-32)

Cage suggests that this can be attributed to the fact that living in an environment characterised by persecution, rejection and frustration, marginalised men do not hold their peers within the co-culture in high esteem. He suggests that historically *"a combination of psychological maladjustment and homophobia laid the ground for them to attack and manipulate each other"*(ibid) 31.



This sense of attack may also be exacerbated by the state of powerlessness that men in this world find themselves. They are generally unable to retaliate against the queer bashers, or the police, or the media, and as a result suffer not only retribution but also negative reconstructions of their identity in the public sphere. Smith (1993) states that,

those beat users who find themselves before the courts will tend to follow the course of least resistance... In the absence of an effective counter discourse, beats fall victim to the paranoia of heterosexuals. Beat users become compliant but unwilling participants in (as in the case of a court action), or an imaginary subject of (as in exaggerated fears of child safety), the fantastic stories that are woven in and around the beat. (p. 21)



Fig. 3:14 Six stills of Sam in the bog with type surrounding him. This is the language of the bogs. It talks about how he is seen and also references some of the features in the environment. The voice here is not Sam's. It is a separate disconnected commentary that only operates in this environment.



Fig. 3:15 Stills of experiments using handwritten words on glass held in front of the camera during filming. While the effects were dramatic, they over emphasised the individualism of the typographic voice. They also created too broad a style palette to integrate cohesively with the more ornate and ecclesiastical typographical treatments in the film.

handwritten voices

The capturing of this suppressed anger was trialed initially through a range of scrawled and scratched typographical experiments. The first approach was to capture the nature of Sam's muffled rage by applying rapidly written words onto the surface of the film, either as text scrawled on transparent sheets, or as words scratched directly onto the negative (fig. 3:15).

Mealing (2003) suggests that

handwritten text speaks of its author ... and variables such as proportion, evenness, slope, slant angle, size, spacing, width and weight are all considered and used to extract information beyond the remit of the text. (p. 45)

However, while handwritten typographical treatments had a strong, author's voice they did not animate flexibly across images. They also gave too strong a personal voice to the speaker.

The difficulty I encountered was essentially one of balance. The typographical voices in the film were not only Sam's. The written language needed to be flexible enough to operate across a range of scenes.

Furthermore, handwritten text speaks so clearly of the writer that the approach demanded different signature hands for each speaker in the film. This proved too congested and confusing.

animating behind letterforms

I needed to create a typographical treatment that was angry but still oppressed and dislocated from the viewer. It had to avoid the intimacy of a personal signature, yet still contain feeling. The difficulty, therefore, lay in orchestrating the emotional intensity of the written form. Too much expression of rage, over-impassioned the voice, but purely typographic letterforms seemed to formalise and over-subdue the emotions I wanted to underscore.

The seeds of a solution surfaced eventually in the experimental treatment of an image that was finally dropped from the film.





Fig. 3:16 Still from the animated flash shot, *Red car*. The image was designed to suggest an emerging khamp, kind of fury; something florid but as yet unrefined (immature) in its assault. The sequence was dropped from the final cut of the film because it did not add anything significant to either the narrative flow or Sam's already established anger.

For a moment after keying (scratching) the red car with his flick-knife, Sam was to turn back and look at it. The car was to appear as a flash shot that scratched and then melted like a burnt negative (fig. 3:16).

The rapidly animated, distressed surface built on the anger that had motivated Sam's attack on the car. A white scratch, separate from the image, was animated over it and continued to crackle as the picture of the car burst into flame and turned into a melting negative. This device, which sat between the worlds of the type and image, I realised could operate as an independent emphasis. It was flexible in

that the technique could be transported across images. The crackling, frustrated texture could become a background rather than a letter form. This technique had the ability to punctuate. It could also contrast letterforms against their backgrounds, and create a variety of animated textures that could be independently orchestrated in terms of discord. Thus, the dislocated, background of the letterform became a significant device in determining the intensity of a word.

This may be likened to the way that Baker (2002b) suggests the background (environment) of an anti-society becomes a determining agent in the intensity of an anti-language.

The creation of an intermediary surface that was neither letterform nor an actual pictorial element, meant that the level of frustration and scratchy brutality could be animated quickly behind words. This resulted in the kinetic nature of the typography containing the aggression rather than the actual typeface (fig. 3:17).

outcomes

The anger that runs through the distressing of individual words and animated sequences in the film, is a translation of the tone of specific words in bogspeak. The emotion in the typographical design picks up on the hostility and aggression felt towards the key regulating social forces that collectively and individually position bog-cruisers as the demonised other.

The placement of this type in the film, specifically in the bog sequences, references the way that the written word and graphics interplay on toilet walls. Both are separate but mutually involved in describing the social and historical atmosphere of the location. Words from bogspeak flicker in and out of the time that Sam spends waiting for a trick. They form around him or around features in his environment as a silent commentary, in the same way that stories, warnings and advertisements are presented on a bog wall.

The readability and clarity of the letterforms have been preserved because despite the unfamiliarity of some of the words, bogspeak



Fig. 3:17 Film stills.
This flash frame from Sam's notional attack on the girls at his school plays an over-ground insult (*bitches*), off against the underground bogspeak term (*fish*). Both words vibrate because of the scrawled graphic behind them. However, the letter forms remain stable.

is an anti-language not a foreign language. It integrates the known grammar of the dominant society with the obscured lexicon of the underground. The letterforms are recognisable, as are the words. It is simply the meaning and context that is unfamiliar. Bogspeak like any anti-language is identifiable because words from it can be used in over-ground speech (discerningly) to ascertain the nature of another listener³⁰.

Sam's story has a number of voices and it was necessary to design a composite typographical treatment that would demarcate yet integrate these into the cohesive aesthetic of the film.

The dislocated and angry type that operates in the bogs also becomes part of the anger that flows out from them. Thus, the driver's threats, his wife's confrontation with him regarding the bloodied shirt, the boys who threaten Sam in the changing rooms, and the pictorial insults Sam flings at those who hurt him, all carry versions of this typographical profile.

However, there is also an alternative voice; poetic, reflective and gentle, that opens and closes the narrative. It also appears in the story's sequences that deal with loss: (when Sam talks about his mother's death from cancer, when he mentions the angels in the summer grass, and during the funeral of the hitch hiker).

The design for this alternative type drew on a seemingly contradictory feature of bogspeak, its unusual metaphorical emphasis on ecclesiasticism.

³⁰ While Cage's comments related directly to gay men living in the repressive South Africa of last century, some parallels can be drawn with the currently marginalised and ostracised men in contemporary bogculture. Bog cruisers continue to exist in a fundamentally criminalised environment with little empowerment in terms of opposition or redress. This parallel may explain why many (especially rural and suburban bog communities) are seen as operating as almost anachronistic "snap shots" of gay society before the liberations and decriminalisations of the 1970s and 1980s. Martyn Goddard's essay *The Forgotten World* (1990) offers an interesting analysis of this phenomenon.

ecclesiasticism

introduction

The second typeface developed for the lyrical voice in this film, also had its origins in the anti-society of the bogs. However, it drew on a seemingly antithetical feature of the language form. Its source lay in bogspeak's parodying use of the ecclesiastical.

Ecclesiastical metaphors are a significant feature of bogspeak that can be evidenced in specific terms like *glory hole* (a hole in the wall between two toilet cubicles), *having church* (to kneel in order to perform oral sex), *Christ and two apostles* (a dated expression for the genitals of prudish or shy men) and the names of specific toilets like the *Chapel* (Pitt Street Auckland), the *Catacombs* (Auckland Museum), and the *Wailing Wall* (Sydney Hospital in Kingscross). This religiosity also profiles in the names of well-known bog queens like, *Fatima Foetid Fuck*, *Mother Superior Posterior* and *Gloria Hole*.

cultural profiles

Perhaps the most exposed, contemporary socio/political appearance of this parodied ecclesiasticism is the chapters of the *Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence*. The New Zealand chapter of this order first made an appearance in the Wellington Gay Pride Week in 1984. While it had links to other international chapters, this group of radical gay men was called the *Sisters of Sodomy*. Members of this chapter included *Sister Angel Thighs* and *Sister Trevor-Marie*. In an interview with the Wellington Gay Newspaper *New Zealand Pink Triangle* (1984), Sister Trevor-Marie articulated the significance of the chapter that paralleled the rationales adopted by other, international groups. She said,

It's a parody of the Catholic Church, which is a major institution of oppression of lesbians as well as gay men. We are consciously being blasphemous and sacrilegious. That takes away some of the power of the church by mocking its holy symbols. Nuns are supposed to be celibate.... From a political point of view as well it breaks down the barriers you couldn't otherwise get through, in much the same way as the clowns on the 1981 Springbok tour protests did. (Issue 46, p. 4)



Fig. 3:18

Early indicative for Sam's heterodiegetic site of narration.

Initially Sam was designed to appear in the opening frames as the writer of the story. The pictorial style drew on the eclectic and ecclesiastical nature of the poetic verse that framed the narrative. A combination of animated, swirling lines and fusions of *Apple Chancery*, *Brush Script* and *Caflish Script Pro*. typefaces, flickered across the surface of the image. This typographic treatment proved too frail to animate successfully and also led to a competition for primacy between the voice of the type and the voice of the image. The background texture seen in the window behind Sam was developed from the initial typographic treatments taken from the dictionary.

The design however, had too much detail. Because I was wanting the written voice and the images to work harmoniously in the opening of the film, I decided to pare back the use of clutter and detail in both areas.



Fig. 3:19
The Wellington Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.
The photograph by Gavin Young features, Sisters *Trevor Marie* [Douglas Jenkins], *Angel Thighs* [Robert Lake] and an unnamed sister, (Robert Beard), LAGANZ-MS-Papers-0607-396.
In 1993, a second New Zealand chapter profiled in Auckland comprising *Sister Sheep-Fucker*, *Sister Inviolator of the Immaculate Conception* and *Sister Due to Media Attention*. While the New Zealand chapters had relatively short-lived profiles, their Sydney and San Francisco equivalents were highly prominent in the early 1980s. The Australian chapter that included Sisters *Sit-On-My-Face*, *Third Secret of Fatima*, *Joy of Man's Desiring*, *Fuck-Me-Silly*, *Fellatio Obliviata*, *Mary Azaria-in-a-pram* and *Mother Inferior*, [later known as *Mother Abyss* aka Fabian Loschiavo] were noted for such political events as performing a formal exorcism at the Gates of Parliament on March 29th 1982. *Mother Abyss* also walked the highly documented tour of "Gay Sydney", dressed in a pink habit, singing *Volare*, accompanying herself on a squeeze box and being preceded by "a holy relic of gay matrimony, the urinal from a destroyed popular cruising toilet, where so many unions were consecrated." (Cohen, 1999, p. 4).
An extensive profiling of this group of Australian activists is available in the LAGANZ Archives MS-0230.

Baker (2002a), discussing the significance of the London chapter of this organisation, points out that apart from being politically active they are also linguistically revivalist. He notes significantly that they "use 'High Polari' in their blessings, sermons and canonizations- adding a bit of religious mystique whilst acknowledging gay history within their ceremonies" (p. 6).

Reconstituted Christian ritual has historical precedents in the English working class Molly Houses of the eighteenth century³¹. These were taverns and clubs where men met to have sex with other men, and were profiled by the subversion of traditional heterosexual and religious customs and rituals. Norton (1992), refers to Molly marriages that occurred when two men paired off and had sex in another room known as the Chapel. He also offers a description of a "lying in" where a wooden baby was christened after being mock birthed between a man's legs.

Baker (2002a) suggests that this mocking parody of religious convention

was a response to mainstream society's attitude to the Mollies. Sodomy was illegal and punishable by imprisonment... The Mollies were effectively criminalized, partly because of the growth of the Societies for the Reformation of manners, and many of them were driven underground, mixing with criminals or being forced into their company in prison. (p. 22)

Ambivalent attitudes to Christian ritual are a complex feature of men marginalised or ostracised by the church. Among the men who "do the bogs", Humphreys (1970) suggests, are a significant proportion of church affiliates who because of their positions, cannot afford to be seen involving themselves in sexual relationships.

³¹ Among some men in the interviews this language is called "code" and many suggested that it is an old, secret way of finding things out while you remain safe. Wedding (2004) states "it formed initially... to cover up what people were doing so they could carry on a conversation in a coffee bar where there might be elderly ladies having a cup of tea or a cup of coffee" (p. 8).

One of the reasons that Humphrey's data was so controversial when it was first published, was that it profiled Roman Catholicism so disproportionately among men who used public toilets for casual sex. He says

data indicates that Roman Catholic religious affiliation is a causal factor in tearoom participation, because that church's prohibition of the use of artificial contraceptives limits the sexual outlet in marriage. Of the married men in my sample of tearoom participants, 50 percent are Roman Catholic or married to a Roman Catholic, as compared to 26 percent of men in the control sample. (p. 62)

Morton (2003), in his discussion of the phenomenon of cruising codes, says

ritual is an important aspect of the way a society identifies and affirms itself. Many oppressed groups react against their oppressor by donning elements of the same ritual 'dress' that excludes them. Thus some gay men will often fetishise the attire and behavior of the police and rough trade inside their own cruising rituals. While on the surface this may be seen as a form of parody of an oppressive, regulatory body, on a deeper level it also operates inside the cyclic dynamic evidenced in many abusive relationships; the abused adopting elements of the abuser's behavior and profile as a form of identification. Politically however appropriation of elements of oppressor's identity also serves to constantly reinforce the status of the marginalised other. (p. 104)

Thus, elements of the church ritual are reconstituted and repositioned into the metaphors of bogspeak in much the same way that identities of other oppressors (heterosexual men, the police, women, the family and bashers) are³².

³² Trumbach (1991) says that in the 1660s and 1670s, sodomy was committed by "rakes" who were libertine in religion and republican in politics. Sexually they were interested in sex with younger men, were not effeminate and were also sexually interested in women. Fops, who were effeminate, did not have sex with men. By 1710 a new identity, the Molly had emerged, one who was effeminate and also engaged in sex with other males.



Fig. 3:20

Early design for Sam's shrine. The artwork was not used in the final version of the film.

This shrine sequence was developed to profile key characters in the narrative, inside a religious environment that expanded upon the ecclesiastical references of the opening titles. Words were designed to flank each character and the typeface developed for them needed to masquerade in the over-ground while carrying references to the typographical treatments of the bogs.

The problem posed then was how does one create a complementing typographical treatment for a voice coming from a similar synthesis of oppressed elements, but profiling in the film as an interior, lyrical voice?

the lyrical voice

For the design of this typographical treatment, I initially worked outwards from Baker's (2002a) contention that, *"It is the tension between the two alternative constructions of reality (society and anti-society) that creates the linguistic distance between language and anti-language,"* (p. 14). He suggests *"both sets of concepts should be considered as notional extreme ends of a continuum based on a social system, with considerable overlap occupying the middle-ground,"* (ibid.).

Early in the development of the shrines that were designed to create a pause in the narrative, I considered integrating typographical elements into the pictorial structure (fig. 3:20).

The intention was to develop a typeface that carried references to ritual and ecclesiastical ornateness and at the same time remained introspective. Thus, Baker's society (over-ground) and anti-society (underground) needed to be established as poles on a continuum on which Sam's narrative could move backwards and forwards. Linguistic equivalents can be found in terms like *"having church"* or *"visiting the sisters"* that have flexible meanings to a bog cruiser depending where on the gradient of social intercourse the term is used. In a restaurant, away from the cruising community, these words would mean something very different to what they would represent if they were used in discussion between fellow cruisers in the front seat of a car, parked outside the bogs.

The typographical treatment used in the poetry of the titles needed (in a similar way to the treatment designed for the bogs) to seep out from the world of its original appearance, and into elements of the narrative where the implications of events happening in one world caused actions and reactions in the other.



Fig. 3:21
Angel Chancery.
Designed by Welby Ings, June 2003.
The face is profiled by a stiffened lyricism, destabilised by distorted ascenders and descenders, pinched terminals and an absence of uppercase letters.

Fig. 3:22
Opening title, (opposite)
A decision to remove images of Sam from the opening of the narrative meant that I could focus the viewer on a dislocated voice. The Angel Chancery type was used to offset the gritty, distressed treatment of the strange, damaged toys.

the times experiments

The initial typographical experiments operated inside a font family (Times). This typeface was used as an over-ground reference and its appearance was disrupted by its own alternative weightings, italicisations and symbols (cf. anti-language). Words developed from this reconstructed typeface were then stretched and warped so they gained an unstable but decorative rhythm. While this worked as single words, the face had a diminished level of readability when it was animated. It was also too similar to the type I was designing at that time for the disconnected and angry bogface. An application of this experiment can be seen in figure 3:20.

Legibility and readability became important concerns as I began to condense the duration of words appearing within the narrative. What will often work in print does not operate the same way as moveable type. While issues regarding the influence of time and motion on the typefaces in this film will be discussed later in this exegesis, the establishment of a new typeface that would animate effectively was a parallel concern of these early trials.

the chancery experiments

Following the discounting of the reworked Times face, a second set of experiments was trialed involving the subtle corruption of chancery typefaces.

Modern typefaces based on these handwriting scripts developed during the Italian Renaissance, are often used in vernacular religious print media (newsletters, funeral service programmes, the printing of religious tracts). The face I developed which drew references from Holmes' *Apple Chancery* (1994), Slimbach's *Poetica Chancery III* (1992) and Penner's *Rendezvous* (2003), was designed to contain a subtle level of instability within its letter-forms (fig. 3:21) and was employed in experiments where I animated it over filmed footage of broken doll/angels (fig. 3:22).

The new *Angel Chancery* typeface with its additional disrupted tracking and kerning, provided an isolated, introspective, almost delicate voice that pulled itself apart as the animated sequence progressed.



However despite its distortion it proved to be too delicate and while beautiful to watch, had a frailty that belied both the strength of Sam's character and the acerbic nature of bog speak's ecclesiasticism.

The gritty treatment of the angel-dolls had been filmed at this point, and set a confirmed "volume" for a pictorial voice against which the typographical design could be orchestrated. The development of the film's introductory sequence came from a reconsideration of three profiles of Sam's personality: dislocation, eclecticism and ecclesiasticism. These themes had driven much of the development of the typographical experiments to this point. Now they were revisited and combined with different emphases into one composition that carried both graphically and typographically, a sense of the ornamental and the abject.





Fig. 3:23
A comparison between a Nickelodeon slide c.1900 and a narrative commentary subtitle for *Frontier* (1925) demonstrate how the ornamental devices designed in the early part of the century had been developed into linear scroll works, more indicative of typographical flourishes than pictorial borders. It is significant to note the few gay-themed title cards of the period were often profiled by a comparatively over-ornamented design, when compared to those designed for contemporary heterosexual-themed narratives.



Fig. 3:24
Preliminary title sketch for boy. The use of caps throughout the design was too dominant and removed some of the innocence and vulnerability from the design. The regularity of the letterforms was also too stable.



Fig. 3:25
Refined design for title. The lower case b was developed to reinforce the youthful and vulnerable nature of the word. The title has integrated ecclesiastical flourishes and eclectic lower case letterforms.

main title experiments

After discussions with Marcus Ringrose³³ a design for the word “boy” was developed that integrated a range of typefaces and kept the decorative elements on separate layers. This allowed the individual elements to be animated separately.

These devices were influenced by ornamental designs on the borders of early, silent movie commentaries and their graphic relatives, the theatrical Nickelodeon warning slides of the 1900s (fig. 3:23).

During some tangential investigation I had discovered that in many of these commentary frames, it was not necessarily the typeface that had been exoticised (probably for reasons of readability) but the ornamental flourishes surrounding the written text³⁴. In a similar fashion to the way that graphic symbols had been used to intersect the typographical voice in the Oxford dictionary experiments, these subtitle decorations were now disconnected from their original context and purpose and relocated inside the letterforms of the title. Experiments using this approach are illustrated as figures 3:24 and 3:25.

The main title of *boy* was refined from these experiments. The final design contained adaptations that allowed it to reverse out, contain a graded fill, or operate as a positive. In the film’s original promotional graphic (opposite), a diagonal flow of calligraphic flourishes is used to suggest continuity between the three distinct letterforms.

The title heralds the movement that will become the constantly drifting, lyrical voice of the film’s opening.

³³ Marcus Ringrose is the founding member of *Heat Interactive*, a New Zealand design company that specialises in animated type. He formed one of the members of the thesis’ reference group during the post-production work on the film.

³⁴ Griffith and Mayer (1970) suggest that these “voice of God” editorial comments and “spoken titles” were designed for the producers rather than the director. The authors also offer interesting insights into how the design and wording of these were used to significantly change the tone or meaning of the original sequences.

boy



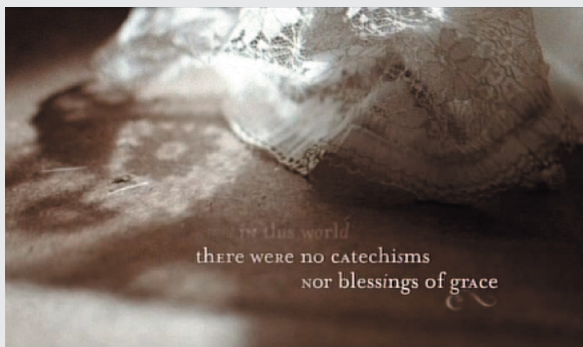


Fig 3:26
Opening poem letterforms. Words are constructed as ornamental forms, using a variety of replaceable upper and lower case letters.
An analysis of the still demonstrates how both upper and lowercase versions of the letters n [N], e [E] & r [R] are integrated in different ways in each word. The letter A remains consistently as an uppercase form.

final ecclesiastical typeface

The film's final, ecclesiastical typeface was eventually made up of serif letterforms taken from across Zuzano Liko's font family *Mrs Eaves* (1996). This eclectic mixture enabled a more delicate construction of words that remained cohesive because all forms came from the same family. The final palette of letterforms included Roman, italics, petite caps and fractions. These were orchestrated into a typeface that provided more than one letterform for many of the alphabet letters (fig. 3: 26). The distorted kerning in each word, affected by the integration of letterforms with varying postures, enabled the words to breathe internally and remain open and lighter.

The result afforded a delicate solution that unlike the Angel Chancery experiments, could breathe inside the time and motion applications. The typeface was quickly legible but still gave a sense of dislocation and eclecticism.

conclusion and applications

The experiments discussed in this section of the exegesis were essentially concerned with translating profiles of Sam's world into typographical voices. I selected two significant themes, drawn from the language and culture of the bogs. They were detachment and ecclesiasticism.

From a consideration of detachment in both behaviour and language, the abject typographical voice was developed. This voice was used to communicate the rage, dislocation and dehumanisation in the story. Conversely from a consideration of the origins and profile of ecclesiasticism in bog culture, a lyrical voice that generally appeared as recollection was developed. In most cases, this voice operated in the heterodiegetic spaces of the film.

Experiments involving disruptions of Salen's (2001) "cultural standardisation" of type, included the dislocation of words and letters from the Oxford Dictionary and the creative consideration of non-grid-based layout, sourced from writing on toilet walls. These experiments contributed to the placing of words around a picture rather than embedding them on grids or in linear sequences.

A consideration of the angry undercurrent that runs through bog-speak, lead to treatments used behind words. This meant that their background environment bristled with hostility while the letterforms themselves, remained undisturbed.

Experiments involving distortions of the *Times* font family, and the development of an *Angel Chancery* face, capable of animation, were both influential in refining the lyrical voice of the film. However, it was the creative application of decorative elements inspired by early movie subtitles and warning slides, that contributed most significantly to the nature of the lyrical face. When this type appears at the opening of the film, its rhythm is graced with small dissolving flourishes. These ornaments also form the distinctive serifs on the film's title.

adaptations in application

Disconnected ornamental features (as angry textures in the bog face and dissolving flourishes in the ecclesiastical face), and eclectic word forms operated as complementary stylistic devices common to both faces. These features gave room for alterations to be made to the two type designs as they moved out from their respective positions (the bogs and the poem).

In terms of their use in the film, both the ecclesiastical and the abject typographical treatments vary in how they are applied. While they maintain their individual emphasis, they alter subtly in terms of placement and the animation of their background textures, (fig 3:27-30).

adaptations to the ecclesiastical face

In the funeral scene (fig. 3:27), the ecclesiastical face that was employed in the opening poem resurfaces. While the treatment of the type maintains the mixture of upper and lower case letterforms, individual words are now placed on slightly different levels. This is a treatment taken from the dislocated underground face.

The animated flourishes adorning the opening sentences have also been removed. I made these adaptations because, although the scene was part of the film's storyline, the typographical voice was Sam's



Fig. 3:27
Flexibility in over-ground and underground faces.

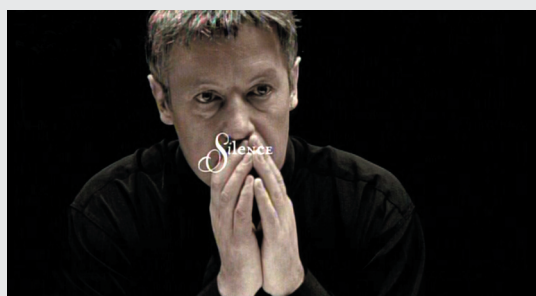


Fig. 3:28 & 29
Changes in application of the ecclesiastical typeface.

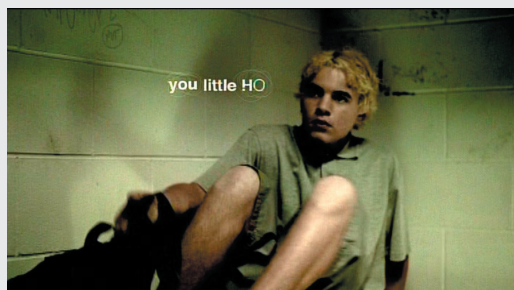


Fig. 3:30
Abject typeface as used by the boy in the changing sheds.

heterodiegetic commentary. With the smooth drift of sound and imagery towards an ecclesiastical ending in the film, it was also necessary that I introduced the adaptation as a transition. *Boy* was now moving from the harsh reality of the over ground into an emerging ecclesiastical environment. This environment held the narrative's resolve. Stylistically this environment also needed to bracket the text³⁵.

In the Last Supper sequence there are two subtle adaptations to the ecclesiastical face. The poem that opened the film has had its words slightly changed. Because the narrative has now been through the brutalising effects of the story's telling, I removed the gentle animation of smoky tones from behind the lettering (fig. 3:28). By doing this, the words became more stable and direct.

The other change can be seen in the final frame of the story. Here, in the closing word, the once separate flourishes that decorated the ecclesiastical written voice, connect (fig. 3:29). The scroll becomes the letter S in the word Silence. What was embellishment now becomes substance. This action brings a form of closure to the typographical journey. The voice has been brought into unison with itself.

adaptations to the dislocated face

The dislocated face designed for Sam's angry underground world, undergoes changes when it is used by other people. A significant example can be seen when Sam's peers threaten him in the school changing rooms (fig. 3:30). Here the underground face has a more open texture operating behind the words. Where individual letters in the earlier bog face were disconnected from a stable base line, now whole words take the same treatment. This brings aggression to snatches of sentences. Its violence is more overt and confrontational. Earlier letter continuity is disrupted to reflect a level of brutality approaching that experienced prior to a queer bashing.

³⁵ *Boy* begins and ends in ecclesiastical environments. In the opening scene broken dolls are presented as angels. In the closing scene we encounter a "Last Supper". The written words are almost identical in both places. The use of monochromatic colour palettes, pace of type, and the employment of low-relief backgrounds also connect these scenes.

The exegesis has now discussed the design of two, distinctive, typographical treatments in the film. These treatments draw on themes inherent in bogspeak, and are able to operate with degrees of flexibility across the text.

Therefore, it is useful at this point, to consider the unique relationship that type has with narration in the film. This next section of the exegesis considers three distinctive features of type as they appear in *boy*.

Drawing on developments in music video and television advertising design, it discusses how type
contributes alternative voices
transfigures current information,
and is *embedded inside the pictorial elements* of the text.

type as narrative voice

introduction

The decision to renegotiate the traditional role of type in a short film was deliberate. It surfaced from the rise of more sophisticated applications of the written word in music video and television commercials at the close of last century.

While theorists like Kellner (1995) observe that there has been a “*steady decline in the use of text or copy in ads and an increase in display and illustrations*” (p. 2), and this would seem to confirm claims by Baudrillard (1975 and 1983), and Boorstin (1962), concerning the increased importance of images in contemporary culture, there has also been a renegotiation of not only the purpose of written text, but also its appearance as an integrated, illustrative voice.

Traditionally type has had slightly different roles in film and television and definitely different roles within the arenas of television advertising and music video.

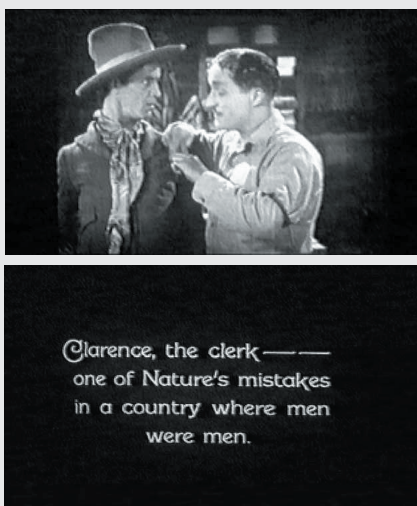


Fig. 3:31
Type card from *Wanderer of the West* (1927)
My intention with *boy* was to reclaim a typographic device that had historically been used to marginalise the other, and employ it as a contemporary system for describing the world of the bogs in their own language. In the bog scenes in *boy*, type is dislocated from the plot. It makes judgments about a world, in a language that turns most viewers into the marginalised because only elements of it can be understood. (Only a seasoned bog cruiser would understand the significance of the word *bona* positioned next to a *gloryhole*.)

In early film, title cards were initially the only method of putting written words onto the screen³⁶. However, despite the increasing range of methods developed for generating type on film, in general the role of the written word as a filmic voice has been restricted to five key functions.

Type's most common use is as titles and end credits. However, it is also commonly employed as a translatory device. Translatory devices generally appear as subtitles that allow the spoken word of one language to translate the written word of another. Its most common deployment is in foreign language films or in films like *Trainspotting* (1996) where dialectal profiles are so strong that written translation acts as a concurrent affirmation of meaning. Other common uses of type have been as documenters of time and location, as written prologues and epilogues, and occasionally in traditional silent film, as a commentator on values associated in the action. (See figures 3:23 and 3:31).

In television, type has generally functioned as a device in the first three arenas, but its use for extended prologues and epilogues is often not effective. Bellantoni and Woolman (1999) suggest that this is because in broadcast television,

the pace of editing is often quick, the type duration is often short, and functions more as image. The type is meant to be seen, not read (with the exception of credits, which are rarely read). Broadcast typography is presented in a predetermined voice, with the intention of leaving an impression. (p. 54)

³⁶ Type was printed on to a card and filmed directly into the camera. Supercards, and key cards that allowed printed text to be superimposed over imagery were later developments of this. Line negatives, burn-in titling, and text applied through character generators (and more recently hardware platforms and software packages for animating and compositing typography) have been developments of this. Current high-end systems include *Avid Media Composer*TM, *EditBox*TM, *Alias/Wavefront*TM, *Softimage 3DTM*, *Maya*TM and *Flame*TM. All of the compositing in the final version of *boy* was done on *Flame*TM. However, experiments leading up to the final embedding of the typographic treatments were developed on the desktop applications *Premiere*TM and *Director*TM.

While type's necessity to leave an impression rather than be read, might be arguable in terms of its most acknowledged use (as either titles or programme and channel identities), Bellantoni and Woolman's (1999) contention ignores a diverse range of innovative uses of type that have profiled in the last fifteen years in the design of music video and television advertising commercials.

Three significant uses of type that have developed substantially in the arenas of music video and television commercials have been influential in the design of the film *boy*. They are type as an *additional narration*, type as a *transfigurer of current narration*, and type as a *pictorial element*.

type as additional narration

This term is used in this exegesis to describe designs where type is employed to speak tangentially to images but is not the primary narrator of the story. In other words, while the pictures might be telling one story, the type is telling another, or adding additional information to the narrative.

This specific treatment of written text profiled in Hollywood's silent cinema as a distinctive form of type-card (fig. 3:31). These cards were not integral to the development of the plot, but rather offered a perspective on events or characters. The insertion of these cards Griffith and Mayer (1971) suggest, allowed for the inclusion of scenes that might contain a socially undesirable character. This is because producers, following a viewing of the cut of the film, could still exert control over aberrant decodings by introducing additional judgmental emphases. In many cases these cards were inserted without the director's knowledge or approval.

With the decline of type's position in film, following the advent of sound, this form of narration remained relatively undeveloped, even in contemporary cinema. However, in music video design, with these texts' inherent ability to present pluralistic meaning, the device developed significantly in the work of directors like Jake Scott. In his video directed for REM, *Everybody Hurts** (1993), Scott developed a parallel, internal commentary that allowed the viewer an insight

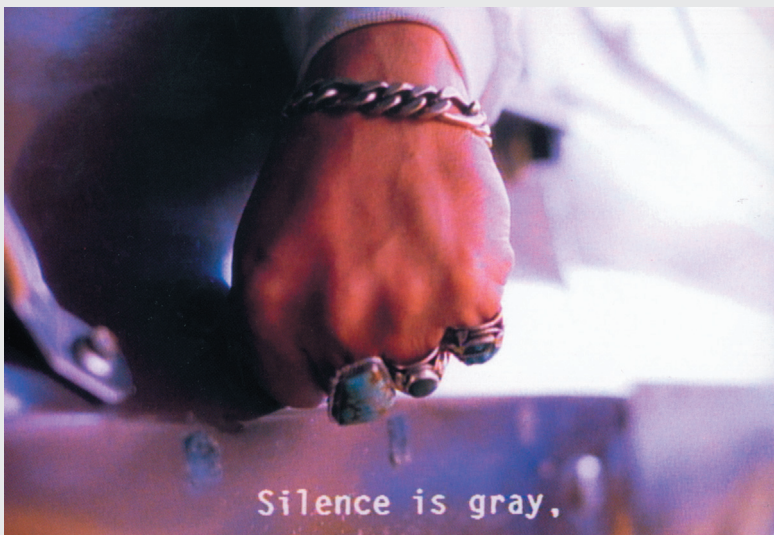


Fig. 3:32 Scott Jake. *Everybody Hurts*, August 1993.

into the thoughts of the people appearing in the visual narrative. The video's narrative concerned a gridlock in an urban environment and the eventual decision of the drivers to leave their cars and walk away from the congestion.

The song's lyrics were not about this event, nor did they concern themselves with the director's depiction of the small thoughts of people caught in the traffic jam. Visually one saw a story about gridlock. Typographically one read the flickering thoughts of people caught in the situation, and aurally one heard lyrics about a man's encouraging words in a time of grief.

However for cohesion, at certain points in the video, Scott connected the typographical thoughts of the people in the cars with the lyrics of the song. His treatment of the typographical voice enabled an additional form of narration (small stories within stories) to bridge the diverse audio and visual narratives.

This approach to additional narration inside music video texts, primarily unfolded by images, was preceded by Mark Pellington's work in the early 1990s for bands like *Pearl Jam*, *INXS* and *U2*. In these videos, Pellington integrated type as a non-subtitling device that while speaking tangentially to the images, avoided direct engagement with either the lyrics or storyline of the video. His enigmatic *Jeremy** alluded to the suicide of a young boy, but used type to flicker in additional ideas of religious domination and interior frustration (fig. 3:33). Type in this video was used as a parallel voice that oscillated between heterodiegetic and homodiegetic positions in the narrative.

In *boy* the use of type as an additional voice, separate to the primary narration, profiles in two ways. It is immediately evident in the bogs where words describe Sam's world using the anti-language form associated with it. These words describe his waiting and perhaps the way he sees himself or other men see him in this world.

type as a transfigurer of current narration

This term describes type that speaks *directly* to the visual narrative. Its voice is actively involved in “telling the story”. In advertising this device allows a director to condense volumes of information into a limited time frame, as often both the type and the image are being read concurrently. At its most sophisticated level, this use of type as part of a shared system of narration, is a form of concurrency; a method that relies on the reader of the text being able to absorb more than one linear unfolding of information at a given time³⁷.

In general this may be seen as a very sophisticated extension of subtitling, where related information about the image is given to the viewer at the same time the image is speaking. The approach may be best typified by a distinctive commercial from Brazil: Revista E’ Paca’s television commercial for EPOCA magazine (2001) (fig. 3:34) [overleaf].

This design employs type as a concurrent narration that explains a distorted “voice-over”, describing the meaning of a week for different forms of life. Moving time appears as a unifying graphic device comprising a moving grid of weekdays along the top of which words flicker and dissolve.

³⁷ The term concurrency in this exegesis refers to a system of presenting different bodies of information simultaneously on the screen. In music video this appears as functional devices like dedications scrolled across the bottom of broadcasts, promos for up-coming presentations inserted into the text, and brandings overlaying images. As a device concurrency has profiled in works as stylistically divergent as Godley’s design for Sting’s *Fields of Gold* (1993) [left] and Fitzgerald’s *Candle in the Wind* (1997) [below].

Godley’s *Fields of Gold* presents a “split time” narrative about a man walking through a deserted town.

In this video we see two separate periods of time run concurrently, one inside the silhouette of the singer and one in the environment surrounding him.

Fitzgerald’s design for Elton John’s homage to the death of Diana Princess of Wales imports the device of scrolled text used in dedications, and employs it as a concurrent translation of audio lyrics in a similar way to karaoke’s presentation of words to accompanying music. Because this music was an adaptation of an earlier song by Elton John, the revised version enabled people to learn the words quickly so the anthem was able, in the space of a few days, to become a popular valediction, familiar to a global audience.



Fig. 3:33
Stills from Pellington’s 1992 production of Pearl Jam’s *Jeremy*. In this work typographical interruptions layer a parallel level of meaning over the visual narrative. While the emotive, naïve treatment of the type supports the video’s atmosphere of childhood angst; it also heightens the sense of enigma by its seemingly unpredictable and irrational intrusion.

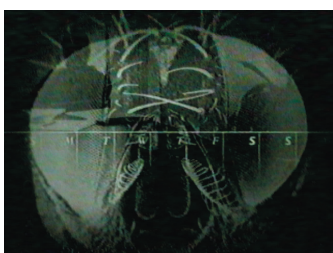
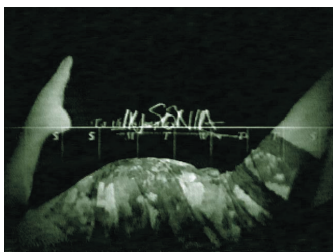


Fig. 3:34
Revista E' Paca's television commercial for EPOCA magazine (2001). Type is used to transfigure narration provided by the images and audio track. However, the type also expands the texture and emotion of the commercial's voice.

Sequences within the narrative are sometimes interrupted by distressings of type over still images. Without the type, the commercial would be a series of still images accompanied by a relatively inaudible oral commentary. The dominant typographical voice not only clarifies the meaning but also creates the texture of the narrative; its role is therefore both syntactic and semantic. The tone of the type becomes a significant determiner of the atmosphere and meaning of the unfolding narrative. Thus it may be seen as transfiguring and embellishing the image-based narration.

This use of type as a transfigurer of current narration was employed significantly in sections of *boy* that dealt with the Driver. I used this approach as a very subtle way of keeping his character integrated yet antagonistically positioned in relation to the flow of the film's narrative.

The Driver always remains slightly "out of synch" with the rhythm of the film. In the dump scene when he looks for Sam, the type is not a direct translation of what he is mouthing. While some words intersect, if you look, his silenced speech contains expletives. Conversely, additional threats are added to what the images of him speaking suggest he is saying. Type is used here as an unsettled, transfigurer of current narration. It tells us what he is saying, using the convention of the subtitle, but it is out of time and incorrect in its literal translation. It becomes a device for heightening the discord in his character.

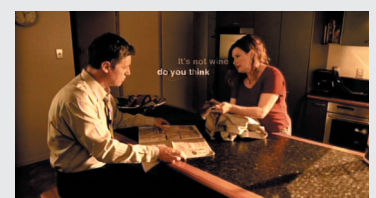
Similarly in the kitchen scene where the Driver and his wife are arguing, type is again masquerading as translative, when in fact nobody has said the words that crackle between the two characters. Type is speaking to us across a dramatic sequence as a transfigurer of the pictorial narration. It is not the written form of the actor's words.



type as a pictorial element

Type that operates simultaneously as a narrator and *pictorial element* has established precedents in film, most significantly in the area of title sequences and credit design. Artists like Kyle Cooper, Saul Bass, Ridley Scott, Robert Dawson and Nick Livesley³⁸ have been

³⁸ See Saul Bass, credits to *Psycho* (1960) and *West Side Story* (1961), Robert Dawson, credits to *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (1985), Ridley Scott, credits to *Altered States* (1980), Kyle Cooper, credits to *Se7en* (1996) and *Mimic** (1997), and Nick Livesley, credits to *The Hunger* (1997).



Figs. 3:35 & 36 The driver's voice. As the film develops, the way the driver speaks, and is spoken to, uses type as a transfigurer of information, that on close analysis reveals a disconnection from the words that are actually being spoken by the actors in the film. The subtle discordance is used to add to the internal conflict building in these scenes.



Fig. 3:37
Still from *No Surprises* (1997).



Fig. 3:38
Marcus Nispel's design for George Michael's
Killer/ Papa was a Rollin' Stone (1993).

instrumental in pushing the potential synergy between image and typographic message to the point where the traditional divisions between the two once separate elements have begun to dissolve. Cooper's designs for Del Toro's 1997 film *Mimic** build on his groundbreaking work, in the preceding year, for Fincher's movie *Se7en*. *Mimic*'s title sequence orchestrates a gritty, eclectic and disturbing composite of cutout, translucent text blocks, insect parts and pinned images. Cooper's animated collage combines both the type and pictures into a composite message of obsession, paranoia and escalating panic. Careful attention has been paid to issues of scale, transparency and letterform and this has enabled the designer to cohesively edit images and type at an increasingly rapid rate as the sequence builds to a climax.

Concern with the synergetic interface between type and image as a potential for narration has profiled increasingly in a music videos. Significant research into this area was refined in the work of Grant Gee, whose design for Radio Head's *No Surprises* (1997), used reversed, highly leaded copy as a fluid, scrolling, subtitle over the face of the narrator. The type became a translatory voice but also an integrated pictorial element. Lyrics were projected on to the face of the singer and filmed *en situ* (fig. 3:37).

Type as a pictorial element that renegotiates the cinematic subtitle, was popularised in 1993 in Nispel's *Killer/Papa was a Rollin' Stone**. This video took the concept of the commodified brand as a graphic element and applied it to translative narration of the song's lyrics. Nispel's parodies on brand signification were inserted between sophisticated monochromatic images of people, moving in slow motion through, around and over urban landscapes. The interspersing of these contrasting graphic treatments (filmed images of people and lyrics as colourful brands) operated as a graphic parallel to the composite nature of the music, which linked two stylistically different songs into one production (fig 3:38).



The pictorial treatment of translatable text in music video can be traced as an emerging phenomenon since D.A. Pennebaker's design of hand held type-cards for Bob Dylan's *Subterranean Homesick Blues* (1965). These cards were reminiscent of both silent film and the hand-held music hall cue cards of Edwardian theatre. In more recent music video design, translation of audio lyrics into type, as a distinctly pictorial element, has been profiled in by two highly distinctive designs. The calligraphic treatment of Suv & Tali's, *Do you Remember Me* (2002), placed a man in a room where he experienced the words of the singer as text which wrote itself across the walls, and Michael Gondry's *Bachelorlorette* (1997) integrated the narrative voice as writing on the pages in a book (fig. 3:39).

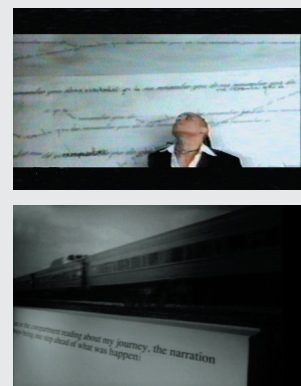


Fig. 3:39
Stills from videos featuring translatable type.
Dan Pennebaker's *Subterranean Homesick Blues*
Paul Morris' *Do You Remember Me?* and
Michael Gondry's *Bachelorlorette*.

experiments with type as pictorial form

Because *boy* is a highly integrated film, relationships between type and image became a central concern early in its design. Although directors like Gee and Nispel, and credit designers like Livesley and Cooper have tended to use type as a dominant graphic element inside highly pictorial designs, I wanted to explore the potential of type as an undercurrent. In other words, I was interested in how type might be used as subtle a voice inside images.

A set of experiments developed in October and November of 2002 were relatively successful in creating this undercurrent (figs. 3:40-41). In an early treatment of scenes dealing with the lines “*In the long summer grass there were angels...*” I experimented with the idea of Sam being watched. The preceding images had depicted his ride through the streets of the town where he lived. Here, early morning locals noted his every move.

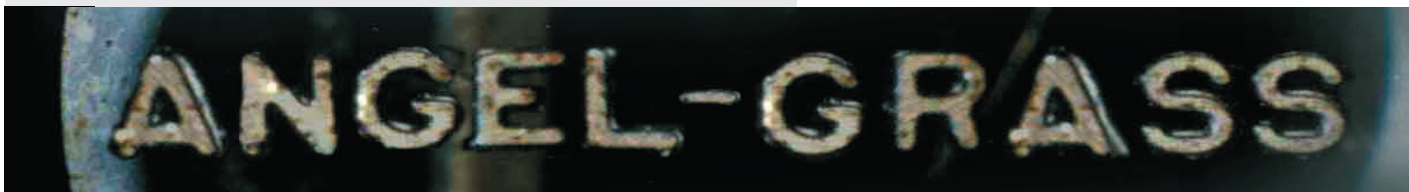


Fig. 3:40 Dispalpy face, Angel Grass. Welby Ings 2002.

I had tried punctuating each of these vignettes with the audio of a camera shutter clicking. The idea was to build the sense of

being watched through an audio treatment and resolve it pictorially in the scene that followed. As he rode through the grass words like *KODAK*, *filter* and *shutter*, sourced off old lens braces, were dissolved in and out of transitions between cameras and skeletal birds. This afforded a subtle integration of narrative voice and pictorial elements that achieved cohesion through the use of related colour palettes.

The design however was eventually rejected because stylistically its darkness overstated the angst level in this early part of the narrative.



Fig. 3:41
Animated sequence from:
In the Long Summer Grass There Were Angels.
Film stills using Photo-shopped im-
ages and animated type, 2002.
I used original, damaged letterforms
on the cameras as a template for the
development of a new display face
called *Angel Grass*.
Letters from this face were refined
and worked back into the image, (a
close analysis shows how words like
stigmata, *angel* and *summer grass* are
actually integrated into the labeling
on the camera). A refined and simpli-
fied proportioning of this face enabled
me to develop the lowercase face for
the narrating voice that animated
across the dissolving images.



Fig. 3:42
One of five border designs made up of reprocessed type.

This experiment however proved important because of a technique I created in the design of the images' frame (fig. 3:42). The distressed type used for the border of these images I made by cutting words and letters off the negatives of old film stock, cellotaping them together, and dropping them over the final filmed images. The device gave a gritty, reprocessed look that established a damaged sense of the cinematic. In the film, these devices are not designed to be noticed, although they do appear in an enhanced form in accompanying print media. Their purpose is as a pictorial element, used to heighten the sense of texture and gritty instability of the images. The borders were designed to operate as a complementing undercurrent for the unstable typefaces that would later be animated across them. Adaptations of these cellotaped borders were used in the final version of the film as surrounds for both Sam's angry flash shots and the sentinel doll/angels that intersect the narrative.

summary

Thus, in the film *boy*, type is used in three relatively distinctive ways. These methods of speaking with the written word are drawn from experiments developed in television commercial and music video design.

Sam's story is introduced by animated type that creates a first person, lyrical monologue. It offers an additional narration. Words appear over images of broken dolls but are telling us something far more than the pictures of the toys. The typographic voice is not only adding to the visual narrative but is in fact carrying the primary body of information.

Type also operates as a transfigurer of current narration at various points in the film. The technique is mainly used to build the sense of discord around the Driver. Normally this treatment of type purports directly to represent what is being said, but in fact transfigures and distorts the message provided by the images.

Type used as pictorial form is widely represented in the film. It appears subtly in images of the sentinel dolls, surrounds the film's three flash shots, appears as hand-drawn graffiti on toilet walls, and is embedded in the texture that flickers behind words given prominence on the screen. Generally this form of type is used to create undercurrent in the story rather than to profile as a dominant prominent pictorial element.

These three treatments of type, as a form of narration, may be fully understood when considered in relation to the final area of this exegesis.

Timing and movement of the film's written voices enables one to approach the paralinguistic potential of spoken language. It allows the written word to gather life, to float or to bristle, to dance in harmony with, or grit itself in discord to, the unfolding story. In this regard, spatio-temporal considerations provide the final key to the way type operates as a voice in *boy*.

spatio-temporal typography

introduction

Spatio-temporal type as used by Bellantoni and Woolman (2000) refers to type that moves through space and time. They argue that the dynamic nature of type is able to take on “*the intonations and voice of the spoken word, the emotional characteristics of dance or music, or the narrative qualities of film*” (p. 6).

Boy is a film that relies heavily on the integration of moving type and image into a rhythmic flow. This is partly as a foil for the volume and rapidity of the image changes and also a way of creating a visually dense text that, while heavily weighted, does not become cloying or overly turgid. As part of achieving this continuity, type moves in a variety of ways. It has a personality and an ability to react to its environment.

the paralinguistic nature of type

Mealing (2003),³⁹ suggests that the meaning of written language can exist in something more than its static form. The written word has the power to communicate emotion through its changing shape and movement. This power he calls the paralinguistic nature of type. Mealing suggests that particular treatments of the written word, can reinstate “*the semantic nuances lost when transient ‘phonic substance’ is translated to immutable ‘graphic substance’*” (p. 47). Thus, he argues that

³⁹ Mealing’s (2003) research into value added text (VAT) and the relationship between paralinguistics and graphic design is concerned with attempts to visually extend the semantic potential of a message further in a computer-based environment and to render the process both algorithmic and dynamic. The principles behind his research, he suggests, are applicable to both typographic and iconic text.

spatio-temporal type can be a re-humanising element in the treatment of text derived from spoken language⁴⁰.

In *boy* all elements work towards a common goal. Image, sound and typographical treatments are influenced by common themes and through this, meld together into a cohesive whole. Type becomes the voices of the film. It has personalities and undergoes transformations in the same way that characters and events do.

Sam's lyrical, ecclesiastical voice is graceful and nebulous. It moves like contemplation; silent, rhythmical, tentative, sometimes remembering itself by repeating a thought, sometimes by speaking in unconventional ways⁴¹.

⁴⁰ The potential for animated type to capture atmosphere and personality can be evidenced in the work of agencies like *Why Not Associates* (2000). Their visual "soundbites" use typography and imagery to visually communicate the personalities of musicians. These works presented at the Virgin Music Group Conference in 1999, marked a significant turning point in the way spatio-temporal type is applied to meaning. (See Woolman, *Sonic Graphics*, 2000, pp. 53-55)

This agency's experiments with the personality of moving type sit alongside expectations among designers that animated typefaces demonstrate the essence and nature of a voice, rather than simply be a series of letterforms that animate effectively. Indicative of this is the fact that among type foundries like *Lettererror* and *T-26* it has become practice to market typefaces inside mini-narrative films. Joyce-Rutter (1998) says "these films, viewed on computer screens, are highly edited amalgams of ambient images and sound that provide an interpretive environment to explore the typeface's personality which cannot be fully realized in print." (p. 42)

⁴¹ Examples of unconventional treatments of sentence structure can be seen in the repeating of words at the end of a thought ("Just things bound by tradition and silence... tradition and silence... silence... silence"). The disruption of order is also evidenced in approaches to memory where a sentence is begun with the dominant thought and meaning is filled in later. For example when Sam tells us of his mother's death, the type appears as, "Cancer... [there is a pause, then]... my mother died of".

Conversely, the abject voice in the film bristles and crackles. It has an undercurrent of emotion that disrupts its own eclectic and unstable letterforms. It's words and letters do not sit in lines and in general it speaks in short, pithy statements.

Emotion embedded inside the movement of type, enables the film to communicate subtle tensions beyond the normal syntactic abilities of its words.

A consideration of the paralinguistic potential of the film's typefaces, enabled me to complement and expand some of the more nebulous tensions embedded in the story. It also meant that by graphically heightening the emotive content of the words, I was able to design a system that more easily communicated meaning across languages.

talking across barriers

Mealing, (2003) suggests that a designer may "*communicate more in a typographic message than the literal semantics of the user's native language.*" He believes that paralinguistic type can "*offer potential assistance in cross cultural design*" (p. 43).

The decision to integrate movement with type in the film *boy* was therefore, useful in developing a more expressive and broadly communicative way of speaking.

For an English-reading audience, the film's use of a relatively unknown anti-language (bogspeak), does not result in a significant loss of understanding. This is because paralinguistic treatments still communicate the feeling of a word or phrase. The use of a paralinguistically styled anti-language can at once distance the audience from a word's meaning while simultaneously communicating its spirit.

Boy has been produced for an international market. The narrative is designed as a "non-spoken" film.⁴²

⁴² "Non-spoken" refers to the fact that the narrative contains no audio narration. Typographic treatments of written words are used to replace the aural and emotional content of speech. The film cannot be termed "silent" however, because it contains sound and this is integral to its discourse. (Sound appears as stylised atmos., heterodiegetic foley work, and as an embedded and highly mixed music track.)

The film has screened at more foreign language festivals than festivals where English is the audience's first language⁴³. It is designed to reach across language barriers because it carries most of its story in pictures and the "look" of words.

Each frame is carefully composed and where it appears, type is finely balanced inside the overall construction of the image. This means that compositional elements are severely disrupted if additional subtitles, (normally required for foreign screenings), are added.

the speed of thought

The voices in *boy* are silent.

Their power lies in the way they speak through their form. This is because Sam's world is essentially covert and introspective. His intimate sexual contact with others is silent, his interactions with the over-ground are silent, even his attacks on those who hurt him are silent. As a result his narration of the story was pitched at a level closer to the safety of internal thought than the confidence of projected speech. The opening words of the film establish this through the appearance of ornate type, floating across the soundscape of a crackling record.

There are two distinct paces of thought in *boy*. The first is poetic, retrospective and contemplative. The second is sudden and fleeting. Because the speed of this second kind of thought is rapid, the pace of type is similar.

Bellantoni and Woolman (2000) argue that,

[I]m]oving type is more often than not most successful when presented

⁴³ Up until March of 2005, *boy* had screened in seventeen international festivals. Ten of these were in countries where English was not generally spoken and only two of these festivals asked to subtitle the film. (This request was politely declined and the film still screened). These official selections included international festivals in Albania, the Czech Republic, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Germany and Belgium.

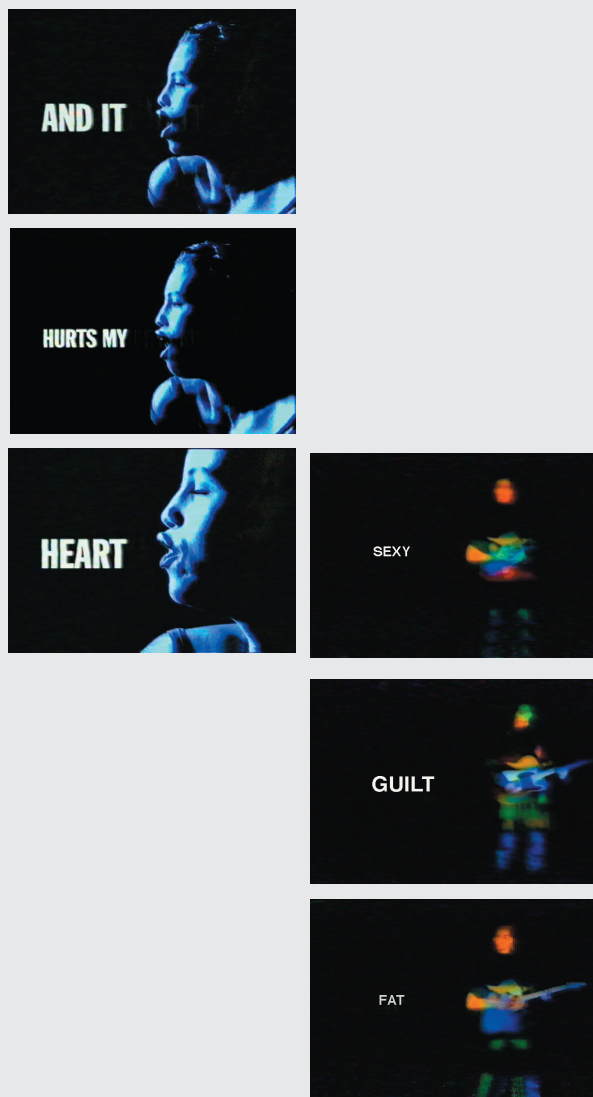


Fig. 3:43
Three and five frame-rate type treatments.
Mondino's (1990) design for Nench Cherry's *I've Got You Under My Skin* (1990) [left], used type as a method of rendering rapid, assertive lyrics while concurrently translating the rhythm of rap into visual form. The opening of this video uses a split screen where the extremely rapid pace of the words was able to operate on a passive background as a way of minimising any visual disturbance. Pellington's (1993) design for INXS' *Beautiful Girl* [right] used the readability of single-words at three frames per unit. This meant words that offered an alternative commentary as a counterpoint to the song's theme of beauty, were able to flicker very rapidly against images in the video.

in individual word or phrase sequences because computer and television screens are an inferior medium for reading long and involved text... Text that is divided into phrases and words, engages in a sort of dialogue with the viewer, giving the experience of being spoken to. Larger bodies of text appearing on the screen [are] closer to the experience of print, and the experience is one of reading. (p. 17)

In *boy*, I was concerned with how pace and form might shift a typographical voice from "the spoken" to "the thought". Definitely thought is faster than speech and the issues this presented in this present project, gave rise to experiments relating to the pace of type in the film.

analysis

Work by music video designers like Jean Baptiste Mondino and Mark Pellington demonstrated in the early 1990s⁴⁴ that single words or very short phrases were able to be read in music videos at a rate of between three and five frames per unit (fig. 3:43)⁴⁵.

In videos where type moved very fast, one was left with the impression that what had been witnessed was a series of notions, rather than cohesive sentences; type appeared to communicate a form of rapid thought.

⁴⁴ A reason why these typographical experiments have occurred in the arenas of music video and television commercials may be because these genres offer an environment where word meaning does not have to be established on first "reading". This is because these music video and television commercials, unlike film, are structured to encourage multiple viewings. A word can be suggested and recognised but not integrated into the context of a wider structure. Because of this, television commercials and music videos offer more flexibility than cinema, in what they demand of type. Generally cinema still maintains its traditional emphasis on readability, legibility and closed translation.

⁴⁵ The term *unit* refers to a single word or graphic appearing in the film. Traditionally, certain rates of exposure have been set for unit readability in film. For example, if set in a clear sans serif face, scrolling credits and animated crawls of type traditionally take between 7-10 seconds (or 168-240 film frames) to move from their entry to their exits on the screen. 35mm film and video have different ratios of frames per second of stock running through the projector. 35mm film runs at 24 frames per second (24 fps) and video is 29.97 (30) and 25 fps.

Bellantoni and Woolman, (2000) may offer a reason as to why the speed of type in these early experiments worked so successfully. They suggest that “our mind’s eye holds on to the images for a slightly longer duration than they are actually seen by the retina,” (p. 42). Key frames and in-betweens for these short bursts of type have tended to be almost identical and the typeface selection followed the convention of avoiding script and serif typefaces with thick-thin stroke variation. It was also common practice when pacing type this quickly, to use caps from bold sans serif faces because they maximised text legibility.

Bellantoni and Woolman (2000) suggest that,

when we read a word that exists within a complete sentence, two types of connotation exist. In the first we compare the letters of the word to each other, to form the word. We then compare the word to other words in the sentence to form a complete thought. (p. 32)

While I would argue that a single word is in fact capable of conveying a thought, it is the authors’ signalling of the difference between these processes of word recognition and sentence readability that is of interest to this present project. The demarcation between the times it takes to perform these two processes definitely appears to be at the base of the effective frames-per-unit ratios for readability on the screen. Discussions with other directors and designers currently working in the arena of title design and music video⁴⁶ appears to confirm that rapidly moving words can be identified in three to five frames, but anything more than three words becomes difficult to read at this pace.

In *boy*, single words animate on average, across three to ten frames. This is because I wanted built into them, internal discords like scratched backgrounds, alternating positions and alternating versions of the word.

⁴⁶ Marcus Ringrose from HEAT Interactive, Brenton Cumberpatch from IMAGES, and Paula Simmons from MARK-MAKER.

Because of this unit-frame ratio, single or compound words are recognised as fleeting but emotionally charged intrusions in the visual narrative. They appear and disappear like notions or half-captured thoughts. They move so quickly that they are noticed rather than contemplated. When words are used as transfigured current narration (the driver in the bog and later in the dump) they bristle like language where the emphasis is more important than the syntactic meaning. We remember the Driver's angry words, but not the details of his sentence.

Establishing a pace for these parts of the film was comparatively straightforward when compared to designing the pacing of longer, lyrical and more reflective voices in the film.

experiments

readability

Between June 2001 and March 2002 I began testing time frames to see if there was any significant difference between readability of sentences on a small screen compared to projections of type on to European and American standard widescreens⁴⁷. My curiosity had been aroused when in 1998 I watched on video, Len Cheeseman's animated type commercial, *The Riot of Spring**. This complex and evocative animation was made for the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and was designed specifically for screening in cinemas. Although the scale of the video viewing took away some of the intensity of the type, the work also appeared to lack the sense of "breathing conversation" it had when I viewed it in a theatre; something appeared to have happened to its pace. I rang Saatchi & Saatchi in Wellington to check that the work on the show-reel I was looking at was in fact the original and they confirmed that it was.

Using Bellantoni and Woolman's (2000) seven-to-ten second industry standard pace for revealing and dissolving type, resulted in a reading pace very similar to a voice that speaks clearly and legibly.

⁴⁷The European Standard widescreen for 35 mm film has a ratio of 1:66:1 and the American Standard 35mm widescreen for film has a 1.85:1, or a 16:9 ratio. The projection screens I used for these experiments measured 2.2 x 1.2 meters (DVD projection) and 10 x 6.2 meters (full, wide-screen).

The type looked as if I was watching a slow and deliberate conversation. This ratio of exposed type-to-motion also presented two other significant problems. Firstly it was out of rhythm with the rapidly edited and flowing structure of the film, and secondly it lacked the intangible and ethereal quality of thought.

Film editor Brenton Cumberpatch states,

Editing pace, music and pictures all tie in to determine what length is necessary for the audience to read a written word. If the audience has been experiencing fast paced, quick cuts then you're able to have smaller frame durations and not jar them. The chances are they will be able to read the writing. If the pace is more languid, and you use small frame edits, the chances are they will have difficulty catching them.

B. Cumberpatch, e-mail communication, (February 2, 2004).

This readability of type pace is also affected by a range of complementing variables including typographical style, text style, text colour and background movement. As a general guide in editing film, editors like Cumberpatch use *"three words per second when trying to establish how long a voice over will be"* (ibid.).

A slightly faster version of this ratio was trialed with the lyrical type sequences in *boy*. This decision was made following a series of experiments that pared down the duration of segments of sentences (in a similar way that a poem breaks ideas into lines).

By revealing thoughts in small sections, I was eventually able to establish a reading pace closer to lyrical thought. I found that holding type in a state of dissolve as I brought on new information, dictated a reading pace that also allowed some variation in the reading speed (fig. 3:44).

These experiments took a long time to refine because of calibration issues between reading time on large-scale projections and the fact that I was developing the type animations on a small computer.



Fig. 3:44

Experiments with pacing reading. Two techniques are evidenced in these early experiments (February 2002). The system at the top used a three second exposure for each line of text and factored in an additional buffer of two seconds as the words faded off and a new line of text emerged. I found it was necessary to edit together slow, tracking shots or images that had similar colour palettes to avoid any undue conflict between the pictorial background and the emerging type. I also used descriptions like *"adrift with mourning"* in the poetic text to draw a subtle relationship between the image and the flow of type.

The second technique evidenced in the last three images, was less successful (although interesting to watch). It faded a new line of words, up through the letters of the old phrase. The problem with this was that one had to factor into the reading time, a period of where neither line of text could be deciphered. In the context of the tightly edited pace with which I was working, this technique was ineffective because it extended the time required to read the words. It also broke the rhythmic flow of the written voice I was trying to develop.



Fig. 3:45
Type wiping in relation to moving imagery.
Sentences tend to wipe off from left to right because within the reduced time available to read the text, this method affords maximum exposure.
To accommodate this design, sequences that were to contain this kind of wipe were all shot with dominant visual elements moving from left to right.

type wiping

By allowing type to wipe on and off in relation to the movement of specific objects in the film (fig. 3:45), I was able to integrate the graphic form of thought with the smooth flow of the visual narrative.

This not only afforded greater concord between text and image but also, because type was dissolving and sometimes reappearing, it captured the nature of thought over speech.

As a result of these experiments, if *boy* is viewed on a computer screen or television set, the pace of the written text appears very fast. On a cinema screen however, the pace, because of the change in scale, appears to be slightly slower.

summary

The pace of type in this film is faster than one would normally encounter in cinema, and it behaves in significantly different ways.

Boy is designed referencing texts that invite multiple viewings; it draws on some of the conventions of type pace, placement and emphasis, from music video and television commercials. It seeks to apply these approaches to a unique way of storytelling.

The film employs type as a system of narration, in three distinctive ways. As additional narration, the typographic voice appears in concord with the images it is discussing. Generally in these sequences it is adding related information to what is unfolding.

As a transfigurer of current narration, type is often in discord with the images, either through its content or its movement. In the film *boy*, transfiguring type is generally used to unsettle the information provided by the imagery.

Finally, as pictorial form, type is used as a subtle addition to the iconography of the film. It is integrated into the imagery as an undercurrent of detail. It is also designed to be revealed in repeated exposures, or recognised in stills used in publicity and print material⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ The main images used to promote the film: *the child with the coat on the open road* (fig. 3:25), *the twin girls in the shrine* (fig. 2:7), *the skinheads in tutus* (p. 26), and *the angel/dolls* (chapter headings) all contain examples of this embedded type. As print media, these images are looked at for much longer periods of time, and in a fashion that allows a greater level on contemplation on their detail.

Four international festivals [*The Telecom New Zealand International Film Festival* 2004, the *Vinokino International Film Festival* 2004, the *Cork International Short Film Festival* 2004 and the *Verzaubert International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival*] used these images from *boy* to promote their festivals.

Moving type has been used to enhance the film's voices in a manner similar to the way paralinguistics augment speech. This expansion of the normal syntactic abilities of type, gives the written language in the film a heightened level of personality.

One of the reasons for the building of the paralinguistic personality of type was the need for the text to operate effectively as it moved across language barriers. However, the treatment was also important in bringing type into concord with the rhythmic and spatial considerations of the film.

The final set of concerns, in relation to the design of spatio-temporal type, was the capturing of thought. This was done to renegotiate cinema's traditional use of the written word as a representation of speech. This process involved experiments with pace and scale, so that ratios could be fine-tuned for single and compound words. It also aimed to develop a distinctively internalised voice for much of the film, a voice that communicated the isolation and disconnected nature of Sam's being.

Type is not a separate veneer on *boy*. It is not laid over the visual text in the manner of some subtitles. It is a carefully constructed contribution to the film's aesthetics, ethos and narrative discourse. It speaks like thought, it develops and changes in relation to the currents of the story, and it draws its forms and expressions from the very core of the film's diegesis.

Complete and intersecting typographical treatments have been developed from a consideration of the culture and language of Sam's underground world. Bog cruising and its profiles have contributed as much to the written voice of the film as they have to its storyline and imagery.

Having now considered some of the important influences on, and developments of, type in the short film *boy*, this chapter is now drawn to a close.

In concluding the exegesis of this project, the final section will reflect on the completed text, the key experiments and processes employed in its development and the impact of the project on further research.

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section four
reflection





reflection

A story once told is understood through reflection.
Morton, 2003, p. 24

Because issues and events raised by this project's development will continue to be applied and extended into new experiments and creative works, a definitive conclusion cannot be presented. However, it is possible to reflect on significant outcomes and processes. This closing chapter therefore considers three features of the project. First, the research's impact since *boy's* release in June 2004. Second, reflection on issues, experiments, experiences and methodology arising during the project, and finally a discussion of new creative and analytical research growing out of the thesis.

journeys on an open road

the research's impact

Boy's homodiegetic narrative opens with the image of an open road, browned by the summer heat and stretching out to a distant horizon.

When I designed the film, it was my intention that the research should travel on such a road. I did not want the study to be closed between the covers of a bound document, assessed by strangers and then relegated to the library shelves of academia. I am a practical man and my desire is to create work that contributes to human experience. In bringing the structures of a Ph.D. to this endeavour, I sought to rigorously challenge the undertaking and thereby enrich the quality of the outcome.

If research like this thesis is to have value, it needs to add not only to knowledge but also to human experience. In both its current form and in the rich potential for further research the project has generated, the thesis may be seen as having achieved these aims.

Boy had its international premiere in July 2004 as one of the six short works on film selected for the *New Zealand International Film Festival*. These films toured through fifteen regional festivals in the country between July and November 2004.

Prior to its release *boy* was selected in competition for the 2004 *Montreal Film Festival*¹. It was nominated for best short film and was described in reviews as “a brilliant story line developed within the short film” (Luc Perreault, 2004, p. 10) and “a beautifully crafted, visually rich, story that pushes the borders of convention in the genre” (Theroux, 2004, p. 21). Critical reviews and exposure at the festival resulted in interviews and excerpts of the film being featured on a number of Canadian and New York television shows². At this time it was also officially selected as one of nine short films for the 42nd New York International Film Festival³. Over the next two months *boy* was selected for ten other international festivals in America and Europe (fig. 4:1).

The New Zealand Film Commission awarded the project a grant of \$20, 460 to take the HD experiment back out on to 35mm stock. However, following the demand for the film in international festivals, the commission took the unusual step of having additional copies printed on 35mm film and Beta SP tape. “A List” international festivals are generally closely networked and selection panels tend to travel to earlier events to see new films. Because of this networking, *boy* was invited to feature in a range of festivals into which it had not been entered⁴.



Fig. 4:1
Official selections in international film festivals (2004)

¹ Because the film premiered in Montreal, it was automatically closed for consideration in Cannes. These festivals require international premieres so films that have screened at one, cannot appear in competition at the other. The decision to accept the selection for Montreal was pragmatic. This festival has a strong history of promoting innovative and experimental films compared to Cannes’ emphasis on more commercially focused works. Montreal also has strong links to European markets, especially in Northern and Western Europe, and these markets are often more open to less formulaic methods of storytelling on film.

² Significant among these were, *The Stephen Holt Show* (2004, October 1). Montreal Film Festival: Episode 2 ; *Channel 2 Arts News*, (2004, September 2). Competition Mondiale: Highlights; and *Arts Week*, (2004, September 4). New approaches to short film: Boy.

³ This festival considered 800 international short films for selection. *Boy* screened with Jonathan Caouette’s documentary *Tarnation* on September 28th and October 5th at the Lincoln Centre, New York.

⁴ Significant among these in 2004 were, *Uppsala*, (Sweden); *Rosefilmdagen*, (Amsterdam); *Hamburg* (Germany), *Sonar Florence*, *Newport* (USA), and *19ième* (Belgium).



Fig. 4:2
Official selections in international film festivals
(January- April 2005)

The film has also been selected for the *American Short Film Archive 100*. This archive managed by the University of Nevada, contains what are considered to be the 100 world’s most significant short films.

Boy has also sold to *Canal+* in France, Poland and Switzerland, and to *Universal* in Italy.

In January 2005, the film was selected for Clermont-Ferrand. This was its third A List festival in six months. The Film Commission travelled over to France with it, using it as a central feature of the marketing and promotion of other New Zealand productions. Prior to its selection for this festival, *Film Movement*, a New York distribution company dealing in festival films, bought the North American rights to the film and plans to release it on DVD in the middle of 2005.

Since January 2005 *boy* has been officially selected for a further fifteen international festivals in Belgium, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Britain, New Zealand, Norway, France, and the USA (fig. 4:2). These selections for widely different types of festival suggest that the film may be seen as a significant and valued contribution to both human experience and new ways of storytelling⁵.

⁵The following excerpts of reviews provide a cross section of reactions to the film.

[Germany]
“In the 15 minutes of short film there is more to discover than in most feature length films. Ings has found a way to tell an exceptional story in an exceptional form.” Hagen Gottschalck. *Kino* magazine. December 2 2004, p. 26

[New York]
“This is a deeply moving, mesmerizing film that just blew the audience away. At its conclusion in the Lincoln Centre the theatre erupted into applause. It is definitely the short film triumph of this year’s festival.” (Richard Beven. *New York Short Film Review*. October 6 2004, p. 35).

[New York]
“A haunting, visually inventive tale about coming of age and into sexuality.” *Film maker* magazine. <http://www.filmmakermagazine.com/blog/2004/09/new-york-film-festival-shorts.php>

[New Zealand]
“Before the screening of *boy* the director, Welby Ings, was given the opportunity to talk to the audience and warned that a lot of the audience probably wouldn’t like this short. He was correct, but not because of misplaced moral outrage, rather that visually the film appears to be a low-budget tribute to Peter Greenaway.... *Boy* has a lot to say about the intolerance and violence inherent in rural life and the ostracism and bashings that a young gay man is subjected to. Unfortunately the look of the movie overpowers its message.” Stephen O’Hoy. *New Zealand Xtra* entertainment website: <http://xtramsn.co.nz/entertainment/0,,7126-3545868,00.html>

[Netherlands]
“A visually stunning story.” Kees Werren. www.maleweblog.nl/weblog/index.php?itemid=397 - 5k

[Reviews continued on facing page.]

Although international reviews of the work have generally drawn attention to *boy's* compression and richness of imagery, the film, as a piece of creative production should not be considered simply as a discrete artifact. Instead it may be seen as a research site where data, knowledge and technology have been brought into creative discourse with each other. Through reflection on, and in action, these elements have been orchestrated into a woven narrative that utilises structural and aesthetic profiles from narrative music videos and television commercials. The thesis may, therefore, be seen as embracing both process and a resolve.

reflection on key issues, experiments and methodology

In reviewing the key issues, experiments, and methodology in this project it is helpful to remember that all of these developments are essentially interconnected. Each move tested against the whole is affected by, and affects, the emerging totality of the work. While significant investigations and outcomes are revisited in groups in this section of the exegesis, their demarcation is not a reflection of the way they worked in the design of the film. The features of this project are considered under the headings method and process, image and narrative, durability, continuity, space, professional method, story-telling, and shrines.

⁵ continued:

[Germany]

"Boy is an ambitious masterpiece. In fifteen minutes Ings assails the audience with a flow of breathtaking images. His use of flickering type and damaged dolls, piles layer upon layer of beautifully coloured images, over a difficult subject. Yet for all of the story's content, this is not heavy-handed sensationalism. The rapes and beatings, psychological pressure and rural claustrophobia are shot so seductively that you are left hypnotised and stunned at the end of the screening".

Samantha Pauson. *Filmspeak*. <http://www.filmspeak.com/2004/german-verzaubert-films.php>

[Finland]

"Finally a political short that is masterfully told. This religiously styled story of a young prostitute's coming of age has all of the detail correct (although some of the written language will go above many people's heads). This is not a light romp through a neon world. Small town prostitution is shown for what it is, run down toilets, petty theft and double standards. What stands out about this work is its treatment. This is a very ornamental film that you have to watch closely. From its opening poetry to the flickering credits, this short holds you in its grip. It talks to you in multiple of voices, all of them silent. You will go away wanting to see it again. This is certainly the most innovative, and groundbreaking short film in this year's festival." Marko Anderson. *Vinokino reviews*. http://www.tuset.fi/vinokino/2004/en/movies/mr_right/index.html

method and process

While there are a number of paradigms of thought surrounding the process of creative problem solving, in this project I sought to unpack the research method that had become so integral to my way of making art.

The project sought to forge a unique way of researching that maximised the chances of creative and effective outcomes. Scrivener's (2000a) understanding of the multiple and shifting goals and issues that might accompany such an undertaking, was addressed by opening the project up to methods of collecting and linking data in ways that enabled me to maintain the maximum variation of perspectives. This process, as Kleining and Witt (2001), suggest enables the researcher to locate and orchestrate similarities and patterns by frequently asking questions of the material. Similarities, analogies or homologies are arranged and rearranged until they begin to form cohesive and coherent patterns.

This becomes a transactional process of reflection and experiment, which employs a form of appreciative enquiry. This is essentially an affirmative process that Gibbs (2004) suggests creates opportunities for positive insights into effectiveness. Essentially it asks the questions, "What works well?" and "Why did it work well?" Appreciative enquiry *"takes attention away from problems and deficits and redirects attention to the best of what is"* (Lander, 2000, p. 136).

Because the research methodology designed for this project was subjectively positioned and transactional, it was sometimes harrowing. The connection of the self to the process and outcomes means that the successes and failures of experiments are keenly felt. Finding positive connections, whether it be in networks for uncovering or creating data, or in methods of connecting material so effective patterns emerge, required an appreciation not only of the material, but also of its potential. Experiments through exploratory and contemplative sketching, the making of artifacts and immersion in locations, were processed concurrently with forms of narration. In processes similar to those outlined by Schön (1983), verbal and non-verbal dimensions were connected and tested. Situations and ideas were talked forward and listened to as they spoke back. Out of this process, situations were reframed and tested against those that surrounded them in the emerging text.

the relationship between image and narrative

Boy is the result of a series of experiments undertaken to create solutions to emerging questions. These questions surfaced as part of an ongoing reflection on action. The experiments could not be seen as linear, as from the outset a sense of the whole meant that creating the film could be likened to a protean, multi-layered kind of jigsaw, where each new piece trialed in the picture altered shapes and patterns in things that surrounded it. These layers covered a multitude of areas including sound, rhythm, direction, colour, type, character, image, depth of field and narrative position.

New treatments of these areas were trialed against broader needs in the text, including impact, durability over repeated screenings, coherence, stylistic concord and accessibility of meaning.

The text was constructed as visually rich, with an approach taken from television advertising where, as Ellis (1992) explains, images tend to be simple and direct, jealous of their meaning, and cutting to details rather than holding a viewer's attention for longer periods of time. Experiments in this area concerned the development of graphic but powerful images like the dolls and atmospheric shots of the open road. The project also experimented with the duration of shots so a core message could be noted and then the viewer quickly moved on to new information. This resulted in the highly compressed nature of the narrative, with closely cropped scenes averaging just over three seconds in duration.

durability

Darley (2000) talked about images in new media genres often being so elaborate that they cannot be apprehended in a single screening. In a similar way, *boy* makes its core information obvious, but images and relationships between images are constructed so they unfold information over repeated exposures to the text. This is done by carefully orchestrating events, density of imagery, and secondary iconography that may contribute to meaning retrospectively. Because *boy* was concerned with a design that might maintain durability and interest over repeated screenings, many experiments focused on the fine-tuning of enigma and closure. These experiments were aimed at creating a text that would work effectively in the cinema, but would also engage in

a calculated way with the growing use of short film as a reviewable narrative, released on DVD. Experiments related to the durability of the film involved the designing of secondary iconography, the use of enigma, the rapid pacing of some typographical treatments, and the development of characters that reveal themselves more fully after repeated exposures to the text.

continuity

Colour, directional flow and rhythm were carefully orchestrated in the film, with the aim of smoothing out the fragmentation caused by the very short scenes and the rapid progress of the narrative. Concord between images included experiments involving the shifting of certain pigments from one scene to the next, the establishment of palettes that grouped sequences together, the subtle use of consistent directional flow, and the use of editing systems that either cut to the beat of the audio track, or around the action within a scene. These techniques were orchestrated to develop concord. Conversely, disruption of these approaches was used to build tension in the text.

To cope with the rapid pace of the story, characters were generally kept simple, being either archetypical or as Burton (2000) posits, opposed to each other in type. Thus in *boy* experiments in both scripting and direction established a dynamic where characters were developed from the actions and reactions within other parts of the narrative. This meant that despite the lack of dialogue, minimal time was demarcated for the singular development of any individual character⁶.

space

Another set of experiments emerging inside the project trialed the potential of both temporal and physical space, in terms of its ability to heighten the power of imagery and pace in the film. The use of

⁶ The contrasting exception to this approach was the character of Sam. He consumes more than five times as much exposure time in the film as any other character. This is so his character has room to develop, passing from a secretive, internalised isolate, to a boy who publicly exposes the guilty driver in the closing scene.

television dramas influenced by music video's narrative discourse, were developed in *boy* through reflection on spatial treatments in selected music videos from the studio broadcasts of the early 1960s. This low relief tiering of space influenced the theatricised look of certain sets in the film. The shallow treatment of space evident in Sam's personal world of the opening titles, the bogs, his flash frames and the shrines, were set against the deeper perspectives used in the rest of the movie. This approach was used to create a subtle demarcation between his private and public worlds.

sound

Experiments with sound became important because the film was non-spoken. Silence, homodiegetic sound, music, sampled mixes and atmos were all orchestrated so they added emphasis or contributed to rhythm or atmosphere within the text⁷. Significant experiments involved the mixing of sound to reinforce the ecclesiastical and contemporary elements of Sam's world, the alienation of the rape scene, and the synchronicity between film action and emphases in the audio track. The selection and demarcation of specific third level sounds was used to reinforce the sense of intimacy and dislocation in the film.

professional method

This movie was shot in a small hydro village in the south Waikato. In 1929 when Arapuni was built, it was one of the major government power stations in the country. Its village boasted a milkbar, tea kiosk, post office and a range of small shops. Among its public services, were doctors' rooms, a library, a primary school, a maternity hospital and a local union. Today, it has no store, no school, and no postal delivery. The hospital and the doctors' rooms are only a memory. While we were filming there, the village's only remaining service station closed down.

⁷To ensure the quality of sound in *boy*, audio was printed using both Dolby digital and analogue systems. This is because Dolby sound, being printed between the film's sprockets is susceptible to damage. As a back-up, an analogue track was also printed. This appears on the right-hand side of the negative. Two versions of the film's soundtrack were necessary to accommodate screenings in festivals where digital systems are not available.



Fig. 4:3
Interior of the half round shed at Arapuni showing the sets for the last supper and Sam's room. This building in the centre of the village, was loaned to us by John and Rosemary Hendrikson. During the weeks of set construction and filming of *boy*, many of the local families popped over here with their children and visitors to have a cup of tea and talk about what was going on. Because of the limited space available in the village, this studio became multifunctional. Beyond its use for the sets of three major scenes in the film, it also served as a costume and prop store, and bedroom for some members of the crew.

Driving south from the dam, as you wind into the village there is a paddock on your left. It is empty now, save for a few cows, grazing indolently in the afternoon heat. But once this field held Mr Darby's picture theatre. As a small boy, his building was the source of my wildest dreams. It was where I saw my first movies.

Every Friday night when they got back from shearing, my father and mother would put their six children in the back of the Chev and drive us over to the village to watch *Ben Hur*, *Sparticus*, *The Robe* and the other cinematic epics that marked the highlights of my childhood.

I came back to this place to make *boy*, because it was home once... a long time ago.

But it has changed.

By necessity, the 120 people living in the village now, have learned

to depend heavily on each other. They are a close and eclectic community whose generosity and support of this project has been phenomenal.

The older people remembered my family.

When I designed and shot the television film *The Coopers* in 1997, one of my main aims was to develop a method of making film inside a community. This meant establishing ways of compensating local people for their help and involving them in the actual process of constructing and checking the integrity of the film (fig. 4:4).

The desire to make film in a manner that profiles a genuine respect for the goodwill of people involved has been important to me since my days of making documentaries for television. Film projects often exploit local communities. Production crews generally show great interest in them while they can access props and locations, but after the shoot is wrapped, there is often no more contact. The relationship is not reciprocal because the film is often seen as more important than the people contributing to it. While I accept that the film is of importance, I believe that one must work with communities so they genuinely feel they have benefited from the experience. This helps to make the event fulfilling for everybody and also ensures that the local people are happy to support future projects.

In *boy* reciprocation was achieved in several ways. Many of the local people appeared as extras in the film and thus became part of the team. Everybody involved has a copy of the film and their names appear in the credits and press packs. Their families and friends were all invited to join us during the shoots⁸ and all crew took time out to explain what was happening and why we were using certain equipment in certain ways⁹.

Because all of the actors were amateurs and only one had worked

⁸ The only exception to this was the rape scene, which was a closed shoot because of the sensitivity of the subject matter. This scene was shot in two separate, sealed-off locations between 1.00 and 2.00 in the morning. Tammy Warwick who acted the part of the young woman, had support people with her during these scenes.

⁹ There was no traditional hierarchy in the crew. All crew were equally valued and received the same flat fee for their involvement in the project. Although we could not afford to pay actors, they all received the same level of support and acknowledgement.

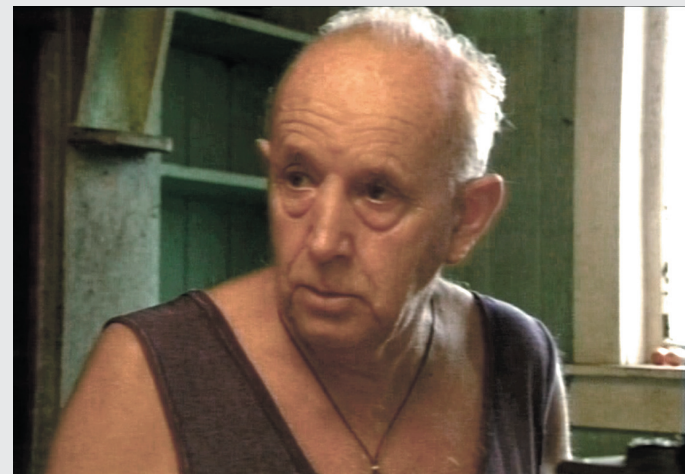


Fig. 4:4

Stills from the community based film *The Coopers* (1997).

All of the actors and crew used in this production were located from inside the district where the original events in the film occurred. Some of the actors were involved with, or relations of, people who lived the original events. These stories were woven together in the narrative. Local people were encouraged to be involved in all parts of the production and we showed them how to use cameras and editing equipment, and how to access funding, so they could go on to make their own stories long after we had gone. While we made the film, we lived in the community; we celebrated with them and gave our help where there were ongoing things we could offer. As a result, the film gathered a high level of analysis and support because the people involved knew details about set dressing and characterisation I would not have been able to access if I had simply employed actors and crew from outside productions. While the film had a unique style, I was anxious that the community saw it as reflecting who they were and the events that had happened in their lives. Today, all of the crew and cast have copies of the film and there are prints in the local *Te Awamutu Museum* and the *New Zealand Film Archive*. Money made from screenings of the film was folded back into the community's support services.

in film before, we were able to arrange agents for many of them after the production. *Boy* therefore, acted as a promotion for them and four of these actors have now gone on to professional work in film, television drama, or commercials. Furthermore, three of the students who had parts in *boy* are now enrolled in university courses in film or theatre. I have written references for them and they have used their performance in the project to support their applications.

For the crew, we rented accommodation in an old church in the village, and we lived and ate there for a week. Contracts for catering and accommodation all went to local people.

When the film was finished I organised a special cast and crew screening for the village, and local families received a small music video that showed them during the making of the film. (See appendix 5: *How Bizarre*). This was not a work of art; it was just a way of saying thank you in a manner that might serve as a record of the time we spent together on the production.

I continue to write newsletters for the community on the progress of the film, and have lobbied on their behalf with the district council for funding for a local picture theatre in the village.

Because many of the people involved in the production have asked what will be happening to specific artworks and props used in the film, I have arranged for these to be given to them at the end of the thesis.

I take this method of working with a community and carrying responsibility for the reputation of film as a profession, seriously and will continue to develop the approach in upcoming projects.

unique ways of storytelling

Considerable research into, and experiment with, narration is a feature of this present project. Some of the most complex decisions in the film were those concerned with the design and positioning of its narrative voices. The development of typefaces and typographical treatments that captured the ethos of Sam's divided world, drew on the ecclesiasticism and angry dislocation inherent in the language of the bogs. The disruption of Salen's (2001) national symbolic environment, with designs that caused disturbances to stable, ubiquitous

font families, was a reflection of bogspeak's disruption of meaning and emphasis in standard English.

Typographical voices operated as direct address in the heterodiegetic spaces of the opening and closing scenes of the film. Type also spoke in more ambiguous ways inside the homodiegetic space of the narrative. The creation of intermediary surfaces, that were neither letter-form nor pictorial elements, were used in the animation of words, so the written word operated not as a subtitle, but paralinguistically as part of the personality and developing drama of the narrative.

Experiments with the relationship between the size, form and pace of type were extensive. Although, in general, these may be seen as successful, I feel I have still not resolved the issue of what happens to readability when the type size and duration, set for large-screen cinema, is compressed and viewed on a video monitor¹⁰. While most of the type works well, I still have concerns with two pieces of text in the narrative. These are the sentences immediately following the girls calling Sam a pussyboy from the school steps, and the text accompanying Sam riding his bike through the open grass (fig. 4:5).

I set the reading pace at the opening of *boy* in a relatively rapid rhythm. The aim of this was to suggest that one needed to pay attention to what was being said with the type, because it might not operate in a manner one is used to encountering in cinema. This worked for most of the typographical interruptions, especially the single word flashes. This was because they could sustain momentary exposure due to the fact that what one was actually reading was a flickering shape. As the film progressed, many longer sentences, originally scripted for the film were edited out. The remaining sections of Sam riding his bike and walking past the girls on the school steps I now feel were unnecessary and could have been pared back using less text.

¹⁰ Colour and sound were both designed to operate effectively, irrespective of viewing format. This was because I took cues from the way broadcast television works around its inability to transmit the breadth of captured information. Drawing on the medium's treatment of these areas, I employed features like heightened foley sound, crushed blacks, and broadcastable colour palettes, to build scaffolds from which intensity could be structured into the film.



Fig. 4:5
Sentences appearing as type. Although the potential for repeated viewing partly addresses the issue of content being too much to take in on first viewing, these two sequences probably push the envelope a fraction too far. Because of the pace of the scenes, one has to focus on either the writing or the action. The competing demands of both are effective on a large screen where scale affords a breathing space. However, when compressed to the size of a video screen, the multiple information feels too panicked.



Fig. 4:6 Early shrine experiment using models to block in a Flash animation. The first shrines were trialed using tracking sequences, but these were later replaced by blue-screened film shots embedded into layered drawings.

Perhaps the most time consuming experiments in the film concerned the designing of the shrines. The problem of how to translate into visual structures, the notion of a chorus, that provides a passive space in an unfolding narrative (ballad), proved complex and challenging. Stylistically the shrines needed to be in concord with, but differentiated from, the iconography of the story. Examples and commentary on these experiments can be viewed in appendix 5: *Shrine experiments*.

In the end I used references to the shape of an arch employed in the set of Sam's bedroom panels (figure 4:7), and ornamented it with funerary sentinels. A selection of these images appears in the exhibition of work accompanying this thesis and as prints within the exegesis. I feel these designs are particularly effective because they are in subtle concord with the audio design that accompanies them in the film. This sound mix samples the two main musical themes of the film, the ecclesiastical *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh* and the darkly personal, and more contemporary *Anchor Me*. The shrines lift ecclesiastical references and weave them with themes of enigma, theatricality, and spatial compression. They are at once simple and complex images, embedded, on close inspection, with a range of secondary iconography, including references to the character inside them and subtle changes in the pose and nature of the statues that flank them. Inside the proscenium arch of the shrines we see the central characters of the narrative, the *dramatis personae*, dislocated from their normal space at the opening of a narrative and now placed out of dramatic context but within the stylistic flow of the unfolding narrative.



The experiments and outcomes involved in the shrines draw attention to an over-riding challenge that faced the film. How does one, in discussing a boy's world, divided between widely different cultures, interpret this as stylistic and narrative devices in a story? In other words how can one translate cultural dislocation into the look and structure of a narrative?

If *boy* has a strength, I believe, it is in how the film's design answers this question. The multiple dimensions orchestrated to bring into stylistic concord, the contrasting themes of dislocation and ecclesiasticism, have been a huge and creative challenge. Sound, image, rhythm, and type have all been used to translate these almost antithetical profiles of Sam's world.



Figure 4:7
Images showing the construction of Sam's shrine.
A glazed watercolour and tissue-paper painting of a detail from a Gothic revival stone portico (*above left*), was overpainted with a landscape of the open road. This image was imported into *photohop*, where it was veneered with a transparent layer of grass and ivy leaves (*top*). The final plate (*above right*), shows Sam as a child embedded into shrine with four layers of funerary flowers and statuary, and a camera lens at the apex of the image.

These areas of the film have been worked in relationship to each other to bring contrast into a strange and opulent concord. This concord appears in both the look and structure of the narrative. In pursuing this convergence, richness has become a feature of the text and the pursuit of this value will travel forward with me into future creative research.

new horizons

new creative and analytical research growing from the thesis

The story of this film began one afternoon in the autumn of 1997 as my partner and I sat on the porch of the Okororie Hotel. We were drinking tea and eating sandwiches. In the quiet light a boy rode past us on a bike. He will never know the impact that moment, frozen from a journey he has no doubt forgotten, had on this thesis. It was a movement that sketched a horizon that took years of research to reach.

Horizons are strange things. They are sometimes perceived more by chance than by design. A discussion of pathways forward from this thesis is something similar. While it might sound impressive to state that experiments with sound, iconography and the pace of type are the main reasons for further experimentation in the medium of film, that would not be the truth.

In the opening to this exegesis, I said that I was a storyteller. My father was a storyteller and I am moved and fascinated by the power of a story to present and affect the human condition. Okri (1997) suggests, “*A good story keeps on growing*” (p. 119). Perhaps this might also be said for a storyteller.

Storytelling is not just narrating information. The verb to weave, so often used to describe the process, is a perceptive one. Many threads are brought forward and then momentarily hidden from the narrative. Every mystery and every revelation is part of a pattern. It is the

desire to find and construct patterns that lie at the core of further research in this area.

While there will continue to be scholarly publications and keynote addresses coming out of this thesis¹¹, it is the challenge of making stories in more powerful ways that is the greatest motivation for my work.

My new feature film will extend the investigation into methods of storytelling, specifically the use of directional flow and blended colour palettes, and how these might be used to bring cohesion to a text heavily saturated with imagery.

Between September and December 2004, I was approached by several production houses in the United States and Europe requesting information about up-coming scripts for feature films. I am currently working with Richard Bever, Creative Executive of *Andrew Lauren Productions* (New York) and the *New Zealand Film Commission*, to develop a new feature film, scheduled for production in 2007.

The film is untitled at the present stage and still in a state of narration. However, a working thumbnail of its content is as follows:

¹¹ I am currently in the process of writing a book on the social and architectural history of the New Zealand public toilet. Five more oral histories have been set up for interview for the Alexander Turnbull library.

Research on contemplative and divergent thinking as a method for creative problem solving is an ongoing interest. Among the keynote addresses influenced by findings and readings in this present research are:

Ings, W. (2004). *Value by Performance*. Keynote address and paper presented at the Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand. Biennial Conference, 5-7 July, Auckland College of Education. http://www.tefanz.org.nz/tefanz_prog_mon.htm

Ings, W. (2004). *Trading Beyond Experience, Design Teaching as an Intimate Act*. Keynote address and paper presented at the INTAD Conference, 1-19 April, Brisbane. <http://www.intad.asn.au/conference/trading%20beyond%20experience.pdf>.

Ings, W. (1998). *Separation and Divorce: the State of Creativity in Technology and Design Education*. Keynote address and paper presented at the Technology New Zealand Education Conference April 14-16, Wellington. <http://www.tenz.org/proceedings/Keynote3WI.shtml>



thumbnail narrative

1941 The early part of the story concerns two conscientious objectors who eventually succumb to pressure from their community and families and go and fight in the Second World War. One is European and one is Maori. The men work as fencing contractors on the steep, mist-shrouded hills of the King country, and although one is married, they are deeply connected (one senses their friendship may be deeper than 'cobbers').

It is early morning and the fog hangs heavily in the valley. The world is silent except for the drone of a distant vehicle making its way across a landscape of mud and stunted trees. Eventually the car stops and a woman and two children get out. The eldest child, a boy, has a black eye and his face is swollen. He stands separate from his mother and sister and stares at his father with sullen anger. The boy has been beaten up at school by the local children because his father has refused to enlist like other men in the district. The child's mother is angry. There is an argument and the woman eventually leaves with the two children.

The incident is obviously significant because the next day the two men sign up at the local borough council offices. Shortly after they visit the Maori man's Nanny. She has warned her nephew not to join the army because she can foresee his death on foreign soil. She is a deeply religious woman. When the two men leave her homestead, she stands on the porch and wails the hymn *Abide with Me* in Maori. She is crying.

When the men arrive in Europe, both want to come home as they realise they have made a terrible mistake. However, the European becomes a hero as an army wrestler, because of his ability in the friendly sports rounds the British, Australian and New Zealanders have while in training camps. When he beats the British contender in a match in London, his success gets caught up in the propaganda machine of the time and he is made a hero of the newsreels coming back to New Zealand.

Both men try to persuade the army to send them home, and in doing so, raise the ire of their commanding officers who accuse them of being cowards and buggers. Despite continued attempts to have their involvement in the war reconsidered, they are eventually posted to Alamein in 1942 and the wrestler's mate is killed next to him in a bloody and graphic exchange of gunfire. Crying in disgust, the wrestler peels off his army uniform in the trench and naked, carries his cobbler's body out into the gunfire. Amongst the smoke and shouting he sings *Abide with Me*. The enemy who recognise the hymn do not shoot at the strange sight.... the wrestler is shot in the back by a commanding officer.

When the wrestler is sent back to New Zealand [wounded] he is given medals but his protest against the war is covered by the army's assertion that he was shell-shocked. He is put in a psychiatric hospital where years later, he dies alone.

Fig. 4:6.
Indicative still from the opening sequence in the film.
A group of small, masked, winged children, are running through the shorn off stubble of a maize field. There is a storm on the horizon... billowing cloud through a damaged sky. Below it the land is still. The children are playing around a homemade high jump. A man approaches the group and grabs one child, pulling her mask off. When he realises he has made a mistake, he goes on to another, who he identifies as his son. He drags the boy inside and the other children follow them down the hillside in a lonely procession. Inside the lounge, under the watchful eye of a large, framed newspaper photograph of his grandfather hanging above the fireplace, the boy is made to wrestle his older brother. We discover it is the boy's eighth birthday party... he loses the match and is humiliated.

1952 Although the wrestler's son knows the truth, he only wants to believe the image of his father as the war hero. As an adult now, every year he marches in the memorial parade wearing his father's medals. He tells people that this old man was killed in battle.

He hangs above the mantle piece in his house, a full-page newspaper print from the 1940s of his father holding the wrestling trophy in front of a crowd of cheering soldiers. He belittles his own sons for never being the men their grandfather was. He makes them train as wrestlers in the small town where they live. Yearly they represent their school in matches, and march behind their father in the ANZAC parades.

The core narrative of the film grows out of these events.

They background the film's main narrative that concerns the wrestler's youngest grandson. The story is essentially about the boy's fight against the domination of his father.

1964 The wrestler's grandson is a popular boy at school. He is admired by his peers and comfortable in his position as a prefect and talented sportsman.

When this section of the story opens, he is required to represent his secondary school in a wrestling match. Every year his older brothers have won the event for the school, and his predicted continuance of this success seems assured. The school has its hopes pinned on him.

About this time a fifth-form girl arrives from another school. There is some discussion about her background and eventually the boy's girlfriend finds out that the new girl is an unmarried mother, who is attempting to make a fresh start at a new school. The new girl and her baby, board with a woman in the town. The woman has fostered the young girl, but it is clear that she is trying to secure custody of the baby.

The unmarried mother is treated very badly by the people in the community, including the boy's ex-girlfriend and her peers. They label her as a slut.

One day, before a physical education class at school, these girls set the young mother up. They fail to pass on to her a note about bringing her swimming costume for the next day's class. The next morning, when the swimming instructor sees the girl without her gear, she reprimands her. The boy's girlfriend and her peers however, appear to come to the rescue and loan the new girl a spare swimming costume.

It is white.

The class begins its swimming lesson and boys in the class constantly harass the young mother. They have been fed rumours about her easy promiscuity and think that the attention is a kind of joke. They swarm around her in the pool like predators and make clumsy grabs for her legs. When the young mother, frightened, eventually tries to leave the pool, she discovers the wet swimming costume, being white, has become nearly transparent. She sinks back down in the pool ...trapped.

At the end of the class, when the teacher insists that the girl and final stragglers get out and change, the other students, who are in on the joke, stand around the changing sheds watching.

When she eventually pulls herself out of the water, the young woman does not call for a towel. She looks down at her feet then defiantly up into the eyes of the teacher. Then she walks down the length of the pool seemingly naked, and through the gaggle of girls outside the changing shed.

The incident causes the boy to criticise his girlfriend and her friends. The incident acts as a catalyst to the break-up of their relationship.

Over the following days, the boy and the young mother become closer. In the world of 1960s small town New Zealand, the girl's unflinching endurance of a pariah-like status, causes the boy to rethink his constant compliance with his father's dreams.

One afternoon, they visit the boy's aunt [who has never married but has an assortment of elderly (paying) gentlemen friends]. While he is visiting, the boy answers the door and finds his form teacher calling, with a bunch of flowers.

From his aunt the boy finds out that his grandfather was somebody very different to the myth his father has created. His aunt gives him a pile of letters his grandfather [the wrestler] wrote asking that the family come to visit him in the psychiatric unit.

They never did.

The letters try to explain why the man walked into the gunfire, and how in dying he thought that that he might be allowed to fly for a moment above the chaos. In so doing he could carry his dead cobbler into the light.

Shattered, the boy rides out to the derelict hospital. Here he finds only empty rooms and broken windows. His search through the building is shadowed by the image of a small, masked child with broken, strap-on wings. [The child from the opening of the film]. This child appears fleetingly in the empty corridors and neglected rooms.

There is a flickering anachronistic scene of the old man sitting alone with afternoon tea. He is surrounded by a Christmas tree and presents, and is waiting for a family to arrive. He hears a car. He stands hopefully and walks to the window. He sees the car pull up and a family get out. They walk towards the ward but then turn and enter another part of the hospital.

He closes the curtain and sits down again in his chair.

The scene fades.

When the boy returns home, he confronts his father.

He is hit violently around the head with a belt and is sent to bed. In the corridor leading to this room, the same small, winged child stands... watching. It turns and follows the boy down to his room.



Fig. 4:7
Stills from documentary footage of
soldiers in Alamein 1942.
[New Zealand Film Archive]

In the weeks that follow, the boy's new girlfriend encourages him to continue training for the high jump in secret. During this training their relationship grows. He talks about his grandfather and the feeling of flight when he jumps, about breaking away and being lifted up into the light.

On the day of the inter-school sports competition, the boy enrolls for the high jump, in defiance of his father and his form teacher's wishes. However, he is not allowed to compete and is brought back to the hall where the wrestling matches are in action. His ex-girl friend and his brothers help the boy change and he is ushered unwillingly into the ring.

The match starts but as it progresses, the shouting and abuse of his father and the crowd cause the boy to stop fighting and he is continually thrown to the floor. As the crowd screams, he stands up again and again, stares straight at his father. Finally, he peels off his wrestling uniform.

There is silence.

Wearing only his shorts he walks past them... out of the hall... and begins to run across the front of the school, towards the high jump event. The small winged child drifts enigmatically behind the onlookers.

His young mother, still out at the high jump, along with a few other marginalised students, sees him coming and although the event has finished, she takes the pole and places it at the highest notch on the frame... far above the winning jump. The supervising teacher tries to stop her, but the boy has begun a run up. Amidst the cheering of these few supporters he runs ...and jumps. The film ends with a frozen frame of his body clearing the pole... in the gritty, texture of the shot, we can see that he has grown wings. The frame is dissolved by light.

director's notes

The main body of the story is set in the late 1960s, although the graphic style is much more contemporary. The film moves in an almost hypnotically directional flow, like a cross between the grace of a good music video and the flickering staccato of old Movietone newsreel footage.

The opening sequence of the children playing uses a square frame, and imagery is desaturated and grainy. The movement is jilted.

The sequences from the 1940s may be black and white or graded so that colour is reminiscent of the footage returned from Europe on coloured showreels of that period. It is slightly bled, unstable and grainy like a fading watercolour. (Fig 4:7)

The sixties sequences may be graded like the hand-painted black and white photographs of the period and action will often be accompanied by antithetical pop and country music from opening years of the decade. Experiments setting silence against climax, the use of melodic sound tracks over abject content, and the use of directional flow, will be extended from research developed in *boy*.

in closing

This has been a project that has taken six years to complete.

The exegesis uses nominated areas and experiments to contextualise the film. It also explains the methodology used to facilitate the level of creative experiment involved in the work.

The document focuses on two features of the work, the structural and aesthetic influence from selected television narrative music videos and advertising, and the development of typographical treatments, from a consideration of an anti-language.

The film itself of course, contains far greater breadth of experimentation than what is presented here. However, if I was to cover all levels of experiment, this document would be many times its current size and could appear to eclipse the importance of the film as the primary site of research in this thesis.

This exegesis should therefore, be read in relationship to the accompanying exhibition of artifacts and images, and cross-referenced to screenings of the film.

So now the thesis closes. It was motivated by a desire to research and develop a new way of telling a story. All experimentation within it has served that primary concern. Storytelling has been both the project's method of development and its primary outcome.

Okri (1997) said,

A great challenge for our age, and future ages, is to do for storytelling what Joyce did for language- to take it to the highest levels of enchantment and magic; to impact into story infinite richness and convergences; to make story flow with serenity, with eternity (p. 111).

There is a truth in this,

...this convergence and richness and enchantment...

It is the power that drove this research and what will lead it on to new horizons...

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This is research that reaches outwards...

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there is no end.





appendices

- The bogs: an historical and legal overview*
- Bogspeak*
- Oral histories*
- Filmography and script*
- DVD*

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appendix one

the bogs: an historical and legal overview

This appendix traces chronologically, significant legislative impacts on bog cruising in New Zealand. It considers these in relation to specific social and historical interventions into the community.

1867- 1908

Consenting sex between men in private was decriminalised in New Zealand in 1986 but consenting sex between men in public places, which includes parked cars or public toilets remains an imprisonable offence. The political and social changes that have contributed to this current situation are varied and complex.

In 1867 New Zealand passed an *Offences Against the Person Act* (31 Vict. 5) that defined “unnatural offences” more clearly than they had been following 1840 annexation of New Zealand and the resulting implementation of English law. This new statute provided:

Whosoever shall be convicted of the abominable crime of buggery committed either with mankind or any animal shall be liable at the discretion of the court to be kept in penal servitude for life or for any term not less than ten years. (s.58)

The Act further provided for imprisonment for between three and ten years for attempted buggery (s.59). These sections largely copied sections 61 and 62 of the earlier English Act although the wording appears to exclude consensual acts, which were treated as assaults. Between 1872 and 1880 only seventeen convictions for unnatural offences occurred in New Zealand and most of them were for male rape (Parkinson, 1988).

The criminal code of 1893 (57 Vict. No. 56) Part XIII *Crimes against Morality* (s. 136) saw the first significant alteration to this law. It provided that

[e]very one is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for life, and, according to his age, to be flogged or whipped once, twice or thrice, who commits buggery either with a human being or with any other living creature.

Section 137 provided for up to ten years imprisonment, with flogging or whipping for attempted buggery, assault on a person with intent to commit buggery or for anyone “*who being a male indecently assaults any other male*”, noting “*It shall be no defense to an indictment for an indecent assault on a male of any age that he consented to the act of indecency*”.

Eldred-Grigg (1984) states that at this time,

Policemen and judges appear to have taken the 1893 Act more seriously than its predecessor because convictions for ‘unnatural’ offences increased markedly. During the twenty years up to 1892 only thirty-nine men were convicted for buggery or bestiality. During the twenty-two years from 1893 onwards the number of convictions rose to eighty-seven, of which the majority were homosexual. (p. 170)

This act was reconsolidated without changes to these sections as the Crimes Acts of 1900 and 1908.

1941- 1961

In 1941 the requirements for flogging and in 1954 the provision for hard labour were removed. However, the penalties remained the same until the consolidation of the *Crimes Act* in 1961. At this time bog cruising was highly prevalent in most New Zealand cities because in a highly criminalised environment without clubs or alternative meeting places, the buildings and their environs provided, in general, the only way that the majority of gay men could meet each other. Polari was a familiar language form in specific bars, cof-

¹ In 1964 “Aversion therapy”, consisting of electric shock treatment and drug therapy, involving nauseating drugs and injections of Testosterone, was still in use in New Zealand hospitals. Two prominent proponents of this treatment were Drs Pat Savage (Auckland) and Basil James (Dunedin). A detailed account of these treatments from a New Zealand recipient is documented in Michael Scholfield’s *Sociological Aspects of Homosexuality* (Longman 1965) and in *Queer History New Zealand* <http://www.queerhistory.net.nz/Aversion.html>. See also: Gaw, H. (1980) Experiments Macabre. *Pink Triangle* 16: 7.

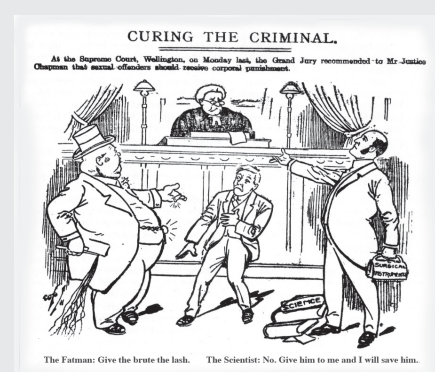


Fig. 5:1
The lashing of gay “offenders”.
Eldred-Grigg argues that the prescription of whipping as a punishment for sexual offenders under the criminal code of 1893 (57 Vict. No. 56) Part XIII *Crimes against Morality* (s. 136) increased rapidly during late colonial times. However, whippings were never very numerous because magistrates and policemen were reluctant to make use of such punishments, and the educated middle class was inclined to argue that whipping was “barbarous”. Working class leaders, he suggests, claimed that corporal punishment was an injustice perpetrated on the working class by capitalists, as suggested in this *New Zealand Truth* cartoon of 1911. However, the *Lyttleton Times*, 24 June 1882 called whipping both “effectual” and “in vogue” and a tension between these two views was apparent in media at the time. The alternative “solution”, suggested by the use of medical treatment, was held in less favour in the last decades of the nineteenth century, yet significantly was still being practised in psychiatric institutions in New Zealand during the 1960s¹.

fee houses and bogs in many New Zealand port cities, because of the numbers of merchant seamen who visited.

The Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand oral history unit have recorded several interviews with men bog-cruising in cities at this time. Cruising communities were often discreetly networked and large numbers of the men knew each other. The bogs themselves often took on identities and names, sometimes after the location (*Pitt Street bogs*, *Potters' Park*, *Garden Place bogs*) or sometimes relating to a specific feature of the building or the history of arrests at the location (*the Catacombs*², or the *Country Club*³). The significance of these buildings in terms of men's identity at the time, can be evidenced in the archived interview with Paul De Rungs⁴ who recalls the impact on a friend of the demolition of two of his favourite bogs.

He was quite sad when they demolished the old Pamure bogs and managed to salvage some of the bricks from the wreckage, which actually had graffiti on them, which he now has at his home. Similarly he did the same with the old bogs that use to be at Point Chev. (MS-Papers-0648-02).

The amendments to the part 7 of the 1961 *Crimes Act* reduced the penalty of imprisonment for "indecent" between consenting males, although consent was no defense. Indecency between males (consensual) and indecent assault on a male by another male (non-consen-

²These were underground, porcelain-lined toilets in the front of the Auckland War Memorial Museum. They were designed by Aimer, Grierson and Draffen in 1929 and remained relatively active as a day-time cruising location until 1996 when they were substantially remodeled.

³The *Country club* was the name for a set of bogs in the Auckland Domain. When police raided these toilets, occupants would often flee to the nearby lake and pretend to be feeding the ducks or admiring the substantial gardens surrounding the facility. At night the place was alternatively known as *Glowworm Grotto* in reference to the glowing cigarettes of men cruising in the dark.

⁴Ings, W. (2004). Interview with Paul De Rungs. This is an oral history interview conducted in Auckland for the New Zealand Oral Histories Unit. It is archived in the Lesbian and Gay Archive of New Zealand, in the Alexander Turnbull Library (MS-Papers-0648-02).

sual) were considered equally severe (s. 140, 141) and carried penalties of five to seven year's imprisonment. However in New Zealand, challenges to the state of legislation, were not activated directly because of a commissioned report as in Britain,⁵ but as a result of a much publicised queer-bashing and murder. The incident occurred near toilets in Hagley Park in 1964, when Charles Aberhart was beaten and killed by a gang of youths. The well-publicised case acted as a significant catalyst for the birth of gay activism in New Zealand. The trial of the six youths lasted for five days, but the jury, returning after seven hours of deliberation, found all of the accused, who had only been charged with manslaughter, not guilty. It was accepted and understood that the youths had struck the blows that killed the man. No one else was ever charged.

The *New Zealand Listener* at the time commented,

At the centre of the case however, was the assumption that the dead man was a homosexual... The six youths who went in search of 'queers' were not moved by moral indignation; they were looking for excitement and believed their victim to be fair game. The Hagley verdict... leaves a suspicion that, at subconscious levels, an alleged homosexuality has been felt to be an offence which mitigates a crime. (Holcroft, 1964, p. 8)

⁵ The British *Wolfenden Report* of 1957, recommended that private homosexual sex between consenting adults should not be considered a crime. Named after its chair, Sir John Wolfenden, the committee was established on August 24, 1954, "to consider...the law and practice relating to homosexual offences and the treatment of persons convicted of such offences by the courts". It was also charged with examining laws governing male and female prostitution. The committee, made up of fourteen men and three women, met on September 15, to hear testimony from a diverse range of witnesses.

After three years of deliberation, the commission issued its *Report of the Departmental Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution* in September 1957. The report stated: "It is not, in our view, the function of the law to intervene in the private life of citizens, or to seek to enforce any particular pattern of behaviour."

This report was to have a significant influence both in England and in New Zealand. In the United States of America it was influential in the overturning of Illinois' sodomy laws. For more information on the Wolfenden Committee and the *Report Of the Commission on Sexual Offences and Prostitution*, see David's *On Queer Street* (1997) pp. 188-191.

This murder, Parkinson (1988) suggests, led to the first attempt by gay men in New Zealand to work towards law reform through the formation in 1964 of a legal subcommittee of the first New Zealand gay club, *The Dorian Society*.

The 1970s

Underhill's (1978) analysis of prosecution statistics for sodomy and indecency between men in New Zealand in 1974 provides a little acknowledged illustration of the nature of society for gay men at that time. In that year, 386 charges covering sodomy or indecency between males were laid; 56 of these were charges of sodomy of which 30 were proven. Of the 27 males sentenced in the Supreme Court for this crime, 6 were imprisoned for terms ranging from one to seven years. Of the 116 charges of indecency between males, 89 resulted in convictions and 16 people received prison sentences (p.10).

It was in this environment, where many men who had sex with other men, knew of people in their communities who were in prison or who had received sentences and exposure to a highly censoring public, that the tentative opening of new gay clubs and bars began to occur. Following the initiatives of the *Dorian Society* these clubs emerged in locations like Hamilton (*The Taurus Society*), Christchurch (*Aequus*) and Auckland (*The Laetus Social Club*). These clubs provided some men in larger cities with alternative ways of meeting other men⁶.

However, for the majority of gay New Zealanders, especially men in rural areas and small towns, and young gay men under the legal drinking age, the bogs remained the only available way of making contact. This situation was further exacerbated by the fact that during this period recurring police raids on both the new clubs and the bogs meant that for many men, any attempt at contact with other gay men was fraught with the possibility of arrest or exposure.

⁶ Prior to the opening of these clubs a few public venues outside of the beats provided protection for communities of gay men. Significant among these in Auckland were the *Queen's Head* and *Occidental* hotels and the *Lily Pond Bar* in the *Great Northern Hotel* on Queen Street. The *Gladiator Sauna* at the top of the same street and a range of small coffee bars, including the *Cadero*, were also popular.

In many instances it was easier to explain away an extended visit to the public toilets than it was to justify to a known policeman, one's appearance in a gay club. It was during this time that police harassment of gay venues gave rise to a series of significant reactions from within the gay community. The *Auckland National Gay Rights Conference* in 1979 ran spontaneous workshops for men teaching them how to conduct themselves in the event of arrest or police harassment. These workshops were heavily attended and included techniques for dealing with interrogation, and role-plays on what questions to answer if one was detained. The workshops also resulted in many men becoming informed, not only about the law, but also about current police procedures and approaches.

Significantly at this time there also emerged the first organised gay politicising intervention into the world of men who used bogs for meeting other men. This was an initiative that was to precede later developments like the *Legal Aid Defense Fund* (1983) and the *BEATS* programme (1990-1). In Wellington and Auckland, a loosely connected network of radical men established a process of intervention during arrests⁷. The initiative was small and was called "the bog-watch". During arrests at central city toilets these men ran between the officiating officers telling detained men not to provide any information other than their name and address unless they were formally arrested, and then under no circumstance should they plead guilty or sign any form of statement. While police often threatened the men in these bog-watch groups, none were ever formally charged because they were careful to offer no legally defined obstruction. As a result of police use of entrapment during this period, *AGRA*⁸ established a legal defence fund to help pay court costs of contesting any police actions of harassment or entrapment of gay people (Gaw, 1980, p. 3).

In the same year that Underhill's statistics profile the outcomes of prosecution (1974) Venn Young introduced a private member's Bill to parliament. This *Crimes Amendment Bill* proposed a decriminalisation of homosexuality with an age of consent of twenty.

⁷ In Auckland a group of three men from *Gay Liberation House* in Ponsonby formed one of these teams. The group consisted of Ian Booth, Welby Ings and Glen Turner.

⁸ AGRA was an acronym for Auckland Gay Rights Activists.



Fig. 5: 2
Gay Liberation House.
This address at 17 Collingwood Street, Ponsonby served as the publishing offices of New Zealand's only national gay men's publication at that time, *New Zealand Gay News*. It was also the home of a number of significant gay activists.



Fig. 5:2
Protesters outside the Auckland Courthouse, February 14th 1980. Following this demonstration, protesters formed an impromptu march to the bottom of Queen Street amidst an intensive police presence. In the foreground are Hamilton gay rights activists Welby Ings and Harrie Jansen.

However at the second reading, on the fourth of July 1975, caution kept some twenty-three MPs from the debating chamber and the bill was lost by five votes, 34 to 29 (Parkinson, 1988, p. 167).

1980-1990

The early 1980s was profiled by significant protests against growing police use of *agents provocateur*. While this was, and continues today to be a common practice in the arresting of men who use public toilets for sex with other men, it was a police raid on an Auckland gay sauna, *The Victoria Spa*, on February 1, 1980 that saw the first major public protests over entrapment.

On the day of the raid two undercover agents entered the men's sauna some hours prior to the arrests, and were instrumental in the prosecution of six men, each charged with committing an indecent act on another male. The manager of the venue, Brett Shepherd was charged with assisting in the management of the Victoria Spa Sauna while it was being used as a place of indecent acts between males. The resulting protests at the trials of the arrested men saw an estimated ninety demonstrators noisily picketing the Auckland Magistrates' Court (Gauntlett, 1980, p. 3 and Shepherd, 1980, pp. 11, 16-17).

These arrests occurred in a context of increased police raids on public toilets, and resulting from the profiling of the prosecutions in local newspapers, a parallel escalation in the numbers of queer-bashings around the country. Because victims of such assaults were not in a position to approach the police for protection, publications serving the gay community, like the *New Zealand Pink Triangle* ran warnings for its readers. In a feature titled *Bashers About*, they reported:

We have been advised that two young men, one European, 5'2", solid build, sandy, short hair, clean shaven, home done tattoos on hands, about 16 years: the other a Maori, 7'7", longish black hair, slim build, tatooes [sic] on hand and upper left arm, aged about 17, have been terrorizing people on the beats in Auckland. They operate together on Saturday nights at Sandringham and are in to theft and blackmail. (1980, issue 13, p. 3)

This approach of describing attackers in detail grew out of the traditional bog practice of writing descriptions and behaviours of queer bashers on the walls of individual toilet cubicles. An extension of these written warnings appeared in the same year in relation to harassment by the police. *New Zealand Pink Triangle* also ran articles giving specific advice relating to detainment and questioning by the police, (Kade & Gaw, 1980, 8, p. 3).⁹ The New Zealand Gay Rights Coalition as an extension of this, began producing small, free cards called *Your Rights and the Police* which fitted easily into wallets, and outlined rights and procedures for protecting yourself if arrested. The cards included space for lawyer's name and phone number.

In terms of homosexual law reform, following the abandoning of another unsuccessful attempt at a reform bill by Warren Freer in June of 1980,¹⁰ the New Zealand Gay Rights Coalition approached a group of gay lawyers to draw up a new measure. This *Equality Bill* was developed between 1980 and 1983, but failed to gain the necessary support from inside the lesbian and gay communities, partly because it failed to give equity in the age of consent and protection against discrimination.

⁹ The article *Gays and the Police* gave the following advice:

- 1 Do not answer any questions except for your name and address.
- 2 Do not give the name and address of your employer.
- 3 Do not go to the police station unless arrested.
- 4 Do not make, or sign any statement.
- 5 Make sure you know a good lawyer.

The feature also covered information relating to arrest processes, the importance of not divulging an employer's name, and also covered the police's right to inform a youth's parents if he was under twenty years of age.

¹⁰ This initiative failed to eventuate because of opposition from both the lesbian and gay communities. Although Freer held talks with the comparatively conservative New Zealand Homosexual Reform Society, the more radical NGRC (New Zealand Gay Rights Coalition) opposed his proposal because of its failure to argue for an equal age of consent commensurate with laws pertaining to heterosexuals. Freer's proposal one year later, for a compromised initiative with an age of consent of eighteen, was also opposed by the NGRC on the same grounds. On June 20th 1980, he announced in Parliament that he was abandoning the Bill.

On March 8, 1985 Fran Wilde, the junior government whip in the recently elected Labour Party, introduced a bill that gave equal age of consent (16) and provided for the Human Rights Commission to deal with discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. Support for the bill was widespread and public opinion polls indicated that about 61% of the population supported reform, while about 37% opposed it. Significantly, in the process of its passage through the house, the human rights provisions were dropped,¹¹ so that on the 11th July 1986 when the Governor General signed the bill into law as the *Homosexual Law Reform Act*, it ensured that the same provisions in law applied to sex in private between people irrespective of gender. All sexual activity to which the partners did not consent was termed “sexual violation” and all consensual activity (except incest) between persons over the age of sixteen was made legal.

Significantly the opening of the 1980s had also seen an amendment to the *Summary Offences Act*. The new Section 28 (1) created the offence of “being found in a public place preparing to commit a crime”. The new offence was designed to replace the offence of “frequenting a public place with felonious intent” under the *Police Offences Act* 1927. In response to the police campaign in the beginning of 1983, to establish precedent, laying prosecutions under this new offence, by raiding bogs and saunas and laying indecency charges,¹² gay men in Wellington also established the Legal Aid Defence Fund (similar to the AGRA initiative in 1979). This fund was set up to pay for the court costs of men who were charged with offences under this Act. The provision, however, was that these men had to refuse to plead guilty. Although it was not part of the current deliberation by the courts at this time, the two national gay periodicals, *New Zealand Pink Triangle* and *OUT Magazine* both ran articles warning readers of the

¹¹ Human rights issues relating to equal protection on the grounds of sexual orientations became part of New Zealand law seven years later when on July 28th 1993, the *Human Rights Bill* s.21(1)(m), was passed in Parliament with a majority of 64 to 4.

¹² See: Legal Aid Defence Fund (1983). The Battle of the Beats. *OUT Magazine*, 52, 24., and Shepherd, B. (1983). Doing the Beat. *OUT Magazine*, 51, 9-10.

additional barb in Sub-Section (3) which provides... that if you have been previously convicted of the crime the Police think you are preparing to commit, then details of your earlier convictions will be brought up as additional evidence against you... we understand that this is one of the few times in New Zealand law when previous convictions can be used as evidence (Legal Aid Defence Fund, 1983, p. 24).

In November 1984 a significant decision by Judge Hobbs, in sentencing a man appearing in the Wellington District Court on a charge of indecently assaulting a plain-clothes policeman received widespread coverage in the gay press. The judge called for the suppression of the defendant's name and identity (even though there had been no application by the man's counsel for this). He also instructed the man to come up for sentence in six months only if called upon.

The decision of the judge was a noted reaction against the escalating numbers of obvious police entrapment cases that were coming before the courts at the time. He said

it was clear that this was an undercover action concocted by the police. If an innocent party had been involved or a member of the public or a person of immature years, the Court might take a very serious view. (Shepherd, 1984, p. 8)

Judge Hobbs went on to state that *"the offence was at the very low end of the scale"* (ibid.).

This recognition by the courts of the tensions involved in the arrest of men seeking discrete, consensual acts, where the act is encouraged by the police to secure a prosecution, illustrated a fundamental problem with the application of the law on a marginalised community.

1990-2005

In 1990 the release of *Profiles of Gay and Bisexual Men: a series of six reports on the socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of men ac-*

according to the venues at which they make sexual contacts,¹³ represented the first non-repressive, government funded intervention into bog culture in this country. The principal legitimising factor behind this research was the rapid spread of HIV.

Chetwynd's Report No. 6 (*The Toilets*), grew out of an earlier project by Horn, Chetwynd and Kelleher in 1989¹⁴ that considered changing sexual practices amongst homosexual men in response to AIDS. Her report, investigated the profiles and behaviours of men who used public toilets for sex, and its findings were significant not only in providing the first reliable overview of the profile of bog users in New Zealand, but also in helping to support the establishment of the New Zealand BEATS project¹⁵.

BEATS was an educative outreach and support initiative. Developed by the New Zealand AIDS Foundation, it used gay volunteers in peer-based information dissemination programmes, that focused on AIDS awareness and safe sex practices. Under this initiative these volunteers operated within bog cruising areas, talking with cruising men, distributing safe sex and information packs and promoting peer support for safe sex through interpersonal contact. The initiative operated inside the bog cultures active in Auckland, Hamilton, Napier/Hastings, Wellington and Christchurch, and held credibility because in general, it was staffed by men who had personal experience operating inside cruising networks (Meredith, 1991, p. 30).

¹³ Pertinent to research into the bogs was Chetwynd, J. (1990). *Profiles of Gay and Bisexual Men- Report No 6: The Toilets*. A report to the New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Christchurch School of Medicine, University of Otago.

¹⁴ Horn, J., Chetwynd, J., & Kelleher, J. (September 1989). *Changing Sexual Practices Amongst Homosexual Men in Response to AIDS: Who Has Changed and Who Hasn't and Why?* A report to the Department of Health, Christchurch School of Medicine, University of Otago.

¹⁵ This initiative was partly modelled on the successful Australian beats programme trialed in West Sydney by the AIDS Council of New South Wales in December 1988, (see Goddard, 1990. pp. 24-28).



The fact that AIDS was seen as clearly moving between the gay and heterosexual communities, meant that relatively unacknowledged sexual interfaces between the two worlds suddenly became important, and from that recognition surfaced an awareness of the paucity of reliable information about what had been a “silenced” and marginalised community.

¹⁶ Newham, the assailant, was sentenced in May 1991 in the Hamilton High Court following prosecutions for both this crime and the stabbing of another man he followed into the Grantham St toilets. In the second case he demanded money and forced the man to drive him to the Matangi Saleyards where he also stabbed the victim in the back. Both victims were hospitalised. Newham’s justification for his action was that he “*wanted to kill all homosexuals*”. Newham was convicted and sentenced to 10 years, 10 months prison by Mr Justice Fisher. Further detail on this attack and similar “bashings” can be accessed at <http://www.gaynz/archives/hate-crimes.asp>

Fig: 5:3

Piranha Park bogs.

This was one of the active toilets targeted in the Hamilton BEATS project. The bog and surrounding park has a history of queer bashing, typified by the stabbing of a man in the back on the 26th of January 1991.¹⁶ The BEATS project that ran from 1990 until 1997 needed to address a number of significant problems. Two of these discussed in the New Zealand AIDS Foundation Prevention programme 1991/2, were the fact that “...the work required to be done by volunteers is likely to be stigmatized by their gay peers as well as the public; it also involves long hours and a real danger of anti-gay violence” and “beats have their own code of behavior and norms that may be referred to as ‘the beat culture’. The beats users for their own protection and efficacy have developed this code of behavior. Any project intervention that is seen by beat’s users to be operating outside of this beat culture will be rejected by them.” (NZAF Project Plan, BEATS, 1990, p. 5)

This sudden academic and governmental interest in men from this community may be understood if one considers the public profiling in the late 1980s and early 1990s, of statistics from a range of international studies. These suggested that a large proportion of men who used the bogs for sex, defined themselves as either heterosexual or bisexual. These men were now seen as a significant transmission link of the HIV virus from out of the gay community, and into middle, heterosexual New Zealand (Smith, 1993).

At this time, two other significant changes occurred that have impacted heavily on the bogs and cruising rituals associated with them. From the 1990s, in an increasing number of urban centres, sex-on-site venues have begun to proliferate¹⁷. These clubs generally provide a safer environment for men seeking anonymous sex with other men. The earliest of these venues like *Lateshift* (Auckland), and *Buddies* (Wellington), created an alternative to bogcruising that was relatively protected from the police and queerbashers. However clubs like these are not free and despite their innocuous facades, they are often located in built-up areas where men can be seen entering and leaving.

During the 1990s, the appearance of cruise clubs paralleled shifts in town planning decisions in many New Zealand centres. Older “cottages” were increasingly replaced with more publicly exposed, uni-sex facilities. These new buildings removed the ability to make contact at a urinal, or to communicate between cubicles. The designs resulted in many men moving their cruising behaviour out, into the security of the surrounding parkland.

Currently men arrested for bog cruising in New Zealand are generally charged with one of three offences.

The most common is *disorderly behaviour*. This crime relates to sections 3 and 4 of the ‘Summary Offences Act’. The charge, normally

¹⁷ A search of the gay tourist website *gay.co New Zealand* (http://www.pinkpagesnewzealand.com/Bars_Clubs_Restaurants_and_Venues/) in March 2005, indicated seventeen independent venues offering cruising facilities for men seeking same sex encounters. While many of these clubs were located in major cities, there were also organisations advertising in smaller New Zealand centres like Hastings, Tauranga and Invercargill.

involves an arrest for a sexual act performed in, or within view of any public place, or where a person behaves in an offensive or disorderly manner. It is generally used when there has been a complaint made to the police about cruising and the offender is considered to have “breached the Queen’s peace”. Although the maximum fine for this offence is \$1000.00, in practice the amount is generally much less, and often the police are known to award diversion¹⁸.

A more serious charge is committing an *indecent act* in a public place. This is an offence against the ‘Crimes Act 1961’ s.125 (subsections 1&2), and carries a maximum sentence of up to two years imprisonment. The statutory defence puts the onus on the defendant to prove there were reasonable grounds for holding the belief they would not be seen. It is in dealing with this charge, that recent challenges to the definitions of public and private space have been made.

A third, less common, but more serious charge, is that of *indecent assault*. This offence relates to Section 141 of the ‘Crimes Act 1961’. If convicted, a man is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years. This charge normally relates to an indecent assault on another man over the age of sixteen. An arrest for this offence has no potential for diversion and the charge is normally brought where there is “false or fraudulent representation used in relation to the nature and quality of the act”.

While these laws are currently used to control aspects of bog cruising in New Zealand, they need to be understood as part of a wider environment of social censure. Bog cruising, has been, and continues to be, looked down upon by members of the gay community. In the heterosexual world it still remains well hidden and rarely discussed.

¹⁸ Diversion is a police recommendation, introduced in 1993 that is sometimes used where the arrest is for a first offence and the person accepts the allegation against them. Its significance lies in the fact that no criminal record is produced (outside of an entry on police files). The facility technically allows the police to withdraw a prosecution for a minor offence in return for an admission of guilt and a donation to, or work for, a nominated community organisation.

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appendix two

bogspēak: a lexicon

*“Get that troll!
It gobbled off the tragic trade your mother
charvaed yesterday.*

Some omees have nanti taste!”



definition

Bogspeak may be defined as a specific anti-language used by a community of men in New Zealand who frequent public toilets for same sex encounters. The language form appears to have been most widely used in the middle decades of last century. However, words and expressions predate that time and the language also continues to develop as a little known, contemporary system of communication.

purpose

This lexicon was collated to create a broad contemporary and historical profile of bogspeak, so that pertinent analyses could be used to identify themes for typographical design considerations in the short film *boy*. The following document is a carefully collated compendium of this language form. However, the lexicon does not purport to be a definitive or objective piece of research. I do not seek to draw conclusions about the contents outside of the specific research need that it supports.

However, because of the unique and significant nature of the data collected, it is intended that this lexicon will lead to further research beyond the concerns of this thesis.

existing recorded knowledge

When a researcher endeavours to document the way a specific group of people use a language form, one of the methods employed is to refer to archived sources including letters, diaries, literature and oral histories.

However, bogspeak is a language form that is almost entirely spoken and very few written records of it exist. The Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand [LAGANZ] contain a few oral history interviews with men who mention bog cruising, but on these tapes, language use is rarely addressed.

Marian Evans' video interview with James Mack (2003) contains a sequence where Mack refers to *Parley* as a form of gay language. This occurs during an episode where he revisits a bog he cruised in the past. However, because bogspeak was not the primary consideration of Evans' documentary, the language form simply surfaces in Mack's monologue when he discusses features like *glory holes*, or locations like the *Hanging Gardens*.

Hugh Young (1996) published a working, online lexicon of gay Polari¹ but much of this was lifted from other copyright works outside of New Zealand and there is no focus in the work on language forms particular to this country.

To date this is the available, retrievable New Zealand data on the subject. Therefore, because currently no research into the anti-language, bogspeak, exists in this country, the lexicon has been compiled as a piece of primary research.

insider construction

My association with bogspeak stemmed from involvement with bog cruising in the 1970s when I was growing up in the South Waikato. In my adolescence I kept diaries that contained words surfacing from this strangely clandestine world, a world where the language seemed to capture the anger, dislocation and self-denigration I was experiencing as a young gay man. I learned to count and pun and weave this language form, as subtle but savage *double entendre*, through the over-ground slang of my youth. By the late 1970s I had moved to Auckland and was actively involved in the emerging gay liberation movement. This was at the time of the police “crack-down” on the bogs, pubs and saunas that formed the meeting places for gay men. During this period the few radicals, active in the newly formed “gay liberation movement”, spent a lot of time working with men who found themselves prosecuted under Part 7 (s.140) of the 1961 *Crimes Act*. In both advocacy and welfare work we found it necessary, for credibility, to remain conversant with the changing language form. Through the 1980s and 1990s, I became involved with the HIV prevention campaigns. The necessity for designing print media that effectively talked to men in the bogs meant it was imperative that designers remained cognisant of changes in the language.

¹ <http://www2.prestel.co.uk/cello/Polari.htm>

The British linguist, Paul Baker defines Polari as a “*secret gay vocabulary*” (2002b, p. 1). Polari is a language form that appears to have come to New Zealand from England, via the British Merchant Navy. It evidenced itself in the language of some New Zealand gay men during the 1950s and 1960s.

Bogspeak, while closely related to Polari, (and incorporating some Polari words), is a New Zealand language form, associated with bog cruising, that has developed culture-specific neologisms, coinages and profiles, long after the demise of Polari in the gay overground.

Specific words like *bare backing* and *docking* are examples of new bog-speak that appeared in the targeted print media of these campaigns.

network construction

While initially I was able to construct sections of the lexicon based on my own past experience, my exposure to the language form was limited. Although my vocabulary held some currency in the 1970s, there were many changes in the use of words and definitions by the end of the century. However, because of my position as an “inside researcher” (known socially and through my political initiatives and creative writing), I have been able to talk with friends who still use the language and whose networks spread across significant cross-sections of the country.

It was not feasible to formally interview the 121 men who participated in compiling this lexicon. This is because while many of these men were happy to help, the majority would only do so anonymously. They were reluctant to sign any document or to have their identities recorded in any way. This may partly be attributed to the fact that the act of doing the bogs is still criminalised and many men I approached were cautious about social and legal censure resulting from traceable involvement.

Therefore, because it was necessary for the research to document a realistic profile of the historical and current use of the language form, participants involved in verifying and contributing to the lexicon have generally remained anonymous.

data gathering

When interviewing a participant, I normally sat with the man and read through the draft lexicon of words. If the participant recognised a word, I asked him to describe what it meant. Where the definition equated with one already entered, a verification mark was placed against the word. Where a definition was different but the word was familiar, a new definition was entered under the one collected.

Where words already included in the lexicon acted as catalysts to other terms for the same idea (as in names for the police, women, heterosexual men, and specific locations), these new terms were added to the draft lexicon awaiting later, independent verification.

Compilation of the lexicon involved blind verification. This meant that a word could not appear in the final list unless three separate participants, independently recognised the term and agreed on its use and definition.

oral history interviews

The second process employed in the research was the recording of oral history interviews with people who currently cruise, or have cruised, the bogs in New Zealand. These interviews, conducted for the National Oral Histories Association of New Zealand, focus specifically on the language of bog cruising and consider particular words in relation to the participant's personal, historical and social context. The interviews were conducted with ethics approval from the Auckland University of Technology² and the data as transcripts, and audio recordings now forms part of the Lesbian and Gay Archives in Wellington³.

Transcripts of the interviews are enclosed with the appendices accompanying this thesis⁴.

The interviews conducted as part of this research may be referred to as "*attitude data*" (Baker, 2002a, p. 4). Attitude data engages people talking about language rather than in language (although sometimes they slip into bogspeak when discussing specific situations). Interviews are useful because they create contexts for language, and people can describe incidents using language specifically related to the culture in which they occurred. However, as Baker (2002a) found,

it is sometimes difficult to verify the authenticity of the accounts given by interviewees, ... even with the best intentions, groups of people

² Ethics approval number AUTEK (02/162)

³ The recordings are housed in the *Alexander Turnbull Collection* in the National Library of New Zealand:

MS-Papers-0648 for the project as a whole.

MS-Papers-0648-01 Interview with Vanessa Wedding

MS-Papers-0648-02 Interview with Paul de Rungs

MS-Papers-0648-03 Interview with Howie Taylor

⁴ See appendix 3.

may possess different memories of the same situation. Unintentional exaggerations or simplifications may also occur during interviews. (p. 4)

Therefore, when considering quotes or lists of words from people being interviewed, it is important that they are understood as opinions and recollections, open to further verification.

considerations

The process of blind verification, (relying on three independent recognitions of a word), used in compiling this lexicon, has presented some significant problems.

First, words in use before the 1930s were difficult to verify because few men who used them are still alive. In cases where a word from this period was recalled, I have included it. In the case of a word like *brandy latch* where the term was known to only one man but verified in a copy of a personal letter, I included the word with the comment “rare”.

Second, words like *troll* and *gravy* often have multiple meanings. Blind verified multiple meanings have been listed as numbered entries. In general, any definition of a word not blind verified by two other participants, has only been included where it can be traced as retrievable data, (as in an archived oral history interview). References to Wedding, De Rungs, and Taylor relate directly to recorded oral histories. All other references relate to written lexicons or dictionaries of slang.

Third, where multiple pronunciations or spellings have been suggested as in *bona*, *chush-bag*, *khamp*, *ommee*, and *parley*, I have included all versions. The fact that various users of the words may not agree on pronunciations of anti-languages, Baker (2002b) suggests, may be due to the localised, historical and unstandardised nature of such language forms.

Where I have been uncertain as to the origin of a word or phrase, I have noted this in the entry, or referred the reader to sources that have already documented the term.

Where a word has a range of bogspeak synonyms I have listed these alphabetically in ***bold italics***. Synonyms in use by non-bogcruisers have occasionally been listed in *plain italics*, and synonyms in international, gay underground languages have been prefixed cf. followed by a listing in alphabetical order and the country of origin entered in brackets.

introductory note

Each word is presented in the following order: The **word** (alternative spellings); *grammatical category*; meaning(s); etymology; other notes; examples of use; and related words. Related bogspeak words or words documented from other, international bog cruising communities appear in bold italics and related heterosexual words appear in standard *italics*.

abdicate *verb*: to leave a public toilet because of the arrival of the police.

Alice *noun*: 1 uniformed police (kwn Auckland mid 1970s). 2 **Alice (Lady)** the khamp name of Peter Sinclair, a well-known New Zealand television personality.

auntie *noun*: an older gay man, generally whose approach to life and love is conservative. Also ***antique h.p.*** (*h.p.* stands for homee polone) and ***old cunt***.

bagging *verb*: a method of concealing a sexual partner in a toilet cubicle during sex, to avoid police detection. One man sits on the toilet while the other stands facing him with a plastic bag or coat pulled around his feet. If a policeman looks under the gap at the bottom of the door, only one pair of feet will be seen and the direction they are pointing will be obscured. [Baker *b*, 2002: 76]

bareback *verb*: to have anal sex with someone without using a condom. The term came in to common use via U.S. Gayspeak, in the 1990s.

basher *noun*: someone who visits gay cruising areas to attack gay men. Some ***gay bashers***, ***khamp bashers*** or ***queer bashers***, operate in groups, waiting for an opportunity to attack an isolated victim. Others may engage in sex with a gay man and afterwards attack or rob him, cf. ***four-doors*** (kwn San Francisco, late 60s), a carload of young men intent on queer bashing.

From the advice to “*run when you hear the sound of four car doors slamming*”. Also “*Don’t trust him, he looks like a fourdoors*”. [Rogers, 1972:84] Also *bunny bashers* (South African Gayle) [Cage, 2003:59] and *poofter bashers*, New Zealand heterosexual slang.

basket *noun*: bulge in the trousers, swimming togs or underpants. Also *lunch, lunch basket, lunchbox, picnic basket, package, packet*, cf. *family jewels*, heterosexual slang.

batrag *noun*: towel for cleaning up after sex. The word *bat* can also be appended to other artifacts eg: a *batmat* is a single mattress stored under a bed, that can be brought out to expand the site into a larger area when entertaining a trick, (current).

beard *noun*: a woman who is used by a gay man to provide a front of heterosexuality. Also *mask*. Syn. *finking* (Brit. gay slang).

beat *noun*: 1 public toilets and the surrounding environment where sex between men occurs. The phrase *doing the beat* is another term for cruising. Beat is particular to both New Zealand and Australia, *cottaging* is the parallel term in England and *tearoom trading* is the American equivalent. [Keogh, Weatherburn & Hickson, 2000:144]. 2 the space between toilets or sexual encounters.

bent *adjective*: 1 homosexual. The word was in common use prior to its replacement by the word *gay* in the 1970s. In mixed company a man could enquire about the sexuality of a third party by drawing a bent line with his finger on a tabletop. A discrete nod or shake of the head indicated an answer. 2 criminal or deviant.

Black forest *noun*: bogs in Victoria Park in Auckland, given the name because of the higher numbers of Maori and Pacific Islanders who used them. *Kwn* Auckland, 1950-60s. [Wedding, 2004]

blackout *verb*: to remove lights installed in or around bogs to increase safety. Many councils have installed metal encasements for bulbs to stop their removal. These devices are generally cut through with bolt cutters or a hacksaw. Where bulbs are not accessible, sometimes they are sprayed with black or red paint.

blow-job *noun*: oral sex.

blue cheese/cheese mince *noun*: smegma. Also *cock-cheese*.

bitch *noun*: 1 pejorative (sometimes bantering) term for an insolent, resentful gay man. 2 a man preferring a passive role in anal sex. 3 verb: to complain, nag or criticise.

bitch's curse *noun*: a cry of indignation.

bitch smacker *noun*: a policeman who is aggressive in his handling of men arrested in public toilets.

bog *noun*: public toilet. Doing the bogs is a common New Zealand term for cruising. Also *carsey* (Polari and heterosexual slang, kwn Wellington, Christchurch 1940s & 50s), cf. *gents restroom*, *shithouse*, *WC*. heterosexual slang (Cryer, 2002, p. 129).

bog bio *noun*: a personal profile in a wall advertisement, often erroneously indicating age, size and race.

bog queen *noun*: a man who frequently cruises public toilets for sex.

bog-spy *noun*: a 1992 publication edited by Paul De Rungs that was left in public toilets and other gay venues. It rated and profiled specific Auckland bogs and parodied police activities in the area.

bona, bonar, boner, bono *adjective*: 1 good. British Polari in use between the 1950s and 1970s. The word *bona nochy* as a vocative meant good night, and *bona varding* as an adjective meant good looking. Syn. *bonaroo*, wonderful, excellent (prison slang), [Rogers, 1972, p. 35] also *fantabulosa*.
2 *noun*: an erect penis. This word was generally spelt *boner* and appears to have been in more common use amongst non-gay identifying men between the 1960s & 70s. Also *stiffy*.

bosch *verb*: to drill a glory hole, blow hole or peep hole between two toilet cubicles. In New Zealand this is either done with a pocket-knife and cigarettes or a battery powered drill and a masonry bit. The term may have come from a brand name of a popular power tool.

bottom *noun*: a man preferring passive anal sex. A man who prefers an active role is called a *top*. A man who has no particular preference is known as *flexible*.

box *noun*: 1 anus, also *man-cunt*, *love hole*, *love tunnel* and *software* (current).

box rot *noun*: a man with sexually transmitted diseases.

box seat *noun*: cubicle with direct view of the urinal. [Wedding, 2004]

brandy latch *noun*: lockable toilet cubicle. British Polari (rare).

brazen *adjective*: obviously sexually available. The term can be used to describe either a man or a location [Jenkin, 1997: 9]. Also *bold* (Polari), *not shy*.

breeder *noun*: a heterosexual man. The term refers to the propensity for having children. Also *Carlotta, het, naff, straight, square, smeg*.

bucket bum *noun*: 1 an anus that is very accustomed to anal intercourse. Also *Gloria gloryhole, Lucy Loose hole, Victoria tunnel, Waitomo cave, wet paper sack, whorebag*. 2 a policeman.

bullfighter *noun*: a man who refuses to engage in unprotected sex. The term appears to be a neologism that profiled in a prominent New Zealand AIDS Foundation campaign in early 2005.

bumbags *noun*: 1 badly designed trousers or cheap underpants. Also *K marts, grannies*. 2 a small bag that contains safe-sex packs, “know your rights” cards, gay newspapers and equipment to clean up with. These bags are distributed in Queensland Australia by QuAC’s Beat Outreach Project. [Yin, 2004, p. 15]

bumboy *noun*: subservient, sexually available youth.

butch *adjective*: masculine. It can either be taken light heartedly, “*Oh James is looking butch today*” or as a more formal description. “*This butch number was over at the urinal. I thought he was a plain clothes!*” Also *staunch*. [Baker, 2002 b, p. 167] suggests that butch is early twentieth century US slang.

butch it up *verb*: to attempt to act in a more masculine way.

camp/khamp/kamp *noun*: a common word to describe gay men in New Zealand prior to the 1970s. Baker [2002a] and Wedding, [2004] suggest that the word’s origin may be derived from the New Scotland Yard acronyms, *[KAMP]* Known As Male Prostitute, or *[KHAMP]* Known Homosexual and Male Prostitute.

camp *adjective*: flamboyantly effeminate, affected or amusingly theatrical.

camp it up *verb*: to behave in a theatrically effeminate manner.

can of worms *noun*: 1 A public toilet where too many men are cruising at the same time. “*The place was a can of worms!*” 2 a dangerous situation [Taylor, 2004].

Catacombs *noun*: 1 underground toilets in the Auckland War Memorial Museum. They operated as a cruising venue from 1929 until 1996 when their refurbishing made sexual contact more difficult. These facilities were renowned as a location specifically for daytime cruising because they closed at 4.30 pm. 2 generic name for bogs built under street level, also stations. 3 a gay drop in centre off Cuba Street in the 1960s.

charper *verb*: to seek. From Parlyaree (the agot of eighteenth century fair-ground workers and actors) after Italian *cereare*. Kwn Wellington and Christchurch, 1950s.

charpering carsey *noun*: police station. Parlyaree. Kwn Wellington and Christchurch, 1950s.

charpering omee *noun*: policeman. Parlyaree. Kwn Wellington and Christchurch, 1950s.

charver *verb*: to have sexual intercourse. The word, known by bog queens in New Zealand in the 1950s, is generally used as a derogatory term. The British Parlyaree description of a female prostitute *charvering donna*, is less well known in New Zealand.

chicken *noun*: 1 a young boy under the age of consent. 2 an attractive young man. Also *chick* (1950's Merchant Seaman's slang), *schoolbag* (Auckland and Wellington 1970s & 80s), *student* (current). Syn. *candy* (U.S. late 1950s), *punkie* (U.S. 1940s-50s prison slang).

chinker *numeral*: five (Polari).

Christ and two apostles *noun*: a dated expression for the genitals of a priest or prudish or shy men. Kwn Christchurch 1940s (rare).

client *noun*: a man who pays for sex.

closet *adjective*: 1 a description of a man with hidden homosexual tendencies. It is generally used to describe a man who is, or is suspected of being, sexually attracted to other men, but who has not acknowledged it publicly. Also *closet case*, *closet queen*. The description of a lifestyle based on this non-disclosure is being *in the closet*. 2 a cubicle in a public toilet.

commodore *noun*: police car. Evidence that Ds were in the vicinity. The New Zealand Police bought the first of these vehicles in 1980-81. Often the cars were naively parked near bogs and inadvertently alerted cruising men to police activity or potential entrapment. In many small towns, regulars knew number plates of these vehicles, c.f. *ghost car*, U.S. slang 1970s [Rogers, 1972, p. 207].

cottage *noun*: public toilet. Cottage first appeared as a term for toilet at the beginning of the twentieth century, [Baker, 2002 *b*, p. 170]. The term was British in origin and generally referred to toilets that were built in parks to resemble miniature country cottages. *To go cottaging* meant to cruise the bogs.

Country club *noun*: public toilets in the Auckland Domain. When these toilets were raided by police, occupants would flee to the nearby lake and pretend to be

feeding the ducks or admiring the substantial gardens surrounding the facility. At night the same toilets were also known as *Glowworm Grotto*, in reference to cruising activities in the unlit, surrounding park. The name relates to the numerous glowing cigarette ends, moving in the darkness.

crack it *verb*: to have sex for money.

cream run *noun*: a cruising route taken between a series of active bogs.

crotch kutus *noun*: an infestation of pubic lice. Syn. *crabs*. *Kutu* is the Maori word for lice, also *army of soldiers*, *kks*, *groin greebies*.

cruise *verb*: to look for sex. Although cruise originated in the sixteenth century and was used in connection with the movement of ships, in twentieth century Polari it meant the movement of people. More recently it has come to mean driving or walking around looking for casual sex. The word can also be used to describe the intense, interested way that a man looks at a potential sexual partner. “*That guy over there keeps cruising me*”. Syn. *doing the beat*, *catting*, *alley catting* (late 1960s), *hunting*, *on the prowl*, *stalking*, *scoring*.

cum rag *noun*: 1 a handkerchief, small towel or toilet paper used to clean up after sex. Also *fogle* (Polari), *short-time towel*, *trade rag*, *trade towel*. 2 a man who spends an exorbitant amount of time cruising in public toilets. 3 a man who likes the feel of semen on his skin.

crunt *noun*: a woman who dislikes gay men. Derogatory, probably derived from a combination of crone and cunt.

cull *noun*: 1 mate or fool. The word is both cant and molly slang, (rare). 2 in the 1950s cull was sometimes used as a shortened term for testicles.

curry queen *noun*: a man whose sexual preference is Indian men.

cut lunch *noun*: circumcised penis. Also *cut*, *Jewish bob*. A badly circumcised penis is a *crew neck*.

D *noun*: detective. The term is normally associated with entrapment. Other terms include *Alice*, *Cherie cuntstable*, *Demon*, *Diana detective*, *Dolly Handbag*, *Dora D*, *Filth*, *Hilda box-rot*, *Hilda handcuff*, *Jennifer justice*, *Lily lunchbox*, *Nelly law*, *Petunia pig*, *Tilly tight-twat*.

dainty, daiture, daytour, deger, denger *numeral*: ten (Polari).

date, time, size ad. *noun*: formulaic advertisement written on a toilet wall. It normally proposes an appointment indicating time, age and preference.

demon *noun*: a detective, (current).

dethroned *adjective*: forced to leave a public toilet.

dewey *numeral*: two (polari), also *twa*, *twat*.

docking *verb*: pulling the foreskin of one penis over the head of another.

drag *noun*: 1 any type of clothing. (Drag, meaning specifically to dress up in women’s clothing, is less commonly used in bogspeak because one generally wouldn’t “do drag” if one was going to the bogs. However the term has wide circulation in overground gayspeech, meaning to don clothing of the opposite gender). Baker (2002: 173) suggests its origin may be in the naming of nineteenth century dances attended by men wearing feminine attire.
2 the main street of a small town. Local toilets are normally off the main drag.

EEK *noun*: face. This is probably a New Zealand pronunciation of the British Polari *eke/eak*. These words were truncated and more familiar forms of *ecaf*, a backslang Polari term for face. While *ecaf* was in more common use in Britain, Baker [2002a, p. 173] suggests that the truncated forms reached a higher level of familiarity there through their use in the BBC Julian and Sandy sketches in the radio comedy *Round the Horne*.

enthroned *adjective*: to be in a public toilet and looking for sex.

family *noun*: gay. “Don’t worry about him, he’s family”. Also *positive*.

fatcha *noun*: face (Polari).

filth *noun*: uniformed police, (current).

fish *noun*: a woman. Also *crusty box*, *double bum*, *front bum*, *HRU*, *minge*, *three ringed circus*, *gash*, *growler*.

fish wife *noun*: a woman married to a gay man.

fish & chips *noun*: 1 the wife and children of a man who has gay sex. 2 a man of ambiguous sexual preference (kwn, 1960s).

floor mirror *noun*: a puddle of water on the floor that allows an occupant in one cubicle to discern more about the appearance of a man adjacent to him. Floor mirrors can also refer to highly polished tiles as in the IMAC centre in Queen Street Auckland.

flush of queens *collective noun*: a droll description for a group of bog queens cruising the same beat.

fresh meat *noun*: men new to a specific location, seeking sex with other men. “Don’t bother with that tired old thing, everything’s had it. It thinks it’s fresh meat because its had a haircut and got some new sunnies.” Also *new meat*.

fuck flat *noun*: a private residence where sex can take place after an initial pick up. “I didn’t want to do it there so we went back to his fuck flat.” Also *in-call*, *in-house*, *headquarters*, *HQ*, *the office* (current). Syn. *cage*, early twentieth century prostitutes’ slang. [Rogers, 1972, p. 40]

full house *noun*: 1 when all of the cubicles in a public toilet are occupied, cf. *open house*, U.S. slang 1970s [Rogers, 1972, p. 144].
2 having more than one sexually transmitted disease at the same time [Baker, 2002 a, p. 126].

gardening *verb*: cruising in open places near a public toilet, U.K. Some one who does this may also be called a *bush queen*.

gay *noun*: identifying as homosexual. Baker (2002b, p. 176) traces the word’s complex etymology. One of gay’s early meanings meant being “disposed to joy and mirth”. A gay dog in the seventeenth century was a man “given to reveling or self indulgence”. In the early nineteenth century poetry was called the “gay science”. In the same century gay also came to mean an immoral woman who lived a life of prostitution; in the U.S. it meant someone who was impertinent or over-familiar. By the early twentieth century “gay” was applied to homosexuality although in Britain it was generally used to describe only “up market queens”. In New Zealand in the 1970s with the rise of the Gay Liberation Movement the term took on a politicised positivism that extended through into the early 1990s. However since the mid 1990s the word gay, as used by younger heterosexuals, is a derogatory term for something that is slack or ineffective.

glory hole *noun*: a hole between two toilet cubicles, normally large enough to poke things through. Larger holes are called *blow holes*. Smaller holes only large enough to look through are generally termed *peep holes* or *spy holes*. These may also appear in a toilet door. The word may have its origins in navy slang. A glory hole referred to compartments on a ship or was used as a word for stewards’ sleeping quarters [Baker, 2002a, p. 176].

Glowworm grotto *noun*: see *Country Club*.

gobble off *verb*: perform oral sex.

goes off *verb*: sexually active. The term can describe either a man or a toilet. The verb can also take a past tense “Both the toilets inside and outside the library went off and a third beat was just a minute away”. [Jenkin, 1997, p. 9]

gravy *noun*: 1 come stains on toilet walls. The origin may be from gravy stroke meaning the rapid agitation of the penis just prior to ejaculation. This was a term in common use in rural New Zealand in the mid 1960s. “*Stop banging on the door! You’re putting me off my gravy stroke*”. Also *spunk stains, cum/come stains*.
2 accidental emission from the anus after intercourse.
3 semen. “*She swallowed the gravy*”. [Wedding, 2004]

gravy train *noun*: a series of sexual liaisons in rapid succession.

Grotto *noun*: Durham Lane bogs in Auckland.

gunta *abusive adjective*: aberrant or revolting thing.

handbag *noun*: 1 a man worn on the arm of a lesbian, or woman worn on the arm of a gay man to provide the illusion of heterosexuality (kwn Auckland 1960s). [Wedding, 2004] Also *handbrake* (kwn 2004).
2 an effeminate male prostitute.

hand job *noun*: manual masturbation.

Hanging Gardens *noun*: Active bogs in the 1960s and 1970s in Mt Albert Road Auckland.

hang the sherrif *verb*: to urinate.

hardware *noun*: penis. The anus is called *software* (current).

having church *verb*: to kneel in order to perform oral sex. The word possibly derives from a U.S. slang term for a bathhouse. [Baker b, 2002, p. 97]

helmet *noun*: head of a penis, also *knob*.

Hilda handcuff *noun*: uniformed policeman. Also *Alice, Cherie Cuntstable, Dolly Handbag, Filth, Hilda Boxrot, Lily Lunchbox, Petunia Pig, Tilly Tighttwat*.

HRU *acronym*: a heterosexual woman [Human Reproduction Unit]. A man is known as a **SPU** [Sperm Production Unit] (current). [De Rungs, 2004]

hustler *noun*: a male prostitute. Also *call-boy, renter, rent-boy, rental box, schemer, trade*, cf. *iron hoof, merchandise, pro, street mechanic, trader, wheeler and dealer*, (dated British gay slang).
2 a thief.

hole *noun*: anus. Also *box, ring-gear*.

Hollywood *verb*: 1 to engage in bog sex in front of other men. “*That thing is such a show-queen! It only gets off if it’s doing a Hollywood!*” The term is related to a current British practice of *dogging*, where a heterosexual couple engages in sex in a car park, or other public place, while strangers watch. Also *Wanda Wandwaver*.
2 to fake an orgasm.

hoover hips *adjective*: an indiscriminatingly promiscuous man, early 1980s. Also *bike, butt sucker, cum bag, cum rag, door-knob, open-house, put you up, slut, slot, tart, trollop, walking mattress, welcum mat, whorebag*.

horse’s hoof *noun*: a gay man, possibly a form of rhyming slang for the word poof / pouf. [De Rungs, 2004]

iron *noun*: gay. The term is English in origin and generally restricted in use to non-gay identifying men, who cruise the bogs. Although it is relatively rare in New Zealand, the word was known in the latter half of last century. It probably has its origins in British rhyming slang, *iron hoof* [poof]. “*I’d never get caught going in there, everybody knows it’s full of irons.*”

jailbait *noun*: a boy, appearing sexually aware who is under the age of consent. Also *chicken feed, chicken trap, school bag, TY*.

Jesse *noun*: a Scottish queen. (Common in the South Island ports in the 1940s and 50s).

john *noun*: a man who pays for sex, prostitute’s slang. Also *client, trick*, c.f. *dogger* (U.S. 1970s), *steamer* (British Polari, mid 1960s), *mark* (U.S. underworld slang 1940s), [Rogers, 1972, p. 111].

joosh/ shoush/ chush bag *noun*: small airline bag, generally with a long strap carried by queens in Auckland in the 1950s and 1960s, normally containing lube, a cloth (trade rag), cigarettes, money etc. [Wedding, 2004]

joosh *verb*: to shoplift or steal .

jumping *verb*: a location where sex was commonly available. “*The bogs in Potter’s Park were always jumping*”. Also *rock* “*Those bogs rock*”, and *go off*. “*The Customs Street bogs go off a treat*”.

kenza/ kenja *numeral*: twelve, (Polari).

KFC *adjective*: a boy who is under the legal age for sex. The acronym references both fast food and the gay Polari word chicken, meaning a boy. It also references the word *fries*, meaning a gay youth [Cage, 2003, p. 61]. Also *chicken trap, jailbait, school bag*.

kumara queen *noun*: 1 a man whose sexual preference is for Maori men.
2 a well endowed Maori man.

lace curtain *noun*: foreskin.

lace-up *noun*: suspicious man. Alluding to the fact that in the 1970s and 1980s many plain clothes policemen, known for poor style, still wore their uniform [lace-up] shoes when going in to public toilets to entrap men. A glance under the partition at the feet of the person making overtures in the adjoining cubicle, often identified them.

long dedger/ long denja *numeral*: eleven (Polari).

lucoddy *noun*: body (Polari).

lunch *noun*: male genitals. The word was also the name of a popular U.K. gay magazine in the 1970s. Also *bulge, lunchbox, package, packet, picnic basket*.

manky *adjective*: 1 very tasteless, poor bad. Also *naff*.
2 a promiscuous and persistent man.
3 an unclean body.

mate *noun*: a male partner/lover. The word's meaning differs in contemporary bogspeak from an older word *cobber* that was familiar use in both the bogs and broader heterosexual society between the 1930s and the 1950s; this earlier word described a male friend or companion (Partridge, 1972, p. 193). The bogspeak use of mate however employs a droll reference to the sexual verb "to mate" and in so doing is encoded with two potential meanings capable different decodings in different communities.

meat *noun*: 1 penis. Also *cock, dick, lunch*.
2 a sexually available man. Both of these related uses of the word appear to be American.
3 jewellery (rare).

meat market *noun*: a place where men gather to find sex partners, also *meat rack*. The term often applies to both the bog and it environs and in gay slang can also apply to certain clubs, saunas and pubs.

Meatworks *noun*: Onehunga bogs. The term was applied in the 1980s to these toilets in a dual reference to their frequent use as a meeting place for sex between men and also in reference to their proximity to the Southdown meat works in Church street. Rogers [1972] defines a meat rack as an outdoor setting... "*where homosexuals gather to parade their wares and meet new friends*" (p. 132).

medza *numeral*: a half. (Polari)

menu *noun*: 1 toilet wall lined with bog bios and date, time, size ads (1960s) cf. *newspaper* U.S. late 1960s. [Rogers, 1972, p. 141].
2 a possible sex partner. “That thing’s on the menu”. [Wedding, 2004]

milk run *verb*: to go to a public toilet for sex. The term in New Zealand has traditionally referred to bus or train station toilets cruised late at night. The origin may be American, a *milk route* was U.S. gay slang for the late night drive home with a trick in the car [Rogers, 1972, p. 134].

mimi *noun*: to urinate. This is a Maori word that can be compared to the Pakeha terms *slash* and *piss*. *Princess Mimi* is a name given to a man who is constantly finding excuses to visit public toilets.

miscarriage *noun*: a discharge of faeces and semen after anal sex.

mother *noun*: gay mentor, protector, organiser or advisor.

mullet *noun*: an obnoxious woman. The term was popularised in the 1994, Australian film *Pricilla Queen of the Desert*.

n2 *preposition*: into. The term has moved from texting into speech. Its use in words like **n2 anal**, **n2 oral**, **n2 whatever**, subtly references the speaker’s concurrent use of cruising technologies like cybersex, internet and phone-chat. [Taylor, 2004]

nada *quantifier*: nothing. Gay Polari (rare). Generally used in the phrase “*nada to vada in the larder*”, meaning nothing to see in the pants, or not well endowed.

naff *adjective*: 1, tasteless, generally in reference to clothing, objects or people.
2, heterosexual.
While heterosexuals and gay men now both use naff, it has an interesting history as a Polari word. The Oxford English Dictionary (1994) cites the word nifty-naffy as referring to something inconsequential or stupid. One assumption is that it began as an acronym in World War Two, among American soldiers meaning Not Available For Fucking. From there it is assumed that it moved in to the gay lexicon. However Partridge (1970) claims that naff is prostitutes’ slang and suggests that it is either from the French *rien a faire* or from not a fuck. James Gardiner (1997) cites naf in his Polari Lexicon as being back-slang for fanny. Partridge’s slang dictionary also lists the word naafi (N.A.A.F.I) as standing for No aim, ambition or fucking initiative, and Baker [2002 a, p. 41] suggests that naff may therefore be a truncation derived from this. Baker also cites another source that claims the word originated in the 1970s during protests against the National Association for Freedom. (NAF) The acronym was shouted by British Marxist-Leninist students at their right wing fellows. However the term was already part of the New Zealand gay lexicon at

that time, possibly through its appearance in the Julian and Sandy sketches (see omee). Therefore we can probably discount this theory. Although naff has come to be used by non-gays, the original pejorative meaning of the word, as tastelessly heterosexual is still not widely known. Also *manky*.

nanti lucoddy *noun*: unattractive body (Polari).

nanti omi/ nanti homie *noun*: a man not worth considering for sex. Although the term nanti was evident among British seamen and bog queens in the 1950s, and was used to mean, no, not, don't or nothing, it has revived in New Zealand where it is currently used by some gay barmen. The term appears in sentences like "*nan-tee homie d'fafo*". [*D'fafo* is an acronym for "*drink fast and fuck off*". It is also the name of a popular Wellington café, staffed by gay men catering to urbane (naive) heterosexuals].

nanti riah *adjective*: bald.

nanti that *imperative*: forget about it, don't repeat it.

nark *noun*: a person who reports activity in bogs to the police.

nix *negator*: don't tell, keep silent. Baker, [2002, p. 183] states that to "*keep nix*" is nineteenth century slang for keeping watch.

nix taaka/ nix tucker *noun phrase*: hungry. The term can have both sexual and non-sexual references.

NTBH *adjective*: ugly or completely heterosexual. Acronym of Not To Be Had.

nochy *noun*: night.

nosey *verb*: to perform oral sex. "*Miss Thing is in there nosesying off again*". Also *nosh* [from Yiddish].

number *noun*: a person, normally sexually attractive.

obvious *noun*: identifiably cruising. "*He's sooooo obvious!*"

omee/ homee *noun*: man, 1950s and 60s. These are alternative spellings of the same word. It is generally considered to be Polari but has a longer history. Originally in Britain, omeo was a word used by actors to refer to each other and is first recorded in Hotton's (1864) *Slang Dictionary*, as meaning landlord or master. By the end of the nineteenth century it was used more generically to mean man. The word probably arrived in New Zealand from two related sources. In the 1950s and 1960s there is evidence of it being used by Merchant Navy seamen in drinking establish-

ments like the *Great Northern Hotel* in Queen Street (*The Lily Pond*) and the Wellington coffee houses. The term was also familiar among bog queens in major ports. Another probable source is the British radio programme *Round The Horne* that was broadcast by Radio New Zealand on Saturday nights between 1968 and 1970. This programme featured two screamingly camp, Polari speaking Queens called Julian and Sandy. While never reaching the level of popularity it held in England, many New Zealand gay men listened to the programme and words like bona, eke, lally, nada, naff, riah and vada became part of their wider lexicon.

omee palone/ homee palone/ omi paloni *noun*: a gay man. Polari in use in the 1950s and 60s. The word is a combination of omee (man) and palone (woman), meaning man-woman.

on with *verb*: to be involved in a short term sexual relationship.

oney *numeral*: one, also *una*, (Polari).

open house *noun*: a promiscuous man, also *open trade*.

otter *numeral*: eight, (Polari).

Paris *adjective*: glamorous, good. In in the 1960s the word was often used facetiously. “It’s soooo Paris love!” [Wedding, 2004]. The word’s modern equivalents are *Fabuloso* and *Fabulacious*.

parly, parley, parlee, pharley, pharlarey, pholaari *noun*: New Zealand gay argot that appears to have included both gay slang and British Polari words in use between the 1950s and 1970s. Many of these words were also part of bogspeak in those decades.

passing *verb*: 1 being perceived by others as heterosexual when actually gay.
2 *passing trade* refers to men cruising past a bog or its environs without actually stopping.

pick up *noun*: some one who is acquired for sexual purposes. The term has survived from Molly slang [c. 1700]. “What did you pick up in the bogs?”
2 the past tense *picked up* can also be used in relation to an arrest. “She was picked up by the Ds”.

plain clothes *noun*: *agent provocateur* in a public toilet. Also *cleaner*, *D*, *Demon*, *lace-up*, c.f. American 1960’s and 70’s gay slang, *ghost*, *urinal-sniffer* [Rogers, 1972, p. 207]. Plain clothes can normally be identified by their overly clean-cut appearance, poor taste in shoes and pants, tan lines on their finger where their wedding ring has been removed, absence of the smell of alcohol, and their overt sexual propositioning.

positive *noun*: 1 HIV positive.
2 an identifiably gay man.

Princess tiny-meat *derogatory noun*: a man with a small penis.

quattro, qualtro *numeral*: four, (Polari).

queen/ quean *noun*: a gay man. Queen was a term used by the Mollies in Britain in the eighteenth century, although as a slang word it has a history of application to women more than men. The gay use of the word is probably taken from the medieval word quean that meant an ill behaved woman, harlot or strumpet. While queen can refer to any gay man it can also define various types of homosexual: effeminate, sexually passive, older men, sharp-tongued men. The word is often preceded by a noun or adjective that indicates a place of residence, personality or preference, e.g. *Ponsonby queen, bitchy queen, leather queen, bog queen, drama queen, kumara queen*. Syn. *twilighter* (dated 1920s-30s, Auckland), *very musical*, (1940s & 50s), *artistic, light on his feet, wrist flapper*, (1950s-60s), *friend of Dorothy's* (1960-current).

queen bee *noun*: 1 a wealthy, socially dominant or assertive gay man who perceives himself to be the hub of a community.
2 an established, older man in a small town, who cares for, or is surrounded by younger, gay men. When there is no intended sexual relationship between the queen bee and the younger men he is sometimes called a *mother*.

queer bashing *verb*: engaging in a violent, homophobic attack. Also *camp bashing* (Auckland 1950-60s) c.f. *dirt* (1950's U.S. slang), [Rogers, 1972, p. 64], *bunny bashing* (South African Gayle) and *poofter bashing*, [heterosexual slang].
3 a woman who likes the company of gay men, also *fag hag, fruit fly*.

quickie *noun*: rushed sexual act. If at a urinal, this is often a hand job so that men can separate quickly if a sound indicates the arrival of another person.

reach under/reach around *adjective*: to masturbate someone in an adjacent cubicle of a public toilet by reaching under or around a partition. Certain toilets like the Garden Place bogs in Hamilton were renowned for this kind of sex.

rent/ renter/ rent boy/ rent queen *noun*: male prostitute. The word rent was used as early as 1828 to refer to money exchanged for criminal activity [Baker, 2002 *b*, p. 188]. By the 1960s its slang meaning had narrowed to denote gay prostitution and could be used to refer to the prostitute rather than the fee, cf. *bona roba* (good merchandise, Brit. Polari), *punk* (Brit. slang), *commercial*, (current).

rental box *noun*: itinerant male prostitute. The term relates both to the anus and to the rented lockers in New Zealand bus stations where belongings can be stored when one is in transit. [Wedding, 2004]

rice queen *noun*: a man whose sexual preference is Asian Men.

ride there for a ride back *phrase*: sex between men where both partners engage in active and passive intercourse.

ring gear *noun*: anus of a sexually active man. “Don’t make any mistake about it. That one uses KY for its ring gear!” Also *ring piece, ring hole, love hole, love tunnel* (current).

roll neck sweater *noun*: an uncircumcised penis. Also *frilly collar, jew-boy, lace collar, polo neck, turtle neck*.

rough cast *adjective*: rough surfacing on toilet walls and doors applied using a mixture of sand and paint to disable the writing of graffiti, bog bios, date, time, size ads and stories. Other systems used to stop writing on walls were a product called graffiti guard™, and the lining of walls with ceramic tiles.

rough trade *noun*: generally refers to a man who becomes violent or demands money after sex. The term can also apply to sexually available men of aggressive or unrefined appearance. Also *staunch*.

rose leafing *verb*: to lick or rim another man’s anus, also *eating out*, cf. *rosie* (South African Gayle) [Cage, 2003, p. 34].

royal circle *noun*: the two cubicles with the clearest view of the urinal. [Wedding, 2004]

rubber up *verb*: to wear a condom.

ryah/riah *noun*: hair, (back rhyming slang via Brit. Polari). The other British Polari word for coiffured hair, *barnet*, was also in limited use in New Zealand in the 1960s.

say *numeral*: six, (Polari).

say traе/ say tray *numeral*: nine, also *nobber*, (Polari).

scene *noun*: the physical aspect of a community where men who have sex with men meet. Derived from 1950s US beatnik and jazz slang, referring to a location where people of common interests met or where a particular activity was carried out. In small New Zealand towns this location was generally the town bog. “Is there any bog scene in Taihape?”

school bag *noun*: a secondary school boy who cruises public toilets, (kwn Auckland 1960s and 70s). [Wedding, 2004]

setter *numeral*: seven, (Polari).

sharda *vocative*: what a shame. Baker (2002*a*, p. 189) suggests that this term came in to polari used in Ipswich in the 1970s, however the term was known among some drag queens in New Zealand in the 1950s.

shaker *noun*: a police officer known to engage in entrapment. The word references a technique where the officer stands at a urinal shaking his penis suggestively after urination, in an effort to entice another man to make an “indecent assault” on him. The term was documented as part of American gay language in the early 1970s, [Rogers, 1972, p. 207]. Partridge [1970] notes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, that the word also meant to coit or masturbate.

sister *noun*: a queen who is a close personal friend of another queen, also *girl-friend*.

size queen *noun*: a man whose preference is for a large penises.

slash *verb*: urinate, also *mimi*, *piss*.

slash and dump *verb*: to use a public toilet, for “legitimate purposes” to urinate and defecate.

slasher *noun*: urinal.

smeg *noun*: a derogatory term for a heterosexual man. The word is an abbreviation of smegma and refers to the commonly held belief that heterosexual men are not as clean as their gay counterparts. Interestingly Rogers notes its use in the U.S. in the 1970s as a description of “any unclean dock worker”, (1972, p. 185). In the Waikato the insult in the 1980s was extended to *smegmroni* referring to bad heterosexual cooking; Macaroni cheese being seen as the last bastion of culinary atrocity practised by heterosexuals. Thus, “Aghrrr! Smegmaroni” meaning exceedingly naff.

snapped *verb*: to be recognised by another man while cruising the bogs. Generally the verb refers to men who have met but keep hidden from each other, the fact that they do the bogs. The term is used to describe a surprise encounter at a cruising venue.

Spanish gardener *noun*: a man who cruises under age youth, (*kwn* 1950s and 60s).

spray painting *verb*: ejaculating on a toilet door or wall.

sprung *verb*: to be exposed or **outed**. “That guy from the council got sprung. His girlfriend saw him going in to the bogs and waited in her car for two hours for him to come out”.

SPU *acronym*: a male. [Sperm Production Unit] (current).

spunk *noun*: 1 semen. Also *cum/ come, juice, spoof*.
2 sexually attractive man.

straight and narrow *noun*: having the appearance of being heterosexual. “Don’t acknowledge that thing if you pass it on the street, you know it’s on the straight and narrow”. The word straight is a gay term for a heterosexual (man or woman) and is contrasted to the older word bent to denote a homosexual man.

staunch *adjective*: 1 sexually dominant, (current).
2 politically active in gay politics, *kwn* 1980s.

stir the porridge *verb*: to have sex in an anus already containing semen.

Sugar daddy *noun*: generally an older, wealthier man who in return for sex and attention, pays for the lifestyle needs of a younger man.

taaka/ tucker *noun*: a man who regularly receives oral sex in a public toilet, Rotorua/Taupo late 1980s. The word is a play on the New Zealand slang term *tucker* meaning food, and the Maori word *taakatapuhi* which since the mid 1980s has been used to mean a gay man.

take away *noun*: a person picked up in a public toilet who is taken off the premises for sex.

talent *noun*: the availability of attractive men in a place.

taro queen *noun*: a man whose sexual preference is Pacific Island men.

TBH *acronym*: to be had. Generally referring a man who is not gay but will have sex with another man.

tea room *noun*: public toilet where anonymous sex is available. The term is U.S. in origin. [Chauncey, 1994, p. 197] suggests that the word derived from “*t-room*” being an early twentieth century abbreviation of toilet rooms. Also *bog, cottage*.

tea leafing *verb*: thieving, (*kwn* late 1950s- 70s). The word may have origins in British costermongers’ rhyming slang, tealeaf-thief. Also *jooshing*.

The Outsider *noun*: issue two of De Rung’s 1990s magazine distributed to bogs in the Auckland area, see *bog-spy*.

trade *noun*: 1 male sex. Trade is broadly a term for a casual sexual partner that dates back to the Molly words of the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth century “the trade” referred to prostitution. By the twentieth century the term was used in the navy to refer to the submarine service [Baker, 2002a: 193].
2 a heterosexual man who is available for casual sex, normally only allowing himself to be fellated or taking an active role in anal intercourse.

trade curtain *noun*: a doors on a toilet cubicle (especially in port cities). The use is relatively rare but may have come into bogspeak via U.K. Merchant Navy slang; because sailors sometimes slept eight to a berth, in order to maintain privacy during sex with other men, they hung a curtain around their bunk [Baker, 2002b, p. 193)].

trade rag/towel *noun*: a cloth used for cleaning up after sex.

tragic *adjective*: tasteless or very bad. *“Traaagic fatcha! Its acne is so bad, every time it smiles its face runs!”*

tray, trae *numeral*: 1 three, (Polari).
2 very. *“You didn’t fuck that gunta with the nanti lucoddy? Oh my god! It’s sooo trae Warehouse!”*

troll *noun*: an unattractive, generally sexually persistent man. In common use in the 1980s.

troll *verb*: to visit or cruise regularly. The word has several meanings and is probably derived from a definition from the 14th century meaning to move or saunter. The Polari use of troll meant *“to walk around seeking to charm a man in to the act of copulation”* [Baker, b 2002, p. 193]. In New Zealand it also meant to visit or “work” several bogs in one town. *“He was out trolling the bogs”*. Also *doing the beats, thrashing the bogs*.

trick *noun*: a casual sexual liaison, usually a male prostitute. Also *rent boy, renter, rent piece*.

tuna *noun*: a woman. Derogatory, also *bleeder, front bum, gash, mullet, “smell her!”*, *Tina Tuna*.

turn a trick *verb*: to perform a sexual act for money, originally from 1920s prostitute’s slang. Also *score a contract*.

twink *noun*: a young attractive gay man who has little body hair and is not considered intelligent, U.S. in origin. Syn. *chicken, KFC, school bag*.

ugly mug *noun*: an ugly or potentially violent man cruising for sex. The term is also used by New Zealand prostitutes (current use). Also *foul mug*. [De Rungs, 2004]

underground station *noun*: underground toilet. *Kwn* Auckland 1950-60s. *Victoria Station, Howe Street Station*.

uphill gardener *noun*: a man who takes an active role in anal sex, also *butch, n2-anal, staunch*, cf. heterosexual *shit-shunter, shirt lifter, poo-pusher, gentleman of the backdoor*.

Wailing wall *noun*: The wall of Sydney Hospital in Kingscross where rent boys plied their trade in the 1980s. The term has since been applied to exterior walls of public buildings around bogs that act as a safer venue for sex.

Waitomo *noun*: 1 a man with a large anus. Also *paper sack*. The term references large caves in the central North Island.
2, a policeman. In the Waikato during the 1970s the term was sometimes applied to uniformed officers because the cut of their trousers made them appear to have sagging buttocks. *“Look out, the Waitomos are cruising. Leave your driver’s licenses in the car.”*

wall queen *noun*: one who waits in a cubicle in answer to date, time and place advertisements.

wank bank *noun*: stored memories of observed sex between men in a public toilet. The term is normally associated with window shoppers.

wanker *noun*: 1 a pretentious or self absorbed idiot.
2 some one who masturbates, from wank (to masturbate). Also *Arthur* [Arthur Rank] (Polari), *beat the meat, cum the mutton, flog the log, have a white Christmas, J.O., jack off, jerk off, jerk the gherkin, make dolly sick, make Barbie puke, pound the pudding, shake the snake, spank the monkey, strop, strop the beak, strop the poodle, tap dance, toss, treat the meat, tug, wave the wand, whack the poodle*.

Warehouse *adjective*: 1 tasteless, cheap masquerading as stylish. (From the New Zealand budget chain-store, The Warehouse).
2 physically or psychologically disabled. Also *damaged goods*.

wash & leave *verb*: to have sex with someone in a cubicle and then immediately leave. Also *Wham, bang. Thank you Sam*. This is a gay adaptation of a heterosexual phrase that appeared in Xavier Hollander’s book *The Happy Hooker* (1971).

watch queen *noun*: a lookout or man who watches the entrance to a bog and warns sexually active men inside of the approach of others. The term may have come into

New Zealand in the 1970s via Laud Humphrey’s publication *Tearoom trade: Impersonal sex in Public Spaces*, it does not appear to be known in the country before that date, cf. *pegging* (New Zealand prison slang).

Westend *noun*: Western Park toilets in Auckland.

window shopper *noun*: 1 a voyeur in a public toilet who does not engage in physical sex [Taylor, 2004].
2 to cruise a street in a retail area in town, often making contact via reflected glances in windows [Wedding, 2004].

woof *vocative*: used to indicate somebody attractive. Derived from bear slang. An attractive bear is described as “*woofy*”. (The term *woofter* (wooly-woofter) however, is a heterosexual term to describe a gay man. It is probably rhyming slang for poofter / pooftah.

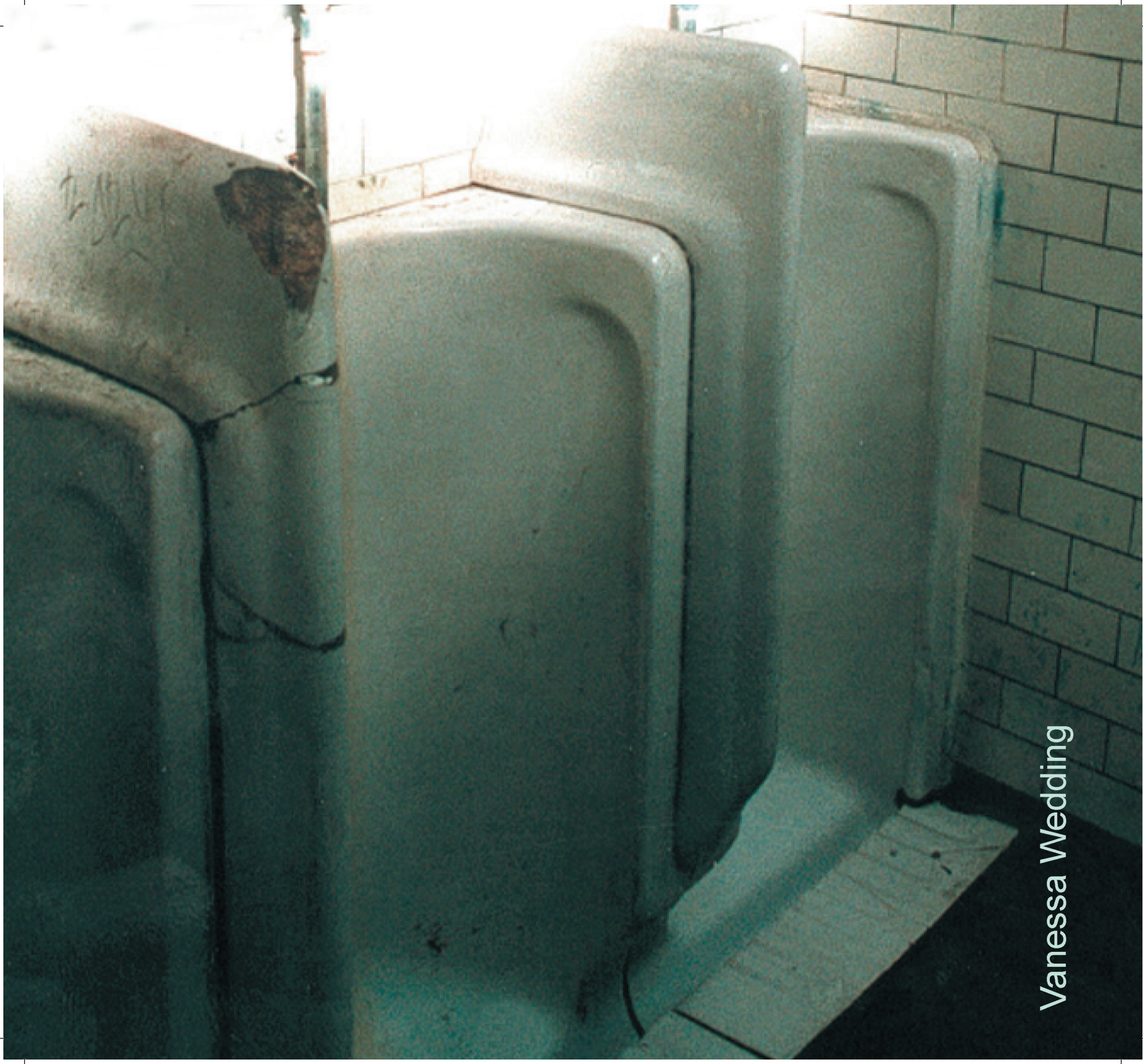
worker *noun*: prostitute.

working bogs *noun*: toilets where sex can be found. In two-bog-towns, often one toilet is called a working bog (identified generally by advertising on walls and holes in the walls); the other toilet is often referred to as *dead, gay proof* or *a grave*. A working bog may also be described as *active, going-off* or *jumping*.

working the bogs *verb*: 1 frequenting public toilets for paid sex.
2 cruising the bogs in a deliberate way.

appendix three

oral histories



Vanessa Wedding

Vanessa Wedding
April 10th 2004
Mangare Auckland

Vanessa can you tell us a little bit about where you were during the time that you heard the language that we are going to discuss, where you were in your life, what you were doing, so we can get a kind of context for the language.

I was in my teenage years and I had been, led a very sheltered life and was told at the age of sixteen that I was gay and that I could be cured so I went to a psychiatrist who said this and was fed a lot of male hormones. It took me seven years to discover that all gay men didn't want to be women and that is when I recognised the difference.

But being told I was gay and trying to cut any sort of sex life whatsoever just didn't work and I ended up living the gay life well and truly. It was all I could do. This was me. This was what I was going to be. So I met eventually a lot of other gay people. It came about by meeting one particular man who introduced me to his particular friends and suddenly I found the gay world, and to my surprise it had its own language and I learnt very quickly. I was fed the information that I needed about this language which I think arrived probably with the British seamen in the Merchant Navy and the title for it was *Phalarae* or *palary*. We also developed our own sort of sub-words for things here. We referred to the underground bogs as the *Underground* and named them as *stations* and that was different. Well we had Vic... there was an underground toilet in Victoria Street so that was *Victoria Station* there was one in Howe Street and that was the *Howe Street Station* and so it went. We also threw a couple of other stations in which were public... which were like picture theatres and so on, to throw anybody off the source of where it came from and what it exactly meant.

We were quite discriminated against in those days and of course the only life we had, there were no gay bars, the only life we had was picking people up... picking our prospective partners up in pubs... in um.. sorry... in toilets or the odd coffee bar. So the toilet scene really sort of became the gay meeting ground. Very often it was just very quick sex in the toilet because that is all the man wanted. So trying to keep clear of the police we developed quite a good system. There was usually somebody... we usually went in pairs and split up but kept our eye on the other person and if the police arrived there was a yell from one to the other or somebody very quickly sort of went down stairs and told the people that the police were arriving. Of course we knew the detectives' cars because they all had the one prefix on them and the same with the police cars so after a little while you got quite in with which cars belonged to whom and of course we referred to them by different names. We had *Jenny Justice* and *Lilly Law* and *Nelly Law* and *Diana Detective* and *Cherie Cunstable* from time to time we used. I think also in Auckland we developed our own sort of sub-language too. We referred to the underground bogs as stations. That was our subway or our underground. We would call Howe Street bogs *Howe Street Station*, Victoria Street Underground was the *Victoria Street Underground Sta-*

tion and we would throw in a couple more like the Civic Station or somewhere that was away from any bog whatsoever, to throw anybody off the track of what we were doing.

Are there any other names for specific toilets that you recall?

Yes we decided to have our own area names as well and we called things like... the Domain was called the *Country Club* and quite often the police of course would drive up the Domain onto the grass and we would all scatter for the stream and the walkway down in the bottom and try to avoid the police that way. Places like Victoria Park was called *Black Forest* referring of course to the fact that it was predominantly a Maori and Island area in those days. We had Western park, that was called *Westend* um...

What time are we talking about here?

We're talking about the mid fifties to the mid sixties.... and then I sort of lost touch with the scene for some years.

Vanessa where did you hear the language used in Auckland in the fifties and sixties?

Well initially it would have been in places like public bars that we could sneak sometimes under age if we were lucky, and if it was gay-friendly enough... or *Khamp* friendly enough in those days. Or coffee bars, which were quite prolific, and coffee bars took the place of what bars are now. We had six-o'clock-closing and if you were still all hyped up from the bar of course you would go to a coffee bar and a lot of them had various entertainments in them, tea-chest basses and a singer and a guitar and that was probably about it. But every coffee bar had its own particular following and sometimes you would go to two or three in a night and end up in one that stayed open very late. So the British seamen would come into the bars or into the coffee bars afterwards and want to pick up a bit of trade that they could take off down to the ship, and so that's how we started on the language I suppose, mixing with a lot of English seamen because the Merchant Navy was very active between Britain and New Zealand in those days. Well I think the whole scene was. So if you'd missed out on one of the bars or you saw somebody walking out that you fancied and you knew they were going to go to the *bog*, you'd usually pick up one of your *sisters*... um in those days homosexuality was either, you were either *butch* or *bitch*, bitch being the passive side. We had friendships because it was safer to travel the streets in two or three or in a small group than by yourself and you always kept your eye on your *sister*, or your *girl friend* and both of you wouldn't go into the bog at the same time. One would be outside and you could have a prear-

ranged signal if the police were arriving. They would come down singing or whistling or saying something silly to themselves so we got the warning that way. Bogs worked much the same I suppose as they do now. They had a row of cubicles and usually across one end the urinals. The first couple of toilet cubicles could actually see what was going on at the urinals and the other ones weren't so good so the *box seat* was of course, or the *Royal circle* was the first two cubicles and you could see whether a man was up to his legitimate business or whether he was encouraging or trying to pick somebody up. Very soon you could sort of hear the signals and the shuffles if someone picked somebody up from the urinal and it was going to be quick sex, they would go off into the cubicle. In the places where the toilets were in parks and things like that, you would usually pick a man up and go out into the bushes somewhere because it was much safer than being cornered, if the police arrived and you were on your own. So life was very, very different than what it is now. There were very few gay or *Khamp* friendly areas at all and we made our own life. Gays and lesbians didn't mix. Lesbians were very territorial and wouldn't invite gays to their parties. It was a very divided scene.

You mention the coffee bars... What were some of the names of some of the ones you remember at this time?

Well the best-known coffee bar in Auckland was the Codoro. And that was in Customs Street and had the public toilet directly downstairs... underground public toilet almost directly outside, and it was close to the bus terminus so of course you could sit there until the last possible moment of the last bus and see what you could manage to pick up. The owners were sort of gay-friendly and they got used to us. Then there were all sorts of other coffee bars. There was the Paris Boulevard at one stage the Quintet... gosh I can't think of them, there were so many.... a little one called Coffee Time.... quite a few different places, they would open up one week and close a couple of months later. It was just the same as the little bars or restaurants now days. You could buy toasted sandwiches or hamburgers or very simple food.

What were the names of the bars that you remember at this time?

Well, the ones that were most gay friendly in Auckland would have been the Queen's Head and the Occidental in Vulcan Lane. They both were, and quite a lot of gay people went there and quite often it was easy to get in if you were under age and neatly dressed. The other one later on became the Great Northern Hotel which was referred to as the *Fish Bowl* or the *Lily Pond*.

Why was it given that name?

Because it had large glass windows in the front and you could watch whatever was happening in the street and they could also watch whatever was happening in the bar.... and people would put on a show.

Can you explain what you mean by people would put on a show?

Well, the queens would all be together, brushing their hair and licking their fingers and touching their eyebrows and flapping their wrists about, changing their *chush bags* from one shoulder to the other. In those days it was airline bags that had very long handles and you had them the maximum of four inches from the ground. That was the way you carried your bag over your shoulder. That’s how people sort of told whether you were gay or not.... your bag was very low to the ground.

What is the name for that bag?

Chush bag.

How would you spell that?

I should imagine it sounds like a J but it was probably chush and it carried make-up or lubrication and maybe tissues or a small towelette or something like that.

Can I ask about some other words? What was a school bag?

A *school bag* was... A man who went after young boys was called an *Aunty* or a *Chicken Hawk* or various other names and the boy himself was called the *school bag*.

So what is a handbag?

A *handbag* was what a straight man... what a gay man called his partner or what a gay woman called her male partner. They were just *handbags*. They were on somebody’s arm and they were worn as a badge of normality I suppose.

Did a handbag refer to somebody of the same gender?

No, the *handbag* referred to somebody of the opposite gender.... Where a gay lady was trying to look *straight* or where a gay man was trying to look *straight*.

What does Paris mean?

Oh *Paris* was wonderful. We used it for everything! It’s *Paris* love! It’s absolutely *Paris*! *She thought she was Paris*! She shooshed her *riah* up to the max and she looked exactly like she was *Paris*!

What is riah?

Riah is hair and that was another bit of *Khamp phalaray*. There were things like... um... my mind’s gone blank.

Can I ask you some more words? A Jewish bob?

A *Jewish bob* was a circumcised man and opposing a Jewish bob was a *roll neck* or a *polo neck*, that was an uncircumcised man of course.

Were you hearing words like those used in the coffee houses?

We would use them in the coffee houses because people wouldn't know what it meant and by and large in those days, men were circumcised and uncircumcised men were thought of as being sort of rather smelly. We talked about the *cheese* and so on and they were what we were not generally used to. American men were circumcised, especially just after the war, the British were, the only ones who weren't were the Continentals. The Dutch certainly were, the Swedish were, so we liked them as seamen and we liked them as partners of course.

I remember hearing you once using the word “a rental box”.

Oh a *rental box* was someone who charged for sex.

How did that come about?

I suppose that came about because sex was short term and you can rent a box... or you could rent a box at the different terminuses, suburban... transport terminuses for a day or a couple of hours and if somebody was paying for sex by the hour, the person they were using was called the *rental box*.

What is a Spanish Gardener?

A *Spanish Gardener* was after a film called the Spanish Gardener and it was a man who was interested in young boys, probably a pederast.

What about the word gravy?

Gravy was commonly referred to as the... well it was commonly... the semen. If you indulged in oral sex, you *swallowed the gravy*.

...and a menu?

A *menu* was, well you might have two of three interesting men so you were going to go through the *menu* to see which one you were going to pick up.

Was there any sense of community around the bogs?

Yes there was. The *girls* all sort of mixed among themselves and we all had names. Passionfruit, Tinkerbelle, Charlotte, Eve... just all different names that we par-

ticularly liked or a play on the sound of a name and we stuck together because sometimes there were *queer bashers* around and one would quickly warn the others about them, and the other thing was there were a lot of dirty old men as we called them, who were unattractive old men that were trying to pick young attractive people like ourselves up and so we sort of warned each other and told each other and described the person.

Was the term queer bashers used at that time?

No. It would have been *Khamp bashers* or *gay bashers*. The word *Khamp* initially was from New Scotland Yard and it was Known Homosexual and Male Prostitute and it gradually, over the years became camp. I mean you talk about camp as a row of tents and that is really sort of confusing the word, but we used that too in the old days, but that's how it came about.

Were there ever signs that you could see that Khamp bashers were in the vicinity?

Yes, there were a lot of signs because especially on a Friday night or a night after work, you would walk down the street in pairs or a group and you could just tell by the way the *straight* guys were looking at you that.... that if they were in a small group or by themselves what they were like and what they might do. So as you passed somebody else who was on the *beat*, going the opposite way, you would warn them that there may be *Khamp bashers* around.

Did they tend to travel in vehicles or were they walking?

Well they were normally walking because most people walked at that stage and caught buses in to the city and with six-o'clock-closing of course you would go in and *window shop* afterwards, I mean quite legitimately window shop but we also called looking for partners as *window-shopping* too.

If you were looking for partners, as window-shopping, was that on the street?

That would be walking up and down the street yes, and in the retail area where the bright... windows were and where the lovely window displays were. So it was really quite good. You could look in the window and see the reflection and sometimes sort of flirt a little with the other person using your own reflection and you would get a reaction as to whether you were going to be received favourably or not.

Vanessa can you tell us in the fifties and sixties, when the police came in to a bog to make an arrest, what normally happened?

Well, quite often the police would decide they were going to raid various *bogs* be-

cause there had been public complaints about them or it had become too openly a *cruising station* so they would just arrive, usually in two cars and one would always block the gate or the entrance to the *bog* if they could get anywhere near it and the other one wouldn't be so far away, and the police would come down and just kick against the *bog* doors, against the cubicle doors and if they were locked they'd ask... they'd say, well can you come out here please and they would stand and wait for them outside the door, and of course quite often two people would be in the cubicle and that created quite a problem for them. And other times they'd decide that, various constables I suppose were anti-gay or anti-queer and they would decide to bait various *queens* who had either defied them or done something to them. Quite often two cops would come down and stand at the urinals and pretend to be playing with each other, and sometimes indeed they were, but that was the way of course to drag one of the *girls* out of a cubicle or somebody out of the cubicles and into action that they could be arrested for.

So when someone was arrested what was the normal procedure?

Well, they'd be taken in the police car, unless it had been such a big raid that they brought the police vans down. They'd be taken up in the police car to Central Police which was in Princes Street up by Albert Park and if they were taken in to the Black Maria they were just fired in to the back of the car and the whole car would be taken up, the whole van would be taken up and that would be that. But occasionally you would get into the back of the car and the policeman would be gay friendly and I met a very nice policeman that way one day. I wasn't arrested but it was for some reason I had seen something, or they wanted a witness, so I yes I had a relationship with a policeman for about six years.

So if we come back to the language form you call Pholarley for a moment, why do you think it was used?

It formed initially I suppose to cover up what people were doing so they could carry on a conversation in a coffee bar where there might be elderly ladies having a cup of tea or a cup of coffee. Coffee bars were the only sort of life spots in those days. People respected the language a lot more than they do now, and of course we didn't use Americanisms, our language was British and we were educated much more in the way of speaking, in the British way of speaking. And of course six-o'clock-closing was in so that meant that people had usually caught their buses from work and gone home, apart from the few that had gone to the hotel and as the licensing was loosened up, and we had eight-o'clock-closing and then ten-o'clock-closing, things became far, sort of more open. There became more workmen, more common men in town and the language used to be heard more often there. I mean you could be arrested for swearing in the street, for saying bloody or bugger in my young days. People just didn't use that sort of language at all. Now days anything goes.

We know that some Khamp names could be fairly brutal but you have mentioned before that early Khamp names didn't incorporate swearing that much?

No, we didn't use swear words for them. We usually feminised somebody's name because people were either *butch* or *bitch* in those days and now days it's a *ride there for a ride back*.

So would a butch man have had a Khamp name?

No. Not so much. It would be the *bitches* who had the *Khamp* names and we took on the name of a film star's role or a famous film star, or a parody of our own name.

So did the person invent the name or was it given to them?

It was usually given to them, and then after a while if they didn't like it they would say, "No, no no. My name is such-and-such".... and it would gradually catch on.

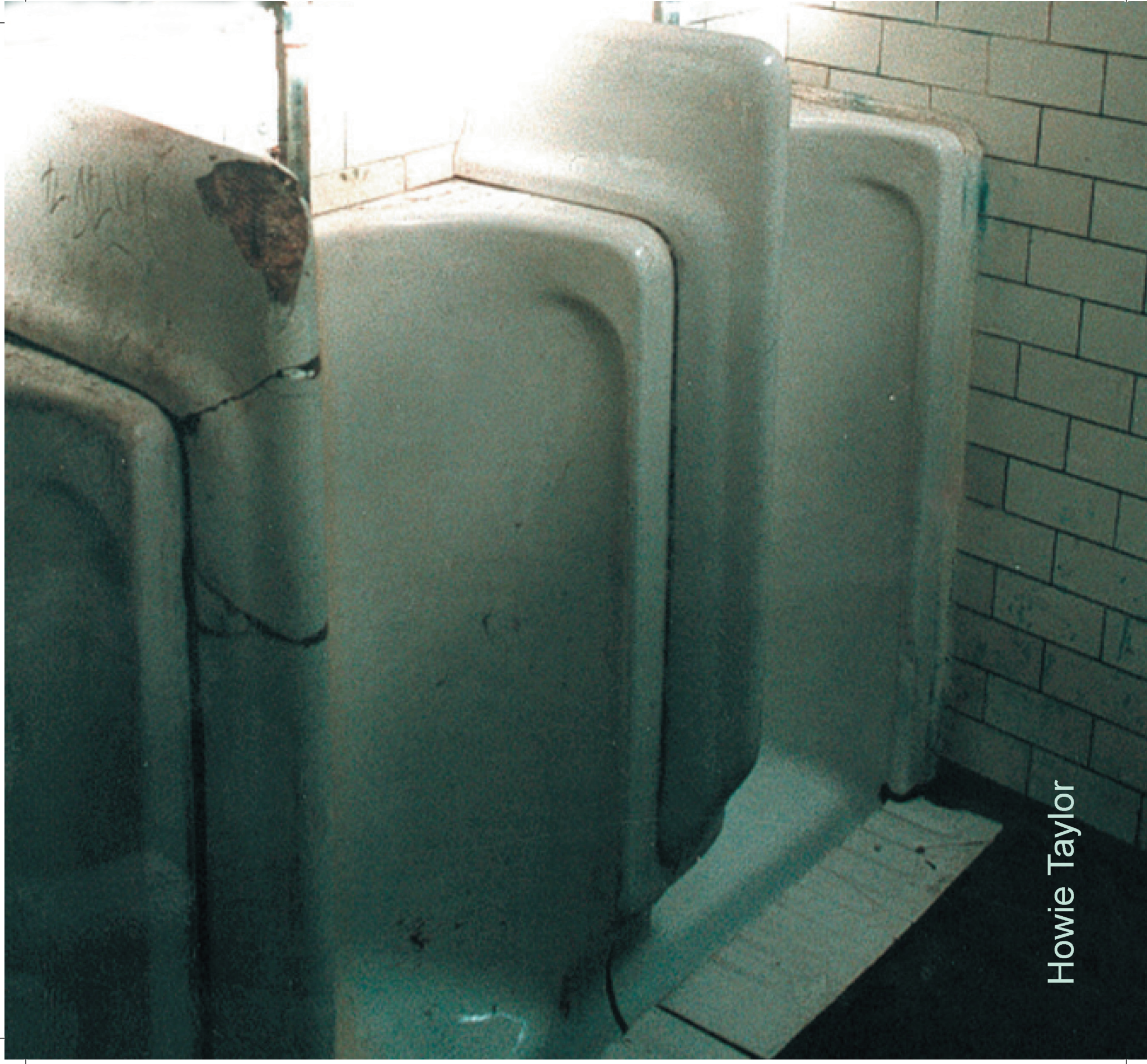
The last thing I wanted to ask you about is your own story, which is really interesting. Can you just explain a little bit about your story and how you fitted in to this gay world in the fifties and sixties?

Well in the fifties and sixties there were much more defined roles as I say, between active and passive and because I had grown up knowing that one day I would be a woman... because this was just something that was within me, I thought well this is what all gay people would want. When I was told I was gay and I could be cured, I thought well, everybody else is in the same boat and all these *gay queens* want to be girls. It took me seven years to discover that they didn't, and in the mean time I had gone to various psychiatrists and doctors and finally found somebody who was interested in pushing me towards having a sex change, well not pushing me, but helping me towards a sex change. I had tried from the time I was fourteen on, every time I found myself at the doctors or having to go somewhere for medical reasons, I would give them my story of how I felt. So I welcomed meeting other people like myself, as I thought at that stage. If all the *girls* were like me, that was fine, but as I say, seven years later I discovered all *girls* didn't want to have a sex change... all of the *queens* didn't want to have a sex change. I later on went ahead and did have it, and I was the first person in New Zealand to have it, and the second in Australasia.

I had to distance myself from active gay life for many years to pass as a normal woman and that meant to live and to work as a woman without being suspected of being different. That was no sort of hardship for me. That was the test and that was what I did, and then gradually found of course somebody who would recommend me for a sex change and I went to Australia to have it. That was all happening as the closing times for hotels came in, as we accepted a lot more American ideas on what gay was about. Which really wasn't so different from ours except we had

two distinct groups of gays, as I say, the *butch* and the *bitch*, and they lived quite differently, and I think, as the barriers broke down and the society of common man mixed more with business man and so on, in the city hotels the language was let slip, it became so common of course that it is common language, it's common for people to swear now days. A lot of men don't know the beginning... don't know the meaning of the words anyway, that they are using. I mean to call somebody a bugger, is really rather insulting to somebody who is not. To use the word fuck is insulting because... and it's misusing the language... because that came from New Scotland Yard too, because it is Full, Unlawful, Carnal, Knowledge, and that was having sex with a person who is under age. So we now have common usage of language that is vastly different to the meaning it had when I was young.

Thank you Vanessa.



Howie Taylor

Harold [*Howie*] Taylor
July 31st 2004
Mt Victoria Wellington

Howie can you tell us a little bit about your own background and where the bogs fit in to that?

Well I was brought up in a small country town. I was brought up as a Jehovah's Witness but came to the finding in myself that it's not who I am, as I wasn't a straight, *straight* male so I started cruising to look for other guys like myself.... and that's how I came into the *bog cruising*.

Can you tell us a little bit about the bogs that you have cruised and what age you became involved, and how that fitted in with the trade?

Well I started *cruising* the parks and the toilets when I was about twelve or thirteen when I was still going to school, because I didn't like school so I wagged and went to the toilets to try and pick up men and found out very quickly that I could be paid for the service as well as enjoying what I was doing anyway... which was a bonus, and as I grew up I travelled up and down the country doing the same thing.

Can you tell us how you turned tricks or how did you make money? How did you ask for money in the bogs?

I used facial expressions and rubbing my fingers together and smiling at the clients and writing notes and passing them through holes in the wall or under the wall.

So over the years, because you have been involved with the bogs for quite a long time, have you seen any significant changes in the bogs and cruising around the bogs?

Yes I have.... Changes? It's a lot more open and not as dangerous sometimes and the *clients* are more open.

So we were talking a little bit about the language around the bogs, some of the words that belong to the bogs, can you... you discussed it as something you called Polari. Can you tell us about Polari because you still use it. Where do you use it and what is it?

Polari is a type of language, linguistics, that gay men in the *gay scene* and the *bog culture* use to speak to each other about certain people that attract them or not attract them so as not to cause any serious consequences with the heterosexual community that may be there at the time.

How do you use it in the bars? Why do you use it in the bar and who do you use it with?

I use it in bars with gay friends of mine who are also into *gayspeak* or *Polari* so as not as to offend any of the straight clientele that come into the gay nightclub.

So what sort of stuff would you talk about in Polari that you wouldn't use ordinary English speech to talk about?

[laughs] Sex talk and talking about body parts and sexual acts with certain people... being of the male gender.

How many people today would you say use Polari?

I'd say ten percent out of a hundred percent.

Where do younger gay men learn Polari? How did you learn Polari?

I learned Polari from previous people that I met... older ones... the older generation that used it and they have taught me the language.

When you were learning this language, was it being discussed while people were in the bogs or was it being discussed outside of the bogs? Where were you picking up the language form?

Both in the *bog* and also outside of the bog, when I became good friends with fellow *workers* and *bog-queens*.

Can I ask you a few words that I have heard you use? What do you mean by a can of worms?

Can of worms can either mean a risky situation where it can be dangerous or a *can of worms*, meaning when the venue is full of people *cruising* for the same thing.

Are there... can you tell us a little bit about language that might be used to describe the police or women that you know of?

The police can be.. a lot of.. most the words are quite *Polari* um, *naff*, *dolly handbags*, and *bull-dykes* and yeah... other words.

Can you tell us about, if the police send a man in to the bogs to try and trap guys who are cruising, what are the ways you can normally tell that it is police that have come in as agent provocateur... have come in, in disguise?

Just their facial expressions and their body posture in general points them out as being undercover policemen.

Howie how old were you when you started doing the bogs and where were the bogs when you started off?

I started off when I was about twelve. Between twelve and thirteen and I started off in small town Masterton at the local park toilets.

So how would you know, if you were in the bogs and a guy comes in, how would you know that a guy is more likely to pay?

If he was the first one to make an offer, either verbally or on written material.

So how does written material...can you explain how written material works?

A scrappy piece of paper with a little note written on it, with writing on it, asking how much do you cost? What do you want and what do you like?... passed through the hole or under the wall.

If you were turning a trick with a John, did you normally do it in the bog or did you go somewhere else?

Most of the time we did it in the *bog* but it all depended on the guy, the *client*, whether he had time to take me back to his place or we'd go for a ride in his car and do it in the back of his car down a dark alleyway or a country road or on the beach.

Okay, so some of the words that I have heard you use in relation to the bogs... what is it if you say someone has got boxrot?

What I mean by when someone's got *boxrot* is a person who *does the bogs* a lot and has unsafe sex all of the time and most of the time has an STD and passes it on regularly.

And what does the term snapped mean?

Snapped is similar to being caught out by other gay men that have no idea that you were a *bog queen* until they saw you in the toilet *cracking it*.

So do some gay men hide the fact that they do the bogs from other gay men?

Yes they do.

Why do you think that is?

It's.. because there is a bias and stigma against *bog-queens* as being bad for the gay community.

So what is a window shopper?

A *window shopper* is like a voyeur who gets their thrills by coming in... watches what happens between guys and goes home and saves it for later.

Howie, you have done the bogs for quite a long time so you have been able to see a lot of the changes that have occurred. What years are we talking about?

Mid seventies till late... mid to late seventies right up until this day.

So more recently are there examples of language which have come up that are no more than ten years old... things that where the language has changing and there are new words coming in?

Yes ahhh, like *anal* is still current, *blow-jobs*, *hand-jobs* and the like and also now that the... a lot of the meeting of other gay guys is also done by phone-chat and on the internet. There is also cyber-sex.

So how has that affected the use of language? How has that affected how things are written or spoken?

It's changed things so that it's not long and drawn out. They have turned a lot of words in to acronyms and shortened them into more understandable, easier terms.

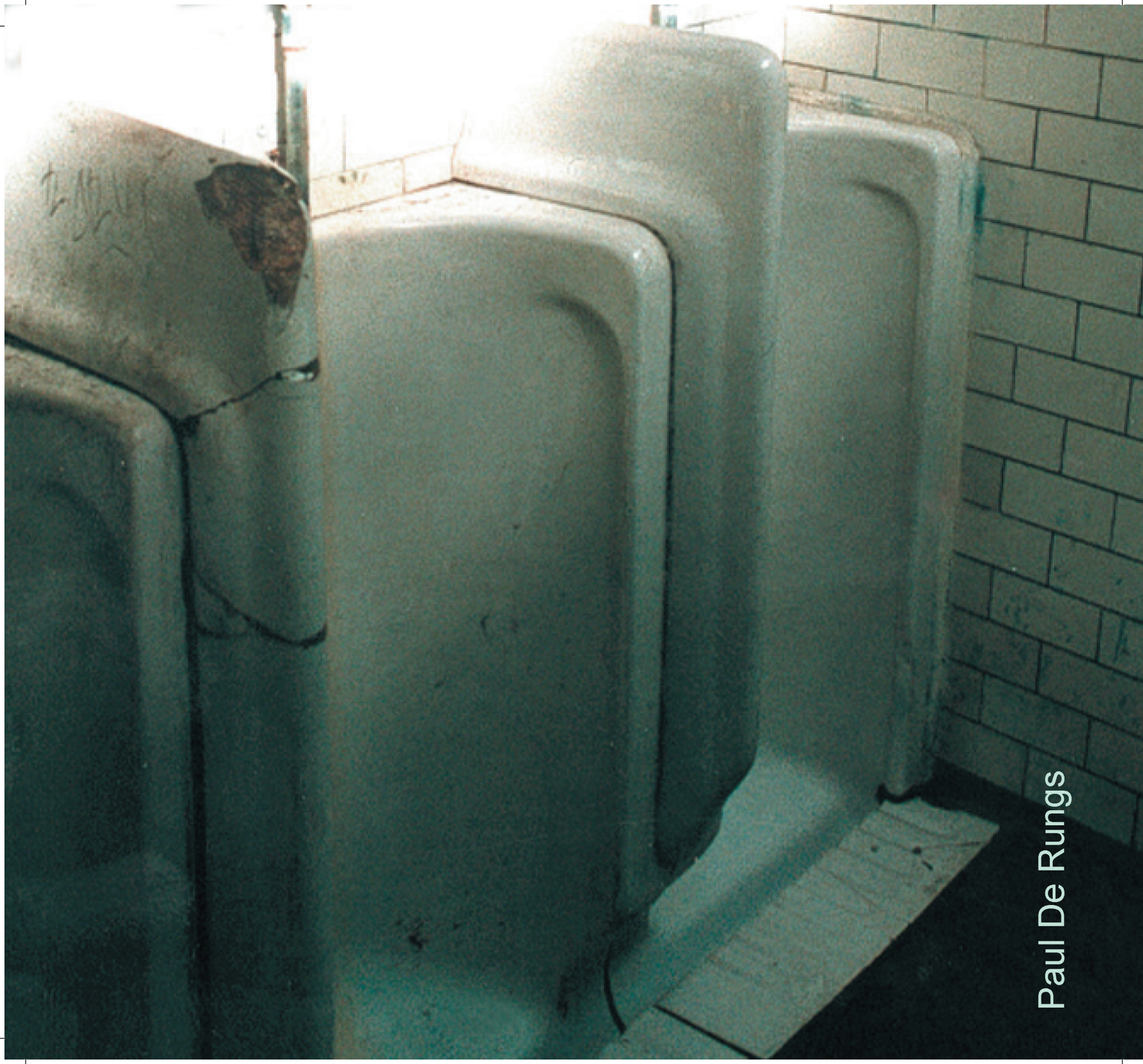
Can you give an example of something like that?

Like instead... when you are on-line, instead of typing I-N-T-O you shorten it to just N and the number 2.

So N2 what?

N2 *oral*, *anal* or whatever.

**That's really good mate, I really appreciate it. There is some really interesting stuff there.
Thank you.**



Paul De Rungs

Paul De Rungs
April 29th 2004
Avondale Auckland

Paul can you tell us about your time in the 1950s with the Merchant Navy in New Zealand and Australia?

Yes. I first went to sea in 1953 in the ship the *Monowai* which was on the Trans-Tasman run between Auckland and Sydney and Wellington and Sydney. There were a lot of gay people on that ship. I was in the catering department which numbered about eighty, and forty of them were gay.
My step-father took me in to Keans out fitters in Lambton Quay in Wellington where I purchased the necessary clothing which was white Monkey jackets with union company brass buttons and black trousers, and then I was taken down to the ship and told to report to the second steward which I did, shown to my accommodation where I met the first two *drag queens* I had ever met in my life... or seen... who immediately took me under their wing.... made a big fuss of me and appointed themselves as my body guard and mentors.
Well my first trip to Sydney was quite memorable because by then all the gay people had taken me under their wing and they were determined to show me the sights of Sydney which they did and I met lots of people in the gay community in Sydney who were very hospitable. I can remember being taken to the hotel where all of the window dressers used to drink from all of the big department stores. I think it was called the Carlton and it was crowded. It was in the days of six-o'clock closing, so there were many parties after the pub.

Some of the words I have heard you use, that you learnt at this time are really interesting Paul. What does the term bona mean?

Bona I learned from an old *queen* called Janey Joyce who I lived with for a while who was quite an exponent of that kind of language. I am only sorry that I didn't learn more about it, but my understanding of the word *bona*, I think its Latin and originally from my days at school, and quite appropriate in meaning good.

So what about words like manky?

Manky is a.. more of a Manchester-Liverpool term I have heard widely used among guys from that area and it means grotty, grubby, dirty.. that is generally the context I have heard it used.

You have also talked about a term called a bitch's curse. What is a bitch's curse?

A *bitch's curse* is a very *khamp scream*. Once again my friend Janie was always doing it. That's why I remember it.

... and what about a horse’s hoof?

Yes. That’s cockney rhyming slang meaning poof.

Paul in 1992 you were involved in the making of a magazine which was left in bogs and other locations called *Bog-Spy*. Can you explain what the magazine was and why you did it?

Yes. It was done for a two-fold purpose. It was meant to be politically motivated which it was to a minor degree. It was also a send-up of gay society, as I knew it then because I felt that it was too inward-looking, and it was designed to take the piss out of it.. out of an element in gay society... and the other thing was it was meant to be humour because that is what would make it sell. Its content was largely written tongue-in-cheek but a lot of it was quite factual and we invented an editorial staff of various names and the articles were written under those names.

... and you rated the bogs with stars?

Oh yes. We did a series based on the *Truth* newspaper thing where they had Myrtle and Pub-spy who used to go around sampling different pubs and then giving them a star rating so I thought why not extend this to bogs, so I did. I visited the various bogs and noted the features about them and so I would for instance for Customs Street I wrote who needs a policeman when you are in Customs Street because you can always find one handy if you ever do need one. There’s another bog in Bell-wood... Bellevue off Dominion Road, I wrote that a certain well-known minister was often in there so if you wanted to have a bit of a church service at the same time you could, because he would be there. So, and each bog of course got a star rating from five to one.

So what about bogs like Sandringham at this time?

At that time Sandringham bog used to *go off a treat* but it was a very dangerous one because there was a woman in the hardware shop across the road that used to take car numbers and keep the place under observation, noting how many people went in there and how long they were there and then one particular occasion two kids were in there and several old men who didn’t have the brains to leave and were flashing themselves at the kids... so the kids went home and reported to their parents who immediately informed the police. The police mounted an operation on that particular bog and thirty-two arrests were made in one day.

This was around 1992?

Yeah round about that time.

So we have surveillance at this time and people taking down number plates and giving them to the police. Were there other forms of it?

I have heard of cases of it. Avondale/Rosebank Road bog there used to be a guy... this was when cell-phones were first coming into vogue, used to sit out there in an old truck and phone the police every time he suspected activity was going on in the bog.

What about taxi drivers Paul?

Taxi drivers are notorious. Taxi drivers in my younger days used to be terrible *narks* because the common belief was that, that was how they kept their license up by narking. But not withstanding that, there's many taxi drivers who have availed themselves of the extra services that there are available in bogs so I don't think that they are all narks but there is a fair element of them.

So have there been changes that have happened in the bogs in the last say, twenty years?

Yes the old bogs that I first knew when I started doing them were all built, you know, probably about thirty years previously and architecturally they were quite good for *spy holes* and things like that but in modern years they have tended to... they have gutted them and retiled them and made them clean looking and modern and they have also had in mind people who come in and use them for other purposes so they've designed in such a way as to deter that. Some of the ones in New Market they have cut the doors right down so that they were like stable doors, you could see under them, you could see over them. That was an extreme case. Most of them they have cut the bottoms off the doors so anyone can look under and see how many people are in there.

What about the surfaces on the walls? How have they changed?

Yeah, well they are more modern ones are tiled or rippled aluminum... very hard to write on... and even harder to drill through.

So can you tell us a little bit about that... about drilling holes?

Oh yes, I call it "putting them on the phone". I put a cubicle at St Lukes "on the phone" and it started as a small hole and it got bigger and bigger by other people and I went in there one day and they had put bloody stainless steel right across the wall. That's very hard to.... you can't drill through it... and that's what they do now.

So in terms of another bog that you use, can you talk about other systems that might have been employed to stop glory holes and how you got around that?

Well yes. They often put bog... that's appropriate.. used for body filler on cars because it sets hard, but you can, with a bit of persistence, dig your way through it. Noise is a factor so it rules out electric drills.

One of my favourite bogs was the East Tamaki one which was built probably in the forties or early fifties. It's all brick construction and there was a wonderful *glory hole* in there and there were two of them actually, and then over the years I came down one morning to find a contractor's van parked outside and when the bogs did eventually open a couple of days later, they had been carefully concreted over with very hard cement and encased in the cement were old nails, probably to act as reinforcing. I decided there and then that these holes needed to be opened up again, so I went down there early one morning when they first opened with a small bar and a sledge hammer and I attacked the hole but the reverberating 'bong' that the hammer blow made could be heard across the road, so I only gave it another three or four swipes and decided that it was too dangerous. So I went back every morning for three weeks with a big screwdriver and worked assiduously at this hole until I got break through three week's later to the day almost.

And prior to cementing up the hole you mentioned once that they had done something with a plate. What was that?

That was another attempt, they had put a big steel plate over the hole and bolted it to the bricks. But when they bolted it to the bricks they didn't burr the ends to the bolts so I was able to get me crescent spanner out of my van and unbolt it and I took the plate home because it was wonderful for a barbeque plate. But they never tried to replace that.

Sometimes guys talk very nostalgically about bogs and the significance of the buildings. Can you think of any examples of this?

Yes I do know one stalwart character who's a taxi driver funnily enough, who can tell numerous stories about old bogs of Auckland and various well known personalities who frequented them but he was quite sad when they demolished the old, original Pamure bogs and managed to salvage some of the bricks from the wreckage which actually had graffiti on them which he has at his home. Similarly, he did the same with the old bogs that used to be at Point Chev.

So if bogs are this important, is there a sense of community among men who cruise them? Can you talk about that?

Yes. Quite often if you did the bogs as frequently as I did in those days, certain faces become familiar to the extent that after a period of time, you can have a conversation with them, and quite often, particularly in the bogs in the Manurewa car park

on a Sunday morning, there would be people sitting in their cars watching to see who was going in and who was coming out and they'd often get out of their cars and we'd meet in a little group and we'd talk generally on bog related subjects.

So what sort of things are bog-related subjects?

Well we'd talk about busts that had been made, weird people who had come in, that sort of thing... or people to watch out for.

Can you tell us a little bit about Planet Hollywood, because that is a newer bog?

I was there yesterday. Yes that works, but once again you have to be ultra careful because there is security and they had a sign up in the bog which has since been taken down, that these premises are under surveillance but there was some holes there, but they have patched them up with little metal plates that they have glued over the... But the contact is readily made because all of the floors are polished marble and if you sit at the right angle and look down you can see what is happening in the cubicle next to you. And I only discovered two days ago that if you use the urinals that are directly opposite the doors of the bog, you can see into every one of them, through the reflections on the floor and know exactly what's going on. So they're wonderful!

Okay. So can I ask you about some words that I've heard you use when you are talking about bog-cruising... What's rough trade?

Rough trade to my way of thinking is someone that looks a bit rough, doesn't look gay at all and has a sort of air of menace about them, likely to give you *the bash*. But some people go for that type.

You've used two words for the cops, demon... demon and filth, is there any difference between them?

Yeah well I generally... that's an old English expression, Cockney again, the *filth*, and that's what I generally use when I am talking about the police generally. *Demons* are detectives.

And are those old words or are they in current use?

They are older words, but some people still use them. When I use them to people who don't know them, they know exactly what I'm talking about.

So what about acronyms like SPU and HRU? Are they new?

Well they're ones of, they're very recent and they're ones that I learned from a

friend who actually invented them I believe. SR.. SR... *HRU* is a human reproduction unit and *SPU* is a sperm production unit.

So what do they actually refer to?

Well *HRU* refers to a woman and *SPU* refers to a young man.

Okay and what about the term Kumara-queen?

Kumara-queens are... I'd say that's a description of me. That's one that likes Maoris. As opposed... a *rice-queen* liking Asian people, or *taro-queen* liking Island people, or a *curry-queen* liking Indian people.

So are those words in use at the moment?

Yes in some sections they are, yes...

Finally Paul, can you tell us about the actual writing on bog walls and how that might have changed over time?

Ahhh, yes... writing on walls, 'cause of the surfaces of the newer toilets with tiles and things, presents some difficulties. From experience I've found that indelible felt-tipped pens are the best. The ones that only methylated spirits will dissolve the writing. But in actual fact there are some pens where they can paint over the graffiti and it will still leech through the paint. Um... but I can never remember what brands of pen they are. I've seen writing in the... on the architraves, wooden surfaces usually painted white or cream and that can be done with ball point pen because you can actually press into the wood. I've seen other people scratch messages because they've gone in there with no implements to write with so the car keys are probably the next best bet... and I've seen writing in the grout between the tiles in some bogs but not a lot of it. I think there's some in Avondale at the moment... in Rosebank... but it is very old.

Paul, that's great. It's been really interesting and I appreciate your time. Thank you.

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appendix four

filmography and final script

boy

key information

Writer/Director/Designer: Welby Ings

Producer/DOP: Nic Finlayson

Production Company: Room 8

Technical Information: 35mm/ Digibeta / 1:1.85 / Dolby Digital and Dolby SR

Running Time: 14 minutes 59 seconds

Country of Production: New Zealand

Date of completion: May 2004

Genre: Short film. Narrative fiction

log Line

getting even is best kept quiet.

synopsis

boy is the strangely told, silent story of a young male prostitute in a small New Zealand town who discovers the truth behind a fatal hit and run accident. As news of the death spreads through the district, the family of the driver responsible realises that the boy must be kept quiet. Using gossip and brutality they set out to frighten him into submission. The pressure becomes increasingly aggressive and through it the boy, from his strange world of broken, angel-like dolls, develops the courage, to expose the truth.

story

In the now faded glory of a hotel and hot pool complex, a fourteen-year-old boy, Sam, lives with his great aunt. He relates a silent story from the strange shrines of collected paraphernalia that are his bedroom.

On an empty, backcountry road, a local, teenage girl is hitchhiking home when she is hit and killed by a solitary driver. The driver [a close friend of her family], in a state of distress recognises her but noting that there are no witnesses, panics and rolls her body over into a drain, tearing her dress and soiling his coat sleeve with blood and dirt in the process. Finding that he can not wipe the evidence off with a piece of her torn dress, the man places the cloth in his pocket and drives back into town where he stops at the public toilets, locks himself into a vacant cubicle, strips off his coat and proceeds to wash the sleeve of his shirt in the toilet bowl.

In the adjoining cubicle, Sam is waiting for a 'trick'. After peering through the hole in the wall he is confused by what he sees. Assuming that the new occupant is cruising, he quietly clambers up onto the cistern and looks over the partition. The driver hears him, looks up and both recognise each other. The man flees, leaving his coat behind in his panic. Sam retrieves this and finding money and credit cards in the pockets, takes it with him.

The next day the girl's body is found and news spreads through the district. The Hotel is the centre of the community and it is here that the parents of the victim are comforted and the situation discussed by locals, including the boy's aunt and the family of the driver. [The driver's wife is unaware of her husband's involvement in the accident, as he has explained away the missing jacket as being at the drycleaners]. The assumption by the police and the local paper is that the girl was killed by a hit and run driver passing through the district.

Sam however, realises what has happened and also the precarious position he is in. [The driver privately seeks him out and makes it quite clear that he is aware of the boy's sexuality and uses this to apply pressure to keep him in a state of compliant fear.]

Over the next three days, tension builds through a series of incidents where the driver indirectly orchestrates pressure on the boy to remain silent. Some of this occurs at school, through the mechanisations of the driver's seventh form son who engineers a beating when Sam retaliates after finding his school locker sprayed out with pink paint. While Sam escapes the initial beating, he is later cornered in a locker bay and thrashed.

Sam is also followed to the town dump where he has hidden the coat. It is from this site that he collects small, bizarre objects that he carries home in an old trolley towed behind his bike. These objects he uses to decorate his room and construct

centrepieces for the main table in the hotel dining room.

When he is hurt, Sam flashes up sudden ‘camp’ reconstructions of the event as momentary responses; these appear as sudden bursts of florid retaliation then dissolve quickly back into the flow of the story.

In the world of the Hotel complex however, Sam is safe under the protection of his aunt, who being an ex ‘grand dame’ of amateur theatre in Wellington, encourages what she sees as his artisticness.

On the night before the funeral the young woman who works at reception [and is considered the town slut], is taken down to the hot pools by a group of local boys from the pub. What starts as a joke turns into a rape and Sam finds her later that evening huddled under the showers in the drizzling rain. Crying, he attempts to carry her back up to the hotel. This incident acts as an anagnorisis and through it he realises the cost of remaining compliantly at the bottom of the pecking order in a small town.

On the day of the funeral, Sam does not attend, but waits in his room for the arrival of the main party back at the hotel. When the two families arrive, along with the local policeman, and the minister, they sit down at the table where a centrepiece is constructed of dolls in a torn, bloodied dress. The driver (coatless throughout the film) sits with his wife, son, identical twin daughters and the parents of the dead girl on one side of the table. Sam’s empty chair faces them.

Sam enters clothed only in his underpants and the driver’s coat. He throws the driver’s credit cards down on the table. The jacket and cards are immediately recognised by the wife of the driver.

There is silence.

From the coat pocket, Sam pulls the piece of cloth from the victim’s dress and places it carefully in front of the victim’s mother.

director’s notes

This film deals with a subject filmmakers tend to avoid. While young, heterosexual men’s emerging sexuality is commonly explored in film and television, their gay equivalent is generally avoided or portrayed as neutral (asexual but camp) or as a victim of paedophilia. *Boy* is neither. He is a phenomenon in nearly every New Zealand small town with a public toilet.

The story flows as a single, linear thread. The aesthetic references stylistic approaches taken to advertising narratives in New Zealand [integrated colour palettes, editing rhythms and structures]. A significant feature of this approach is the highly condensed nature of the story. The narrative [which might normally be told as a 55 minute drama] is now heavily compressed into a quarter of that time.

As a result edited sequences average out at 3.2 seconds in duration. The effect establishes an unusually condensed, dreamlike, visually rich form of storytelling

that alludes to the world of music video and TVCs but uses these references to develop a very intricate, intensified form of storytelling.

Written words as thoughts, comment on or interrupt developments in the film as fragmented or poetic text. The language in this text is either poetic or references the little known New Zealand bog cruising sub-cultural language of bogspeak or parley. (See 'other relevant information').

The sound design is very unusual and has been constructed in such a way as to heighten the sense of dislocation and isolation in the boy's world. This has been done by stripping out the atmospheric palettes and replacing them with the occasional noise that might normally sit in the background.

original character profiles

the grandmother

...lived her life in Wellington as a queen of amateur theatre before coming up to Okororie, where she is now the manager of the local hot pool and hotel complex. She has a penchant for theatrical dressing. She appears in much of the film as an aged, slightly overly made up iron butterfly, resplendent in dated boas and pearls. She commands bemused respect from the locals and in turn considers it her duty to bring culture to the rural proletariat by serving silver service dinner in the hotel dining room to guests and invited visitors.

While she is capable of withering even the most abrasive of the local 'hoods' with a cold eyed glance, she is very tender and protective of both Sam and Delwyn.

She is, for all of this, somewhat out of touch in this cultural backwater.

delwyn

... has a rough innocence that sits uncomfortably with an exuded sexuality. Having little belief in herself she is shaped and buffeted by the attention of the local men, who do not disguise the fact that they see her as an easy lay. She and Sam have a bond born out of their parallel positions at the bottom of the local pecking order. She tends to dress like a poorly copied 80s soapbox star, punctuated with touches of vernacular innocence.

the driver

...a successful small town business man, probably on the chamber of commerce and bucking for a J.P. He drives an Alpha Romeo and projects an air of comfortable arrogance born out of his status as a son of an "established family". He is good looking with a brooding cruelty sitting just behind the open smile. He has married a nice girl (who is best friends with the mother of the daughter he kills) and has a popular seventh form son (currently going through small town hoonishness, but off to Victoria next year). He also has two beautiful, identical twin girls (piano lessoned, Barbie collecting, pampered and approved). He lies to his wife about the missing coat and engineers, through his 'good mate' status with his son's seventh form friends, Sam's escalating harassment.

Sam ... is fourteen, gay and pulled between two worlds. In his bedroom and at the Hotel, he is adored child of his theatrical Grandmother. However, in the town and at school, he is a reject. This is a child whose introduction to his sexuality via small town bog cruising has caused him to grow up very fast in a world shaped by hypocrisy. On one level he is completely closeted, on the other he is the local trick; charging \$20 a time. He has a strange but fertile imagination well beyond his years. (...something like a plant that has been overfed but is root-bound in too small a pot). In the film he appears tough, independent and isolated. There are no trimmings of effeteism or weakness about him; he does not cry when he is beaten at school and appears to continually brush off the victimisation he experiences. He has a theatrical and somewhat camp humour that surfaces in flashes of imagined retaliatory action when he is assaulted or victimised. His retreat from this is the strangely beautiful worlds of the dump and his doll studded bedroom. Despite his self-containment however, it is through the tenderness of his relationship with his Aunt and his helpless role-playing as 'rescuer' in the aftermath of Delwyn's rape, that we see the sensitivity and vulnerability that exists beneath the surface.

support characters

driver's son driver's wife twin girls police man minister
hitch hiker mother of hitchhiker father of hitchhiker 2 pool players
mate Mike school students English teacher science teacher
Sam as a child Sam's parents John in the toilet locals

full cast & crew

actors

Jesse Lee	Melvin Te Wani	Katrina Hamblin
Bryan Bevege	Matt Risbridge	Sam Christopher
Tammy Warwick	Paul Probine	Peter Hansen
Francie Gray	Darion Ings	Stevie Terei Hitana
Luke Thompson	Karen Ings	Vanessa Curd
Fredd Marshall	Bill Taua	Amanda Hennessey
Daniel Hodson	Matthew Saville	Josephine Bates
Stephanie Jefferson	Leigh Hunt	Stephanie Hewson
Hannah Hurst	Petrus Rijkers	Logan Meredith
Amanda Macek	Suzanne Ings	Tim Chandler
Emily & Rebekah Horgan	Cairine Barton	Johnny Shaw
Michael Easther	Madison Barton-Ings	Daniel Richards
Miriam Bleackley	Brooke Ings	Stephen Archer
John ten Velde	Auriol Farquharh	John Strange
Trisha Waugh	Danelle Barugh	Kieren Hooks
Robert Jenkinson	Kirsten Heaps	

Production crew

Production Manager
1st AD
2nd AD
Production Assistant
Focus Pullers

Clapper Loader
Gaffer
Grip
Lighting assistants

Wardrobe
Wardrobe Assist
On Set Art Director
Art dept assistant
Make-up

Hair

Unit

Catering

Zara Hayden
Katie Taite
Katie Flanigan
Tania Ludlow
Bryony Mathew
Ben Freedman
Lucy Bowey
Marc Mateo
Kim Worthington
Spencer Locke-Bonney
Ben Freedman
Yvonne Stewart
Amanda Stewart
Rihari Taratoa-Bannister
Mike Holland
Noeline White
Cath Mish-Wills
Nyssa Brocklehurst
Loretta Whalley
Aaron Whalley
Suzanne Ings
Cairine Barton
Lois & Arthur Ings
Jeannette & Andrew Kay

Post production

Offline Editor
Flame artist/editor
Music
Sound

Bella Erikson
Brenton Cumberpatch
Don McGlashan
Tom Miskin
Andrew Dubber

Equipment and suppliers

Panavision
Kodak
Lighting Equipment
Grip Equipment
Film Lab

Paul Lake
Grant Campbell
Flashlight, Gordy
Dolly Shop, Dennis Thompson
Craig Howard

Support people

Brigid Rice-Lloyd	South-Waikato Council	Pub locals - Marian Tamati
Hendrikse family	Noel Ferguson	Gwen King
Karen & Dean Gittings	Norm Torstenson	Mariana Dimondino
Lynda Bennett	Elaine & Laurie Downes	Kevin Madgewick
Michelle Pompey & Dave	Team 7 Te Awamutu	Rima Christie
Alan Nelson,	Gavin Muckle,	Hugh & Kiri Rhodes,
Dawn Mellow	John Birkes	Okoroire Hotel
Lynn Forsman	Putaruru Highschool	Hamilton/ Putaruru Police
The Lee family	Colin Gibbs	Dante Bonica

about the production

boy was filmed on 35mm film, and uses the HD format for all intermediate stages of post-production. The principal photography was completed within a week from 20-24 January, 2003 at locations in the south Waikato of New Zealand. Two later sequences, including titles and blue-screen elements were filmed in Arapuni and in Auckland respectively. These extra sequences were shot during the period of the offline edit, which meant I could be certain of the styling required. Post-production on the film took four months as much of the digital intermediate process was very exacting as it profiles a highly coloured style with large composite and graphic elements.

The film was then taken back to 35mm print for projection in cinemas [1;1.85] with a Dolby mix soundtrack. The film is on one reel and is 1340 feet long with a 150 ft leader at the front.

boy is also formatted on Beta SP [16.9 letterboxed] and DVD [PAL or NTSC]. The unusual and distinctive sound design has been very important, as the film has no dialogue. The approach has been to communicate aurally the isolation and disconnection that surrounds the main character’s world. The treatment has involved stripping back the most obvious sounds and heightening small details, so they draw attention to the tension in the film. The foley work has been supported by two versions of the song, *Anchor Me*, by Don McGlashan and a 17th century Russian choral work, *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh*. Performance rights for all three pieces of music have been secured.

film website

www.boyshortfilm.co.nz

script

title sequence
Scene 1
INT. TIMELESS
From the darkness emerges the word boy.

The camera details a series of gritty details of broken angel dolls. These images are overlaid with Sam's interior monologue. The images are brown and aged and bristle under the soundtrack of a cracked record.

TEXT
SAM'S MONOLOGUE

In the silence of my childhood
there were angels;
flightless
black winged
rejected pieces of other people's lives.

In this world
there were no catechisms
no blessings of grace.
just things bound by tradition and silence
tradition and silence.
silence

In the final construction an image of a blind doll dissolves away to reveal a shot of a deserted backcountry road.
The sky is heavy.

Scene 2
EXT. ROAD- LATE AFTERNOON.
A young GIRL is walking home. The heat has clung her dress to her shoulders. She brushes hair from her face and listens. (Filmed in slow motion).
From the distance a car approaches.

Scene 3
INT. CAR- LATE AFTERNOON.
A DRIVER in an expensive suit is drunk and driving. His brief case is open on the front seat. Beside it is a cell phone. It falls off the seat.

Scene 4
deleted

Scene 5
INT. CAR- LATE AFTERNOON.
The man sees her, then suddenly hears his cell phone and reaches for it. He loses control of the car.

Scene 6
EXT. CAR- LATE AFTERNOON.
The car spins out of control and through a rapid series of cuts, careers across the road, hitting the GIRL.
Silence.

Scene 7
The DRIVER climbs out and looks around him. The road is deserted. Aware that he has hit somebody, he quickly circles the vehicle and suddenly locates the girl. She has been killed. There is blood on her body and her dress is torn. The DRIVER in semi shock stands up and walks back to the car, then goes back to the body. He bends down and seeing that she is dead, half lifts her towards the car, then changes his mind and drags her into the drain at the side of the road. The road remains deserted.

Scene 8
EXT. PARK TOILETS- LATE AFTERNOON.
SAM parks his bike by a wall, looks around then disappears into the building.

Scene 9
EXT. ROAD- LATE AFTERNOON.
After semi hiding the body, the DRIVER stands up and notes the blood and dirt on his hands and jacket sleeve. He reaches down and loosens a piece of cloth off the girl's dress and tries to clean himself. The marks smudge. Noting that the road is still deserted, he puts the cloth into the pocket of his jacket, turns the car around and drives back into town.

Scene 10
INT. MIDDLE CUBICLE- LATE AFTERNOON.
SAM is sitting clothed in the middle cubicle, his pants are undone. He is reading a paperback. He leans forward and looks through a hole in the wall to his left, then sits back.

Scene 11
EXT. OUTSIDE TOILET- LATE AFTERNOON.
DRIVER'S car pulls up next to toilet and exits taking off his coat.

Scene 12
INT. MIDDLE CUBICLE- LATE AFTERNOON.
Sam hears somebody come in and close the door of the cubicle on his right. He listens for a moment then leans forward to look through the hole again. What he sees is indecipherable, so he goes back down for a second look.

Scene 13
INT. RIGHT CUBICLE- LATE AFTERNOON.
The DRIVER takes his coat off, looks around then crouches over the bowl to wash the blood off his hand and shirtsleeve.

Scene 14
INT. MIDDLE CUBICLE- LATE AFTERNOON.
SAM looks through the hole again, waits, and then pulls up his shorts.

SAM stealthfully levers himself up onto the cistern. He peers over the division between the cubicles.

Scene 15
INT. RIGHT CUBICLE- LATE AFTERNOON.
The DRIVER has put his coat down and is rubbing his shirt-sleeve with a wetted handkerchief. He hears a sound, and looks up.

TEXT
fuck off

He recognizes SAM and scrambles to hide what he is doing. When he looks up again the boy has gone. In a panic he stands up, flushes the toilet and leaves. His coat remains discarded on the floor.

rentboy
open house
trick
trade

SAM enters the cubicle, bends down and picks up the coat. He is puzzled but rifles through the pockets, finding a small amount of money and credit cards. He transfers these to his pocket.

Scene 16, 17, 18 & 19
shrine deleted

Scene 20 A
EXT. HOTEL FRONT PORCH- MORNING.
Establishing shot. [Idyllic]

Scene 20 B
EXT. HOTEL FRONT PORCH- MORNING
The GRANDMOTHER resplendent in morning light sits drinking tea from fine china. DELWYN enters with a small plate of neatly arranged fruit and places it beside her. She is graced with a smile as she departs.
Below in the empty Hotel car park SAM is leaving on his bike. It is an old black contraption towing a strange trailer made from 2 old pram wheels on which, balanced precariously is an old staple box. Into this he has placed a small shovel. SAM smiles and waves. His GRANDMOTHER flutters her fingers indulgently and sips her tea.
As SAM leaves a POLICE car pulls into the car park. SAM looks over his shoulder.

Scene 21
EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET- MORNING.
SAM rides past a row of houses on a tight, small town street. [Close up of WOMAN IN PUB getting her mail, MAN IN PUB inspecting a wall on his rental, child riding bike into gateway, MINISTER pruning Roses and DRIVER washing his car.]

Scene 22
INT./ EXT. CAR-MORNING.
Two identical TWIN GIRLS are playing with Barbies in the front seat. Through the window we can see SAM ride past. Water floods across the windscreen.

Scene 23
EXT. SUBURBAN SECTION- MORNING.
The DRIVER is bent over washing his car. He stands up and glimpses SAM passing. He says something to his SEVENTH FORM SON.

Scene 24

EXT. BACK ROAD- MORNING.

SAM rides his bike with the trolley.

TEXT

In the long grass of the summer roads

angels watched

white winged children

in torn cloth

dead

somebody's daughter

dead

Scene 25

INT. SITTING ROOM- MORNING.

The GRANDMOTHER is comforting a crying HITCH-HIKER'S MOTHER.

Scene 26

EXT. PARK TOILET- LATE MORNING.

SAM parks his bike and walks into the toilets.

Scene 27

INT/EXT. CAR ON BY TOILETS- LATE MORNING.

A JOHN'S arm rests on the open window of his Ute. A pair of sun glasses he has in his fingers tap against the paint work. He gets out and follows SAM into the toilets.

Scene 28

EXT. SITTING ROOM- LATE MORNING.

The GRANDMOTHER pours tea for the HITCH-HIKER'S MOTHER.

Scene 29

INT. MIDDLE CUBICLE- LATE MORNING.

Through the wall a pen is poked with a note wrapped around it. SAM reads it, writes something on it, then pokes it back. He looks up at the ceiling for a moment then a \$20.00 note comes back through the hole. He stands up, pulls up his shorts and leaves the cubicle.

He quietly pushes open the door of the adjoining cubicle.

TEXT

cruise
wait
bona polone

as the note is being written

rentboy

in the final piece as he is waiting for the money and eventually leaving...

glory hole
beat
cottage

Scene 30
EXT. SUBURBAN SECTION- LATE MORNING.
The DRIVER pulls out of the drive while the TWINS holding Barbies, watch. The DRIVER'S WIFE walks out to stand beside them. Behind her, polishing a red 1970s Holden is their seventh form SON. The DRIVER'S WIFE turns and walks into the house.

Scene 31
INT. RIGHT CUBICLE/URINAL- LATE MORNING.
SAM is standing on the toilet seat with his hand against the wall. Though not explicit, it is obvious that the JOHN is giving him a blow job.

A MAN walks in and stands at the urinal.

The JOHN freezes and looks around. SAM remains still, looking bored.

Scene 32
deleted

Scene 33
EXT. BACK ROAD- MIDDAY.
An old, bleached sign decaying under lichen and summer heat stands at the entrance to the town dump. SAM opens the gate by picking the padlock with his flick knife, and then he wheels his bike and trailer through. He closes the gate. As he disappears down the track through the long grass, the DRIVER'S car

passes the gate. The DRIVER notices him, pulls up and backs quietly back onto the side of the road. He gets out of his car. SAM is unaware.

Scene 34 A
EXT. DUMP- MIDDAY.
deleted

Scene 34 B
EXT. DUMP- MIDDAY.
Sam wheels his bike up to the shed

Scene 35
EXT. FRONT OF DUMP BUILDING- MIDDAY.
Driver looks for Sam

Scene 36
deleted

Scene 37
INT. DUMP-BUILDING MIDDAY.
Sam sits in the gloom packing up strange objects he has found at the dump.

Scene 38
INT. DUMP BUILDING- MIDDAY.
The DRIVER moves between shadows.
The DRIVER moves again.
SAM stops, listens... looks around.
He bends to readjust the something he is working with then looks up. He hears something.
He sneaks down to hide under some machinery and watches the DRIVER as he comes around the corner and discovers the trolley.

TEXT

fag
I want the coat
and my fuckin' credit cards
you're dead meat!

The trailer is tipped over and the broken toys spill out into a puddle on the floor. There is a flurry of images of smashed doll's faces

Scene 39
INT. HOTEL SITTING-ROOM AFTERNOON.
The HITCH-HIKER'S MOTHER and the DRIVER'S WIFE are seated. The MOTHER stands as her HUSBAND and the POLICEMAN enter. The HUSBAND hands her the girl's dress. She turns it in her hands, noting that it is torn, then she lifts it to her face and cries.

Scene 40
Sam puts doll on the wall of his bedroom

Scene 41
INT. PUB- NIGHT.
A small group of locals is in the bar. DELWYN is cleaning tables. The GRANDMOTHER is behind the bar. The POLICEMAN slides the local paper across the bar at her. It reads LOCAL GIRL KILLED IN HIT AND RUN. She shakes her head in dismay.

Scene 42
delete

Scene 43
INT. PUB- NIGHT.
One of the POOL PLAYERS is talking to DELWYN. As she turns he makes a grope at her. She laughs and SAM enters. The DRIVER is standing with his son. He says something to THE MAN IN THE PUB beside him. The MAN IN THE PUB raises his eyebrow and a look of distaste registers on his face. SAM looks at the DRIVER.

Scene 44
INT. PUB- NIGHT.
FLASH SHOT.
The DRIVER is in a pointed bra and panties with a beer in his hand. He looks confused for a split second (as if a strange thought has struck him).

TEXT
slag
breeder

Scene 44C
INT. PUB- NIGHT.
SAM looks at him with sullen aggression then leaves.

Scene 45
INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR- NIGHT.
SAM walks down the corridor that leads between the guest rooms.

Scene 46
deleted

Scene 47
deleted

Scene 48
INT. EMPTY ROOM- EVENING.
Sam enters an empty room. The room is in a state of restoration. Wallpaper rolls and paint tins are stacked against the walls. Drop sheets shroud the furniture.
SAM picks up the coat, looks around nervously then leaves.

Scene 49
INT. HOTEL SITTING ROOM- NIGHT.
The GIRL'S FATHER is seated, staring out the window. The room is empty.

first shrine
Seated father, Policeman, Twins, Delwyn Sam as a child...

Scene 50
INT. ROAD- TIMELESS.
An empty road containing the grouping of SAM AS A CHILD with his MOTHER and his GRANDMOTHER. His eyes open and behind him the image of a road appears and gathers colour. The MOTHER begins to fade away and as she does...

TEXT FLICKER
Cancer
my mother died of

The GRANDMOTHER then fades away and SAM THE CHILD, stands alone.
SAM moves in front of him and SAM AS A CHILD takes the coat he is given turns, walks back down the road... and dissolves.

Scene 51
EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT- MORNING.
Generic.

Anchor Me fades in and drifts in and out through the shots.

Scene 52
delete

Scene 53
EXT. SCHOOL- MORNING.
SAM wheels his bike through the car park. STEVE, TONY, ANGELA and the DRIVER'S SON are standing around the Holden. The DRIVER'S SON says something to them and they look up at SAM with disgust.

Scene 54 A
INT. CLASSROOM- MORNING.
The ENGLISH TEACHER is talking while writing notes on the board. The CLASS is copying. SAM sits in the front row. At the back STEVE, ANGELA and RENEE are whispering to each other. RENEE glances up as SAM turns around to look at her.

SAM leans over his desk and with a wet finger tries to rub out the word faggot that has been scrawled on to the desk top.

TEXT
synchronize the words

anchor me

Scene 54 B
EXT. SCHOOL VERANDAH- MORNING.
ANGELA, RENEE and TWO OTHER GIRLS eat lunch and gossip. They look up as SAM passes.

words like some disease,
the calling of girls
gossip
pussy boy
asphalt

Scene 55, 56, 57 & 58
deleted

Scene 59
INT. BEDROOM- MORNING.
The DRIVER’S WIFE is picking up clothes scattered around their double bedroom. She lifts up the driver’s pants and shirt. She notices blood on the cuff.

Scene 60
Delete

Scene 61
INT. LOCKER BAY- EARLY AFTERNOON.
SAM goes to his locker and finds that the lock has been broken. He opens it. His books, pens, pencils and pocket knife have been sprayed with pink paint.

Scene 62
delete

Scene 63
INT. LOCKER BAY- EARLY AFTERNOON
SAM slams the locker door in an eruption of temper...

TEXT
shit

then storms out of frame.

Scene 64
EXT. SCHOOL CARPARK- EARLY AFTERNOON.
SAM pulls a pink paint smeared flick knife out of his pocket, looks back at the school then gouges a deep scratch along three panels of the driver’s son’s car.

Scene 65
FLASH SHOT. The car burns as a graphic as Sam glances back at it.

Scene 66
INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM- EARLY EVENING.
SAM is arranging the table for the evening meal. The table is set as a full silver service. The centerpiece construction is a row of decaying 1930s school girl dolls.

FLASH SHOT. Fifth form school girls gossiping in the exact pose.

TEXT
bitches
fish

His GRANDMOTHER comes in while he is putting the finishing touches to his creation and standing behind him, strokes his shoulder and kisses him on the head. For a moment he closes his eyes, drinking in the affection.

Scene 67
INT. DRIVER’S KITCHEN- EARLY EVENING.
The DRIVER is seated reading the newspaper. The DRIVER’S WIFE walks over to him with the shirt and asks about it.
He gives her an angry glare then puts down the paper.

TEXT
It’s not wine.
Do you think I’m bloody stupid?

second shrine
Scene 68
School.
Teacher, Driver’s son & Steve, Angela & Renee, Tony, Sam..

Scene 69
EXT. SCHOOL- MORNING.
Establishing shot. School morning. Kids walking.

Scene 70
INT. CHANGING ROOMS- MORNING.
STEVE and TONY are flicking each other with towels. They are in physed shorts. Three OTHER BOYS leave. SAM is seated in the corner and watches the situation. TONY advances on him and text flickers over the images.

TEXT
Shit.
Faggot.
Keyed his car
you little Ho.

The boys laugh. The DRIVER'S SON watches then beckons them to stop [with a glance].

MIKE registers disapproval and the 3 antagonists leave. SAM looks at MIKE and the older boy smiles.
MIKE, pulls his shirt over his head. There is a look between them that shows SAM'S cautious enquiry.

Scene 71, 72, 73, 74 & 75
delete

Scene 76
INT. PUB- AFTERNOON.
DELWYN is cleaning a tabletop. She is bending forwards and her dress is tight. MUZZA leans on the table she is cleaning. He looks at her. He grins and flicks some cigarette ash down onto the freshly cleaned surface. DELWYN wipes it away. Pretending not to notice he gives her a slow once over with his eyes and smiles again.

Scene 77
INT. LOCKER BAY- LUNCHTIME.
The DRIVER'S SON, STEVE and TONY are standing at their lockers. SAM walks down the corridor and as he passes them they step out in front of him.
The boys push SAM against the lockers. He falls. The DRIVER'S SON kicks him and STEVE and TONY join in. SAM huddles in slow motion while they assault him in real time. ANGELA and RENEE walk past in slow motion, glancing disinterestedly.
The ENGLISH TEACHER walks towards the fight. The three boys quickly leave. SAM pulls himself up. The teacher looks at him without emotion.
SAM walks past him down the corridor willing nobody to say anything.

Scene 78A
EXT. DUMP TRAMS- AFTERNOON.
Sam assembles broken doll in the dump then wheels his bike out holding the strange angel against the handlebars.

Scenes 79, 80 & 81
deleted

Scene 82 A
EXT. STREET- LATE AFTERNOON.
SAM rides along the street with the doll perched on his handle-
bars.
He passes houses where an ARAPUNI WOMAN and BABY in front of a
decayed noddy house watch him disapprovingly.

Scene 82 B
EXT. STREET- LATE AFTERNOON.
The last house has two POOL PLAYERS sitting outside on a ve-
randah, drinking beer. As SAM passes, one of the POOL PLAYERS
gives him the finger.

Scene 83
FLASH SHOT.
The POOL PLAYERS sit dressed in tutus on the sofa with cham-
pagne glasses.

TEXT
wanklers
smilegs

Scene 84
2 brown dolls turn against a time-lapse night sky...

Scene 85
INT. DINING ROOM- EARLY EVENING.
Gathered at the table are SAM, his GRANDMOTHER and the girl's
MOTHER and FATHER. The POLICEMAN has joined them. SAM'S cen-
terpiece is made of two strange, bronzed dolls holding photo-
graphs of barking dogs.
The POLICEMAN is talking.

TEXT

Synchronise the text

the shivering skin

to the lyrics, then follow with...

somebody out of town
we may never find him

Scene 86
INT. HOTEL- DUSK.
DRIVER finishes his beer.

TEXT
just some driver passing through

Scene 87
INT. DRIVER'S BEDROOM- DUSK.
The DRIVER'S WIFE lays out a black dress for herself.

Scene 88
delete

Scene 89
INT. PUB- NIGHT.
DELWYN picks up glasses. The DRIVER'S SON is drinking with the DRIVER, the POOL PLAYERS and MUZZA. MUZZA watches her.

Scene 90 A
EXT. RECEPTION BOOTH- NIGHT.
DELWYN reaches across the reception counter and takes two towels. There is a hot pools sign in view. SAM is serving. She smiles at him and jokes.

Scene 90 B
EXT. TREES- NIGHT.
DELWYN walks down through the trees. There she meets MUZZA and the two of them go down into the darkness.

Scene 91 A
EXT/INT. PUB- NIGHT.
The DRIVER'S SON and the POOL PLAYERS look out the window. The DRIVER says something to them and they laugh.

Scene 91 B
EXT. PUB- NIGHT.
The DRIVER'S SON and POOL PLAYERS leave the pub. The DRIVER watches them from the steps.

Scene 91 C
INT/EXT. RECEPTION-NIGHT
SAM peeps around the reception entrance and watches the boys go down through the trees.

Scene 92

delete

Scene 93 A

EXT. TREES- NIGHT.

The DRIVER'S SON and POOL PLAYERS are laughing and sneaking down through the trees.

Scene 93 B

EXT. HOT POOLS- NIGHT.

The DRIVER'S SON helps one of the POOL PLAYERS to scale up and look over the fence. The POOL PLAYER turns and laughs.

Scene 93 C

EXT. HOT POOLS- NIGHT.

The DRIVER'S SON and two POOL PLAYERS quietly open the gate and enter the hot pool.

Scene 94

INT. TIMELESS.

Rape scene to the sound of echoing water drops.

Scene 95 A

EXT. TREES- NIGHT.

SAM in short pyjamas walks carefully down the steps to the pool complex.

Scene 95 AB

EXT. HOT POOLS- NIGHT.

SAM carefully pushes the door, which is open. Water from an old shower drips intermittently. He finds DELWYN in the last cubicle, she is lying on the ground, her hair is wet and she appears unconscious. SAM kneels beside her and pulls her T-shirt down to cover the top of her legs, which are bruised and dirty. She scrambles forwards on her knees.

He sits still for a moment and looks at the shower almost crying.

It drips.

Scene 96

A drip of water. Its constant sound has preceded its appearance.

Scene 97
EXT. CARAVAN PADDOCK- NIGHT.
SAM follows DELWYN over to her small caravan. They are two tiny characters winding through an empty paddock DELWYN shuts him outside.

Scene 98 A
Fade up road sequence. The child appears out of the cloud on an open road. He is shirtless. SAM appears, takes the coat. The child turns, disappears while SAM turns and holds the coat up to his face.

Scene 98 B
deleted

Scene 99 A
deleted

Scene 99 B
EXT. CEMETERY- MORNING
A small crowd stands under large trees. The MINISTER reads. The DRIVER and his WIFE comfort the MOTHER and FATHER. The GRAND-MOTHER, DRIVER'S SON and POLICEMAN are all present. All are dressed in black.

TEXT
Text starts here, running along the image then continues through the image of Delwyn at her caravan and ends as SAM exits his room with the doll.

It was a small funeral
adrift with mourning

The camera cuts to the TWIN GIRLS.

the angels of his life

Shot of Delwyn at caravan and SAM soldering

and the wounded angels of others

Scene 102
EXT. CARAVAN STEPS- MIDDAY.
DELWYN sits on the steps of her caravan holding a soft toy.

Scene 100
deleted

Scene 101
INT. SAM’S BEDROOM- MIDDAY.
SAM carries the doll out of the room.

TEXT
I took the doll
torn dress
bloodied
and carried her out

Scene 103
delete

Scene 104
delete

Scene 105
EXT. HOTEL CARPARK- MIDDAY.
Four cars with their headlights on, pull in to view containing
the GRANDMOTHER, MOTHER and FATHER, DRIVER’S FAMILY, POLICEMAN
and MINISTER.
CU of mother grieving in a car.

Scene 106
Delete

Scene 106
INT. SAM’S BEDROOM- MIDDAY.
SAM puts on the driver’s coat and turns to go. A doll/angel
briefly fades up and down.

Scene 107
delete

Scene 108
delete

Scene 109
INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM- MIDDAY.
The MINISTER, POLICEMAN, GRANDMOTHER, MOTHER and FATHER of the dead girl and the DRIVER'S family are seated at the table. The scene is laid out like Andrea del Castagno's Last Supper. The center display features a single, black winged, soldered doll, now on impossibly long legs with her torn dress flickering in the breeze. SAM'S chair is empty.

SAM arrives and stands opposite the group. He is wearing only the coat and a pair of underpants. He pulls out of his pocket the driver's credit cards and tosses them onto the table. The camera flickers between text and fleeting glances of the narrative as it shows...
From the coat pocket SAM slowly pulls the piece of cloth from the dead girl's dress and lays it out carefully and dramatically in front of the hitchhiker's MOTHER.
The MOTHER turns and looks at the DRIVER and he bolts up from the table exposed.

TEXT

In the silence of my childhood
there were angels
flightless
black winged
rejected pieces of other people's lives.

angels didn't fly in this world
there were no catechisms
nor blessings of grace.
Just things bound by tradition and silence
... silence

Welby Ings c. 2003

dialogue list
[with slang and bogspeak translations]

boy

a short film by welby ings

In the silence of my childhood
there were angels

flightless
black winged

rejected pieces of other people’s lives

in this world there were no catechisms
nor blessings of grace
just things bound by tradition and silence
tradition and silence
silence.

fuck off

rentboy *young male prostitute*
trick *nameless male prostitute*
trade *attractive, experienced male prostitute*

In the long grass
of summer roads
angels watched
white winged children in torn cloth
dead
a mother’s daughter
dead

cruise *to visit a public toilet looking for sex*
wait *to spend a long time without making contact*
bona *good*

rentboy *young male prostitute*
gloryhole *a hole drilled through a wall for looking, passing money or notes.*
beat *a public toilet and surrounding environment where sex can be accessed*
cottage *an older term for a public toilet where sex can be accessed*

fag *abbreviation of faggot*
coat
credit cards
you're dead meat *threatening to kill or injure something worthless*

slag
breeder *an unsophisticated and sexually inhibited heterosexual*

Cancer
my mother died of.....

anchor me
words like some disease
the calling of girls
from asphalt steps
pussyboy *effeminate boy who offers sex to heterosexual males*
pussy boy

shit

bitches *spiteful young women*
fish *derogatory term for all females*

It's not wine
do you think I'm bloody stupid?

shit
faggot
keyed his car *to scratch more than one panel of a car with a key*
you little Ho *the word Ho means an unclean whore*

the shivering skin
somebody out of town
we may never find him
just some driver passing through

It was a small funeral
adrift with mourning
the angels of his life
and the wounded angels of others.
I took the doll
torn dress
bloodied
and carried her out.

In the silence of my childhood
there were angels

flightless
black winged

angels didn't fly in this world
there were no catechisms
no blessings of grace
just things bound by tradition and silence
silence
silence

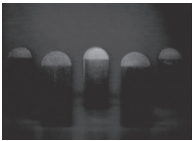
appendix five
DVD

*referenced music videos and television commercials,
excerpt from The Coopers (1997),
video: How Bizarre,
shrine experiments.*

The attached DVD contains the opening sequence from *The Coopers*, advertisements and music videos referenced in the exegesis, the video *How Bizarre*, and shrine experiments involved in the development of the short film boy. All these texts are referenced with an asterix* in the body of the exegesis.



⁽ⁱ⁾ Opening sequence from *The Coopers*
Ings, W. (Director designer and writer). (1997).
The Coopers. New Zealand: London: Manmade Films.



⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ **Komposition in Blau**
Fischinger, O. (Director and Producer). (1934).
Komposition in Blau. Fischinger Film Berlin.



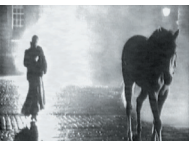
⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ **Do the Locomotion**
Director unknown. (1962). *Do the Locomotion*.
London: Huntley Archives.



^(iv) **Low Down Dog**
Director unknown. (circa 1940). *Low Down Dog*.
USA: Scopitone.



^(v) **Lady Jane**
Whitehead, P. (Director). (1966) *Lady Jane*.
UK: Production company unknown.



^(vi) **Vienna**
Mulcahy, R. (Director). (1980). *Vienna*.
UK: MGMM



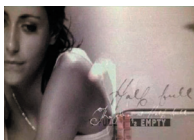
(vii) **Union of the Snake**
Milne, S. (Director). (1983). Union of the Snake. USA: Direct Productions Ltd.



(viii) **Jeremy**
Pellington, M. (Director). (1992, July). Jeremy. USA: Epic Records Inc.



(ix) **Xenical**
Bridge, M. (Director). (1999). Xenical. Auckland. The Sweetshop. Meares Taine.



(x) **The Glass is Half Full**
Bridge, M. (Director). (2002). The Glass is Half full: Cadbury. Auckland. The Sweetshop. Whybin Lawrence TBWA.



(xi) **Losing My Religion**
Singh, T. (Director). (1991). Losing My Religion. Version 1. USA: Warner Bros. Records, Inc.



(xii) **Lessons from Geese**
(Director Unknown). (1995). Lessons from Geese. Wellington: Saatchi & Saatchi.



(xiii) **Ribbons: Air New Zealand**
Rhulman, D. (Director). (2000) Ribbons: Air New Zealand. Saatchi & Saatchi.



(xiv) **Oh Father**
Fincher, D. (Director). (1989). Oh Father. USA: Propaganda Films.



(xv) **All I Want is You**
Avis, M. (Director). (1989, April). All I Want Is You. USA: Island Records Ltd.



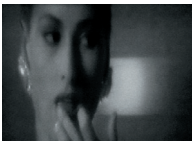
(xvi) **Da Funk**
Jonze, S. (Director). (1997). Da Funk. France: Satellite Virgin.



(xvii) **Do You Remember?** [above].
Yukich, J. (Director). (1990), Do You Remember?
UK: Hit and Run Music.



(xviii) **Cloudbusting**
Doyle, J. (Director). (1985). Cloudbusting.
UK: Picture Music International.



(xix) **Who is it?**
Fincher, D. (Director). (1991). Who Is It?
USA: Propaganda Films.



(xx) **No Son of Mine**
Yukich, J. (Director). (1991). No Son of Mine.
UK: Hit and Run Music.



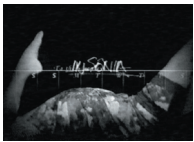
(xxi) **Like a Prayer**
Lambert, M. (Director). (1989). Like a Prayer.
USA: Sire Records.



(xxii) **Karma Police**
Glazer, J. (Director). (1997). Karma Police.
Academy Music Videos. Parlophone.



(xxiii) **Mimic**
Cooper, K. (Designer). (1997). *Mimic*. Title sequence. Imaginary Forces. Miramax Dimension.



(xxiv) **Epoca**
Revista C'Pacas. (Director). (2001). *EPOCA*. Brazil: Revista C'Pacas.



(xxv) **Papa was a Rolling Stone/ Killer**
Nispel, M. (Director). (1993). *Killer/ Papa was a Rolling Stone*. USA: Epic/Sony.



(xxvi) **Everybody Hurts**
Scott, J. (Director). (1993) *Everybody Hurts*. USA: Black Dog Films.



(xxvii) **Foggie Bummer**
Barnbrook, J. (Director). (1995). *Foggie Bummer*. Tony Kaye films. Faulds Advertising.



(xxviii) **True Romance**
Barnbrook, J. (Director). (1995). *True Romance*. Tony Kaye films. Faulds Advertising.



(xxix) **No Surprises**
Gee, G. (Director). (1997). *No Surprises*. Kudos Productions. Parlophone.



(xxx) **The Riot of Spring**
Cheeseman, L. (Director). (1998). *The Riot of Spring*. Wellington. Saatchi & Saatchi.



(xxxi) **Shrine experiments**
Ings, W. (Designer). (2001-4). Overview of Shrine experiments. Auckland and Arapuni.



(xxxii) **How Bizarre**
Ings, W. (Director). (2004). *How Bizarre*. Auckland.

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