

**LIMINAL SITES: MATERIALISING AN  
EVERYDAY**

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## Abstract

Title: Liminal Sites: Materialising An Everyday

This visual art research practice examined the daily actions undertaken in a personal domestic everyday with a view to understanding its cultural significance. Across a period of 549 days intentional, mindful observation, and reflective record making were undertaken. Through the chronological accretion of minutiae and the trace of what is normally unseen or invisible, the patterns of time in the everyday were investigated and evaluated as value markers. The role of reinterpreted preservation or meaning maintenance to create, support and reflect individual identity and social position was examined and chronicled. To further explore the materialisation of this everyday as sites of understanding, differing durational practices using coding, diaristic recording, and textile-based media and processes were employed in the creation of symbolic representations. The domestic everyday was revealed as a site of active choice, liminal transferral processes and the flow of essences amongst the three different spheres, the personal, the domestic and the public.

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### Attestation of Authorship

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

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## INTRODUCTION

The world in which an act or deed actually proceeds... is a unique world that is experienced concretely: it is a world that is seen, heard, touched, and thought, a world permeated in its entirety with the emotional-volitional tones of the affirmed validity of values. The unitary uniqueness of this world [is] guaranteed for actuality by the acknowledgment of my unique participation in that world, by my non-alibi in it. [I] come upon this world, in as much as I come forth or issue from within myself in my performed act or deed of seeing, of thinking, of practical doing.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*. Trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin: Texas University Press, 1993), 56-7. Quoted in Michael E Gardiner, "Bakhtin's Prosaic Imagination," In *Critiques of Everyday Life* (Taylor & Francis Books, 2000), 52.



The visual art research practice informing this exegesis was located in my personal domestic everyday. Now in my early 60's, my life has passed through many stages including long-term, long distance migration and repatriation. My home is the research project's primary locus, my place of residence with my retired husband and my animals, set in a small town in rural New Zealand. Our possessions and valuables are kept here, and this is where I travel from and return to. At this site we have constructed and actively maintain a family-centred life that involves most aspects of our life, as it houses my studio space. However, through connections to a public world by community infrastructures and social networks, my domestic everyday is not entirely contained in this location; I have dependences on this public world for the supply of nearly everything that sustains my living. This interconnectedness with the public realm is very robust, and an increasingly active transfer zone through digital penetration.

Felski states "everyday life simply is, indisputably."<sup>2</sup> We all must have an everyday in our existence and in this society it is considered most common

to have a domestic base, a home, for our everyday. The intention of my research path was to gain an understanding, through my actions in my personal context, of why creating and maintaining a domestic everyday is of such cultural significance. My research method was grounded in direct on-going observation, which led to a reflective recording practice, and finally resolved into concrete materialisations; the art works that investigated these ideas. The observational practice focused mindfully on my actions and engagements as sites of choice, revealing the meanings of these choices as liminal processes that were continuously shaping and being shaped by my quotidian. In this research context I considered the liminality of the everyday as the process whereby things that were barely perceptible or largely unconscious were made apparent, as Dados<sup>3</sup> describes, through a change in state, for example, from thought to action. These changes occur across the transfer thresholds that exist between the spheres of the domestic everyday, informing the fluid reality of the mundane.

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2. Rita Felski, "The Invention of Everyday Life," *New Formations - Cool Moves* 39 (2000): 15, accessed March 8, 2011, <http://www.newformations.co.uk/subscribers/nf39/nf39Felski.pdf>

3. Nour Dados, "Liminal Transformations: Folding the Surface of the Photograph," *Conserveries mémorielles. Revue transdisciplinaire de jeunes chercheurs [En ligne]* 7, (2010): 5, accessed December 23, 2014, <http://cm.revues.org/447>

The pervasive nature of the everyday by the very extent of its reach, dictated the need for restrictive parameters for this research. Only those parts of my everyday over which I had exercised some level of choice were observed. Time was spent daily on the biological necessities of life, their practice was less negotiable, more inexorable, and they lie outside the scope of this research.

I have used the three terms, the domestic everyday, the quotidian, and the mundane interchangeably throughout the exegesis with no evaluative connotations placed on the terms.

This document focuses on the ideas and processes that informed the studio practices, which have been durational, symbolic and diaristic in nature. Chapter One begins by explaining how this research practice was positioned to embed it in the mundane, followed by discussion of the critical theories about the domestic everyday that informed my exploration into its nature; firstly an analysis of the actual fabric of the quotidian being studied, secondly a theoretical investigation of the processes shaping this fabric, followed by the underpinning theories of value, concluding with the liminality that shapes the domestic everyday.

Chapter Two explores the theoretical and contextual frameworks informing

the research methodologies using five different aspects of consideration: a sense-making structure for unravelling the everyday by consideration of its attributes; the use of time as an art making material; the theories informing the practice of "seeing"; the constructs underpinning observational dairistic recording of the mundane; and finally, considerations informing the materialisation of the thresholds of the domestic everyday.

Chapter Three lays out the specifics of the materialisation practices in the research's chronological sequence. I begin by detailing the maintenance of *The Daily Log* as the site of the base data collection that underpinned the other materialisations. Following this, each expression is detailed using sequential imagery with accompanying descriptive explanations. Firstly the diaristic book form of *The Codex Series*, secondly the spatialised chronology of *Her Room* and finally the specific considerations underpinning the symbolic woven fabrication of *Days*.

At appropriate places throughout this document I have run a parallel discussion of some contextualising art practices, in many instances drawing on the artists' own words, that describe informing aspects of their practice that I considered in my own practice.

## CHAPTER 1. A CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF A DOMESTIC EVERYDAY

Everyday life is synonymous with the habitual, the ordinary, the mundane, yet it is also strangely elusive, that which resists our understanding and escapes our grasp.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Felski, "The Invention of Everyday Life," 15.

## 1. 1. Aligning Research Practice And The Praxis Of The Everyday

"Like the blurred speck at the edge of one's vision that disappears when looked at directly, the everyday ceases to be everyday when it is subject to critical scrutiny."<sup>2</sup>

An overriding consideration as I sought to know the praxis of my domestic everyday was minimising the chance of this loss of the "real" everyday happening through its close scrutiny. To that end practices were established that could normalise the research into a part of the performance of my quotidian. To design these it was necessary to firstly establish what the "everyday" was. Crane-Seeber wrote that "what makes an occurrence or practice 'everyday' is the extent to which it is ... ostensibly natural."<sup>3</sup> This was the initial point from which to differentiate what is everyday from the "not everyday". The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "natural" as "having an essential relation with someone...following from the nature of the one in question".<sup>4</sup>

My intuition indicated that what came naturally in my life had often become an habituated part of my life, done regularly and repeatedly. Accepting Heidegger's belief that, "habitual human activity reveals things

as meaningful,"<sup>5</sup> I considered an understanding of a domestic everyday could be contained in these natural and habituated acts. Consequently, my research projects were based in habitual performance, requiring daily attention at consistent times and in specific sequences that were established as the "rule" of the practice. The durationally consistent performance of these practices as the research sites, "naturalised" them and enabled the patterns and nuances of the everyday to become apparent as they informed the rule-based practices. This holistic blending of practice and praxis made visible what would otherwise pass unobserved in the plethora of actions, producing a greater depth of "seeing", revealing the liminality that was shaping the domestic everyday. Thoughts and decision from the personal sphere ("inscape") were liminally transferred through sites of choice (actions), into the material existence of the domestic realm, drawing into that domain what was selected as contributive from the public sphere.

2. Ibid., 15.

3. Jesse Crane-Seeber, "Everyday Counterinsurgency," *International Political Sociology* 5, no. 4 (2011): 450, accessed March 21, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-5687.2011.00145.2.x>

4. Retrieved from: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/natural> Furthermore, Habit is defined in The Merriam-Webster as "a usual way of behaving: something that a person does often in a regular and repeated way."

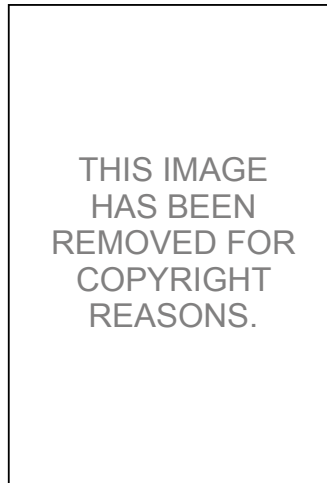
5. Iris Marion Young, "House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme," in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, edited by Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington, (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 254.

## 1. 2. An Actual Domestic Everyday

"The ordinary and the everyday are not final results. They offer no safe haven. The everyday is not a state, but a *task*."<sup>6</sup>

This section begins by contesting the philosophical political theorist, Hannah Arendt's definitions of labour, work and action, to explain the positioning of my domestic choices from a woman's political view. This is followed by reviewing the analysis I undertook into the everyday domestic actions, to learn exactly what they were.

Arendt differentiated three types of activities. Firstly Labour, concerned with biological necessities insignificantly producing only Life; secondly Work, creating things that are merely for the enduring structure of human experience. These two categories contain everyday domestic life, which therefore had no enduring significance. Arendt gave significance to the third type of activity, Action which, she maintained, defined a person as an individual through power of social contribution, creating something "new".<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 1. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, "Washing, Tracks Maintenance: Outside (detail)," 1973.**

From a performance at the Wadsworth Athenium, Hartford, Connecticut. Source: "AMT Visiting Artists Lecture Series," Art Haps, accessed May 4, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/qg4lzgs>

Ukeles made a defiant challenge to Arendt's construct with her *Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969* and her body of Maintenance Art works. She advocated that maintaining the species was as essential as maintaining anything else. Ukeles illustrated through her practice that the "new" and precious was only kept viable by maintenance actions, thereby elevating the importance of those actions. She stated in her "Manifesto":

"Maintenance: keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight."<sup>1</sup>

1. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, "Manifesto for Maintenance Art, 1969" Arnolfini Blog, September, 2013, accessed January 14, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/nu4yfug>

6. Toril Moi, "What He Said: All the Time: Language, Metaphysics, and the Everyday in "The Wild Duck"," *New Literary History* 33, no. 4 (2002): 662, accessed May 27, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20057750>

7. This was Arendt's opinion of the value of Labour. From: Hannah Arendt *The Human Condition* 1958. 88. Quoted in Paul Voice. "Labour, Work, Action." in *Hannah Arendt: Key Concepts*, edited by Patrick Hayden, 36 -51. (Durham, England: Acumen, 2014), 37.

This individual was realised in “the political (public)” realm through “sites of appearance”, where others saw the appearance. As I came to understand the nature of work and labour in the domestic everyday, I became aware that these were the sites of action. In my particular research context the everyday was composed of multitudinous examples of choice, evidence of individuation and social contribution, the performance of which was mainly witnessed by the informing social group. Therefore this domestic everyday is a site of action, a “site of appearance” to use Arendt’s construct,<sup>8</sup> as well as being a site of participatory democracy, with continuous negotiations between the participants. It is also where the “new” is routinely created.<sup>9</sup>

The starting point for my research was *The Daily Log*, a diary record in note form that recorded over 70 items that were part of my normal mundane,

which I used for analysis of my daily engagements and actions. Each of the items recorded were conscious sites of choice or “appearance” I made as a regular and repeated use of my time. Although for analysis these categories are delineated, in performance the actions cross categories.<sup>10</sup> Domestic maintenance work such as vacuuming the floors was categorised as housework but, mindful observation revealed the performance was informed by the desire to maintain a safe, secure living space “facilitating life activities”. In this sense, the domestic maintenance work was a liminal process, materialising underlying value structures. Table 1.1. below illustrates the generalised understanding developed from my analysis.

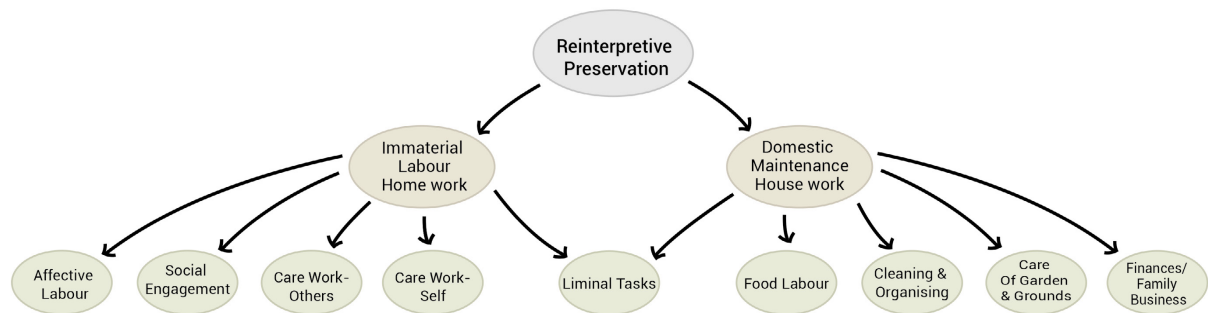
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8. Voice, “Labour, Work, Action,” 40.

9. As discussed above on Page 16.

10. Appendix I contains a detailed tabulated list that illustrates the specific tasks and the categories they fall into. This demonstrates the weighting of time spent and the holistic interconnectedness of action in the domestic everyday. This appendix also shows how the tasks “fit” into more than one category.

Table 1. An Informal Conceptual Structure For Analysing The Tasks Of A Domestic Everyday



“Reinterpretive preservation” or “meaning maintenance” are terms the philosopher Iris Marion Young used to define what she considered the essential role of the domestic everyday. I used them as the overarching criteria for my logged actions. For Young, “homemaking exists in the activities of endowing things with living meaning, arranging them in space in order to facilitate the life activities of those to whom they belong, and preserving them, along with their meaning.”<sup>11</sup> She believed it was through these acts of reinterpretive preservation that the home provided the structure to support and maintain individual lives.

Domestic maintenance is the most visible manifestation of choice, tangible actions, evidencing what gets “done” and how it is prioritised in the time management of each day. It is self-explanatory. The complex intangible actions of immaterial labour <sup>12</sup> are supportive engagements on intellectual and emotional levels, including communications, that build and maintain the home. These maintain the fabric of the social purposes of the domestic everyday. My informal analysis of logged tasks showed a weighting to the immaterial and revealed the liminal nature of the majority of the actions, the fluidity and fundamentally holistic structure of a domestic everyday.

11. Young, Iris Marion. 1997. “Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy and Policy.” (New Jersey: Princeton University Press): 151. Quoted in Joanne Hollows, “Domestic Cultures,” In *Issues in Cultural and Media Studies*, ed. Stewart Allan (Glasgow, Scotland: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 2008), 74.

12. Such labour can be informed by empathies, sympathies, telepathy, intuition, instincts, tolerance, understanding, patience and imagination. See Appendix I for more description of what I have classified as Immaterial Labour.

### 1. 3. Maintenance Of A Domestic Everyday

"Heller maintains 'that the sphere of everyday life remains the essential 'value-horizon' for human beings, and it is here where human ethical and intersubjective relations must be forged.'" <sup>13</sup>

As stated, my analysis of logged tasks indicated that in my domestic everyday the focus was on the immaterial labour, resonating with Heller's belief that this is the underpinning essence of the everyday. To understand this conceptually I drew principally on the works of the philosophers Parker, Bakhtin, Weir and Young as explained in this section.

Dewitt Parker believes that our values are created to satisfy, as naturally as possible the dominant desire of both the body and the mind. This is "a desire for union, for what we call mutual understanding and agreement, whereby our sense of isolation is overcome."<sup>14</sup> Consequentially, he believes, our values are centred in social networks, seeking acceptance

to enable the satisfaction of this desire. Parker also maintains our everyday is determined by this social drive, because there is "no personal apart from the social."<sup>15</sup> Parker's belief is that all we can truly "know" are concrete experiences, which are the social engagements of personalities that hold the values essential for our existence, stating, "every concrete experience is itself a value, positive or negative."<sup>16</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin agrees with this, believing that:

"the molten lava of events' is crucial ... because this is where the unique character of our everyday actions and deeds, and indeed our very selfhood, is constituted. It is the paramount reality where 'we create, cognize, contemplate, live our lives and die - the world in which the acts of our activity are objectified and the world in which these acts actually proceed and are actually accomplished once and only once.'"<sup>17</sup>

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13. Michael E Gardiner, "Agnes Heller: Rationality, Ethics and Everyday Life," in *Critiques of Everyday Life* (Taylor & Francis Books, 2000), 129.

14. Dewitt H Parker, *The Philosophy of Value* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957), 19, accessed July 14, 2014, <http://www.catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001388341>

15. Dewitt H Parker, "Value and Existence," *Ethics. An international journal of social, political and legal philosophy* XLVIII, no. 4 (1938): 479, accessed July 16, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2989076>

16. Ibid., 486.

17. Bakhtin, "Toward a Philosophy of the Act," 2. Quoted in Gardiner, "Bakhtin's Prosaic Imagination," 47.



Culturally, it is considered important that we have our own identity that is socially accepted. It is widely maintained<sup>18</sup> that we can only achieve this through the support of others in a social network. Both Young and Bakhtin<sup>19</sup> consider “the self” to be a constantly forming entity that is always dynamically striving for meaning-making and value attribution in its surrounding social context. For Young the home expresses some “uniquely human values that can be explored through the meaning-making activity ... in domestic work.”<sup>20</sup>



**Figure 2. May, Victoria. “Perfect Daughter,” 2001.**

Organza, human teeth, canvas headblock, steel stand. Source: “Fiberscene,” Artists: Victoria May, accessed June 8, 2015, [http://www.fiberscene.com/artists/v\\_may.html](http://www.fiberscene.com/artists/v_may.html)

May deals with social shaping of values of the individual in their search for acceptance. She states:

“An individual may develop a strong set of convictions, fundamentally altering the way he or she functions in the world. Though such constructs initially exist in a purely mental realm, because of the energy invested in maintaining the beliefs, to the individual they become concrete. My interest was in translating such ultimately insubstantial beliefs into actual artifacts.”<sup>2</sup>

2. “Artists: Victoria May,” Fiberscene, accessed June 8, 2015, [http://www.fiberscene.com/artists/v\\_may.html](http://www.fiberscene.com/artists/v_may.html)

18. Parker, Bakhtin, Weir and Young all take this stance. Weir notes she and Young depart on how this is expressed: “(I.M.Young) argues for ... an ‘individual subjectivity of the person, where the subject is understood as fluid, partial, shifting’, but she adds that this subjectivity exists ‘in relations of reciprocal support with others’. (Young 1997a, 141) ... I want to argue ... for a conception of identity as relational because it is constituted through both relations of power and relations of mutuality and love. They are intertwined, but neither cancels out the other. Neither can be reduced to the other. Nor do they exist only in radical opposition, or oscillation.” Allison Weir, “Home and Identity: In Memory of Iris Marion Young,” *Hypatia* 23, no. 3 (2008): 10 & 12, accessed November 8, 2014, <https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hypatia/v023/23.3.bellon.html>

19. Gardiner, “Bakhtin’s Prosaic Imagination,” 49.

20. Young, “House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme,” in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 253.

## 1. 4. The Liminality Of The Domestic Everyday

"The everyday is what we are first of all, and most often: at work, at leisure, awake, asleep, in the street, in private existence. The everyday, then, is ourselves, ordinarily."<sup>21</sup>

There are three spheres, domains or realms<sup>22</sup> in the domestic everyday, the personal, the domestic (private) and the public (worldly, political).<sup>23</sup> These are not discrete from each other but are parts of domestic everyday life that have different informing influences. They engage with each other holistically. My research practice revealed actions and engagements, as the sites of choice, producing liminal transfers through the boundaries of these realms, the centre of which was the home; the locus of the domestic realm.

These transfers resulted in the threshold synthesis of something new, which Gami describes as a "supple carrier of both the inside and the

outside."<sup>24</sup> The home acts as this threshold for synthesis, receiving from both the inside (personal realm) and the outside (public realm). In my research context the home operated in this sense as a "site of appearances" where, as previously explained<sup>25</sup> each act is unique, its' evidence "new", a value restatement.

The personal sphere of the domestic everyday is that of each individual life involved in that everyday. As I have only been able to consider my own personal sphere, this has been the authorial stance of the entire research practice.<sup>26</sup>

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21. Maurice Blanchot and Claire Hanson, "Everyday Speech," *Yale French Studies*, No 73, (1987): 12, accessed August 24, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2930194>

22. Gardiner, "Bakhtin's Prosaic Imagination." 51.

23. In this context I am using this concept to describe contributing areas or aspects that cumulatively create the domestic everyday.

24. Hriday Gami, "Of the House, the City, the Earth and the Universe: The Ota as a Threshold Space," (2015). 1, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/qztgkd7>

25. Please see section 1.2.

26. This consideration has entirely informed the personal basis of the research. It is beyond the scope of this research to unravel all the autobiographical complexities that form a life or how these inform the actions of the everyday.

The domestic realm centres in the home, which functions as both a place, and a space. Home as place is a dwelling, a property, which is constrained by physical materiality but in the domestic everyday the home is also a space, "a practiced place".<sup>27</sup> Home as place, containing the material objects of life is a stabilising construct of layers of significance and meaning that have been emplaced over time. The objects in the home have affordances<sup>28</sup> attached to them beyond the practicalities of biological existence, including identity markers. They can also be the "contaminated"<sup>29</sup> objects that retain memory.



Figure 3. Andrea Zittel, "A Homestead Unit with Rough Furniture," 2001.

Installation Piece. Source: "Homestead Unit With Rough Furniture," A Z, accessed November 12, 2014, <http://www.zittel.org/works>

"Zittel's art practice explores the concept of social behaviour being made up of many tiny 'interventions' that accumulate to create the whole. Activity is viewed as a type of performance, which means that it can be changed by shifting any of the components of the act. Small changes can create big changes." <sup>3</sup> In this work she creates a dwelling that is of fluid configuration, adjustable to changing purposes, aesthetic but functional, an example of the concept of the home as a space. The use of this installation piece responds to the explicit actions it is housing at the time

3. Alexis Lloyd, "Performing the Mundane - Interventions in Everyday Life," 2007, accessed April 26, 2011, [http://a.parsons.edu/~lloya465/art/everyday\\_life.pdf](http://a.parsons.edu/~lloya465/art/everyday_life.pdf)

27. Michel De Certeau makes the distinction between space and place and this informed my use of this distinction. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (London, England: University of California Press, 1984), 115-130.

28. Henny Coolen and Janine Meesters explain that "The affordances" refers to "the meanings attached to the house, as well as ... the process of homemaking." Henny Coolen and Janine Meesters, "Editorial Special Issue: House, Home, Dwelling," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 27, no. 1 (2012):1-2, accessed May 7, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10901-011-9247-4>

29. Grayson describes how objects become "contaminated". "Irreplaceable special possessions are indices because they have a factual, spatial connection with the special events and people they represent ....The indexicality of irreplaceable possessions allows them to serve a factual or evidentiary function for their owners ....They verify important moments of personal history." Possessions can become "contaminated" due to a sympathetic 'contagion' as memory vessels. Contaminated possessions are perceived as ..."being uniquely able to 'carry' certain memories - or to make these memories more -'real'- because of a connection between the possession and the real world, a connection that is neither unreal nor imaginary." Kent Grayson and David Shulman, "Indexicality and the Verification Function of Irreplaceable Possessions: A Semiotic Analysis," *Journal of Consumer Research* 27, no. June (2000): 19, accessed November 6, 2014, <http://www.kentgrayson.com/Grayson%20Archive/indexicalityjcr.pdf>

Home's physical existence creates a threshold between the public sphere and the domestic sphere called privacy. Describing the home as a space acknowledges its porosity and its actively maintained nature. This is what Felski alludes to when she states "my definition (of home) is intentionally minimal; it includes any often visited place that is the object of cathexis, that in its familiarity becomes a symbolic extension and confirmation of the self."<sup>30</sup> It is through the function of the home as a space that the degree of stability is determined by the choices of liminal renewal processes, what Silverstone describes as the investment of meaning in space.<sup>31</sup> Every person within the domestic sphere has differing priorities and makes differing choices. The home is the site where resident individuals have reached some level of consensus that there is value in using time jointly to achieve shared objectives, not implying that these will always be completely aligned.



**Figure 4. Do-Ho Suh, "Home within Home," 2013.**

Installation Work. Source: "Do-Ho Suh's "Home within Home," Juxtapose: Art & Culture Magazine, accessed July 17, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/qa7qdtz>

"Do Ho Suh's practice, highlight[s] the porous boundary between public and private space as well as notions of global identity, space, nomadism, memory, and displacement. Transparency, or the oscillation between opacity and visibility, appears throughout much of the artist's work. ... Suh's poetic works ask viewers to consider the definition of home: what it means, how it feels to have a home or be without, and the way in which we carry our past, present, and future dwellings around with us for the entirety of our lives."<sup>4</sup> I consider this work is a liminal materialisation of the home as a space.

4. Heather Pesanti, "Do-Ho Suh. September 20, 2014 - January 11, 2015," The Contemporary Austin, accessed June 17, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/oxr8evp>

30. Felski, "The invention of Everyday Life," 25.

31. Silverstone, Roger. "Television and Everyday Life." (London: Routledge, 1994), 28. Quoted in Ibid., 25.

The home is sustained within these active and shifting thresholds where the choices of individuals move with time as differing priorities surface and submerge.

With the digital dissolution of many traditional domestic barriers, engagement on an everyday, natural basis with the public sphere has acquired an increased ease and significance. Miller observes that our self-construction in contemporary society "is increasingly through relations with cultural forms in the arena of consumption."<sup>32</sup> Gardiner observes that Bakhtin believes "through practical action we can bridge the gap between our 'small scrap of space and time' and that of the 'large spatial and temporal whole'<sup>33</sup> or ... between the 'micro' sphere of personal life and intimate interaction and the more public realm of politics and culture."<sup>34</sup>



**Figure 5. Doris Salcedo, "Untitled," 1998.**

Wood, cement and metal 82 1/2 x 47 1/2 x 39 1/2 in. Source: "Doris Salcedo," Artvehicle 23/Review, accessed July 4, 2015, <http://www.artvehicle.com/events/82>

Salcedo's work utilizes the notion of the affordances of domestic objects to make emotively charged political statements.

"Doris Salcedo makes sculptures and installations that function as political and mental archaeology, using domestic materials charged with significance and suffused with meanings accumulated over years of use in everyday life."<sup>5</sup>

5. "Doris Salcedo," White Cube, accessed July 4, 2015, [http://whitecube.com/artists/doris\\_salcedo/](http://whitecube.com/artists/doris_salcedo/)

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32. Daniel Miller, ed. *Material Cultures. Why Some Things Matter* (London, England: UCL Press Limited, 1998), 11.

33. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, 51. Quoted in Gardiner, "Bakhtin's Prosaic Imagination," 51.

34. *Ibid.*, 51.

## CHAPTER 2. CRITICAL CONTEXTS AND THEORIES INFORMING THE PRACTICE METHODS

The everyday has this essential trait: it allows no hold. It escapes. It belongs to insignificance, and the insignificance is without truth, without reality, without secret, but perhaps also the site of all possible signification. The everyday escapes.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Maurice Blanchot and Claire Hanson, "Everyday Speech," *Yale French Studies*, No 73, (1987): 14, accessed August 24, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2930194>

## 2. 1. Design Of The Practice Methods

“The quotidian is what is humble and solid, what is taken for granted...though it occupies and preoccupies it is practically untellable: and it is the ethics underlying routine and the aesthetics of familiar settings.”<sup>2</sup>

The research was designed to capture the everyday, to prevent its escape in order to come to a deeper understanding of its nature. Different strategies were used to do this, grounded in the pragmatic note form of *The Daily Log*.

As one of these strategies, my research initially used Felski's construct of the three key facets of the everyday: space, time, and modality as a tool to focus on the understanding of the attributes of the quotidian.<sup>3</sup> In these attributes I sought criteria for the materialisation of the “untellable”. I accumulated lists of these attributes from theoretical readings: from these lists, attributes that were referred to often and that aligned with my own initial observations were selected as guideline qualities to inform the selection and designing of the practice research.<sup>4</sup>

Spatial attributes of the quotidian that were used in the materialisations have been covered in detail in Section 1.4. These included the qualities inherent in “home”, such as its role as a site of self creation and meaning maintenance, its liminal borders and its fluid responsiveness.

To reflect the temporal attributes of the domestic everyday, time was used as a material and a process, and this is covered in more detail in Section 2.2. Adoption of a chronological structure enabled the accretion of the sequences, patterns, consequences and influences within the everyday, nuancing evidence of its praxis. Time's passage was given a perceptible existence, traced in space and chronologically bound.

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2. Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, ed. Arthur Asa Berger, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch, 2nd ed., Classics in Communication and Mass Culture Series (London, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1971), 24.

3. Felski, *The Invention of Everyday Life*, 18.

4. See Appendix II for more discussion of this.

Modal attributes of habituation, routine praxis, sequential systems and familiarity, were chosen as informing attributes for the materialisation practices. The modal attribute of inattentiveness was deliberately subverted for this research through the practices of “seeing” and “recording”. My research was designed to be sequential; the on-going daily practice of “seeing” informing the subsequent habituated practices of recording and ritualised synthesis. In this way the form of the research mode aligned with that of the research subject - the routine, repetitive, tasks that operated within the domestic everyday. “[The] routine evokes a sense of order and certainty in keeping on. ... Being in a daily routine is an embodied experience of being in ... the day rather than a conceptual activity.”<sup>5</sup> This resonant use of time and behaviour as research methods grounded my practices, enabling deeper connection and perception, a more embodied experience of my quotidian.

This research practice was designed as living, reflective artistic practices, focused on discovering the liminal nature and the liminal practices of the three realms (personal, domestic, public) of the domestic everyday. The attributes of the three key facets (time, space, mode) were used to shape the physical and aesthetic nature of the materialisation practices.

The concepts and contexts informing these materialisation practices are discussed in this chapter beginning with the primary consideration; the use of time as an “artistic material and tool.”<sup>6</sup> Time is considered to be the key attribute of the everyday. The following section considers the practice of “seeing” as informed by the need to closely observe what was normally unconsidered, in a way that revealed the “essence” of the domestic everyday. In Section 2.3 the conceptual framework underpinning the habituated recording practices is analysed. The final section contains a description of the refabricating of the everyday in a metaphorical materialisation of liminality.

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5. Valerie Wright-St Clair and Elizabeth Smythe, “Being Occupied in the Everyday,” in *Transactional Perspectives on Occupation*, eds. Malcolm Cutchin and Virginia Dickie (Auckland, NZ: AUT University; Springer, 2012), Chaps. 8 & 4, accessed November 19, 2014, <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/2320>

6. Adrian Heathfield and Tehching Hsieh, *Out of Now. The Life Works of Tehching Hsieh* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Live Art Development Agency and the MIT Press, 2009), 12.



## 2. 2. Time As An Art-Making Material

"Time", writes Fabian,<sup>7</sup> is a carrier of significance, a form through which we define the content of relations between the Self and the Other."

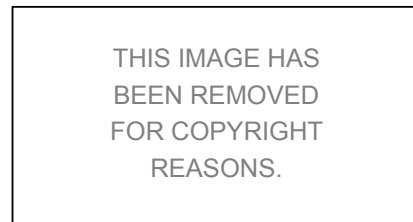
Time is the over-arching method and concept informing each body of practical work in this research project. Time is the one thing we all have, albeit in differing quantities and qualities. As living creatures we are fundamentally controlled by our biological organic nature, configured by the rhythms of the earth in diurnal and seasonal cycles;<sup>8</sup> furthermore we naturally experience linear time in our passage from birth to death. This twin structure of time ensures nothing can ever be exactly reiterated, every repetition is unique, new.

In the 1980's and 90's artist Tehching Hsieh undertook a series of extended durational practices ruled by a very prescribed set of parameters, contriving a life to be lived for the duration of each piece. Describing Hsieh's year-long performances, Heathfield says they created "evidence of being-in-duration, as a life-course of becoming."<sup>9</sup>

7. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University, 1983). ix. Quoted in Felski, "The Invention of Everyday Life," 19.

8. Eva Hoffman describes the inescapable organic essence of this time as "... we tick on biological clocks and, as in other species, these work on the principle of oscillation and are adjusted to the diurnal cycle. On the most basic level, time comes into existence within our bodies, and we experience its tempos physiologically: through the rhythms of our heartbeat, or the alternations of appetite and satiation, or the pace at which we walk". Eva Hoffman, *Time* (New York, N.Y.: Picador, 2009), 25.

9. Heathfield and Hsieh, *Out of Now. The Life Work of Tehching Hsieh*, 13.



**Figure 6. Tehching Hsieh, "One Year Performance" 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece) (detail), 1980–81.**

16 mm film frames documenting the performance. Source: Kristiano Ang, "Tehching Hsieh's 'Time Clock Piece' on Show in Sydney," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 22, 2014, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/nwoznw9>

Heathfield states:

"Hsieh's conception and enactment of yearlong works...brought his work into direct correspondence with the socially and culturally accepted measures of a life. In this context the durational measure carries a symbolic weight, which ties into ritualistic nomination and common human accounting. Hsieh often mentions that this choice of a year was one that attuned the work to the earth's orbit of the sun, reminding us of the reliance of the cultural measure on a cosmic order."<sup>6</sup>

6. Heathfield, Adrian and Tehching Hsieh, *Out of Now. The Life Works of Tehching Hsieh* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Live Art Development Agency and the MIT Press, 2009), 19.

My research practice did not contrive a life to record but rather it took the iterative time that structures much of the quotidian and used it as both a subject and a practice material. I was actively engaged in the practices of this research between March 2014 and September 2015. It was designed and undertaken as an *in situ* living practice. Chronologically ordered processes operated on a cyclical daily basis within this period, aligning as much as possible with the processes of my living in order to be sustainable for such an extended duration. They were ritualised, designed for performance at specific times of the day, each enactment being a specific spatial manifestation of a measured time period. In this way time produced the accretional longitudinal recording of a "life-course of becoming."

This method engaged the very obdurate nature of temporality to generate the materialisation. The cycle of the day always occurred and triggered my rules for the cycle of the recording, incrementally creating a timescape. Holland describes a timescape as "a temporal vista that brings into focus a micro-temporal view of the world, and can in this way ... give insight into the dynamic unfolding of real lives. Temporality, its different meanings and the way the different temporalities intersect ...,"<sup>10</sup> is the essence of the everyday. Through the durational practices, evidence accrued of the variability of the timescapes. No two records are the same, the mundane is a continuously shifting, morphing fluidly responsive phenomenon.

10. Janet Holland, "Timescapes: Living a Qualitative Longitudinal Study," *Forum Qualitativ Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [Online] 12, no. 3 (2011): 1, accessed February 19, 2015, [http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs110392\\_1](http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs110392_1)



Figure 7. Janice Lawry, "Diary," July 5, 2003.

Artist's Journal Page. Various media and drawing. Source: Owen Edwards, "Drawn From Life. Artist Janice Lawry's illustrated diaries record her history - and ours," *The Smithsonian Magazine*, accessed April 13, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/oqtvoj8>

In an interview conducted with Lowry she describes her extended diaristic practice as "reportage" and then went on to say:

"Originally, I saw them as books for my sons, so they could see my progress through life. Now they're 126 chapters of a memoir."<sup>7</sup>

Lowry's diaristic practice began at 11 years of age and continued until her death at 63

7. Owen Edwards, "Drawn from Life" *The Smithsonian Magazine*, November 2009. accessed April 13, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/oqtvoj8>

The players in the domestic sphere experience unique timescapes that, by democratic negotiation processes, intersect and synthesise the domestic timescape. The normal use of time in the domestic everyday is responsive to a ranking of priorities: what is most prized or urgent gets time invested in it before things not held to be as important. This use of time operates as a sensory threshold making visible the private terrains of the individuals, evidencing their own constructs of social value.

The decisions by the individuals in the domestic sphere to engage with the public world through digital platforms has altered time in the domestic, deconstructing many constraints. For example, it is no longer necessary to physically travel to the bank at set hours, banking can be done at any time through the internet banking structures. At the site of this research project time was the most scarce and prized asset. This domestic timescape demonstrated desire to accommodate many differing actions daily by dividing the day into time-bites that were marked by the timer of the omnipotent cell phone, making allocations for each undertaking. The seasonally informed lifestyle, based around the garden and the animals, meant routines of maintenance demanded scheduling but also the flexibility to adjust for the unanticipated.



**Figure 8. Germaine Koh, "Knitwork: ongoing since 1992," 1998.**

Unravelled used garments, with text and photographic documentation, approx. 2 m x increasing length.  
Source: "Knitwork," Germaine Koh, accessed August 22, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/qyza424>

Koh discusses her durational practice "Knitwork"

"Begun in February 1992, Knitwork is a life-long piece made by my unraveling used garments and re-knitting the yarn into a single continuously growing object. As it records the ongoing passage of time and effort, the work becomes a monument to the artifacts that comprise it, to mundane activity, and to everyday labour. As a visual record of the passage of time, the details of the piece incidentally register variations in my process, and through these one can retrace a history of decisions."<sup>8</sup> This work has created a timescape such as I am referring to with my own diaristic practices.

8. Germaine Koh, "Knitwork," accessed August 22, 2014.  
[http://germainekoh.com/ma/projects\\_mainpage.cfm?pg=projects](http://germainekoh.com/ma/projects_mainpage.cfm?pg=projects)

## 2. 3. The Practice Of "Seeing"<sup>11</sup>

Felski states that the everyday

is often equated with a habitual, distracted, mode of perception; life conducted in ... the natural attitude. We act without being fully cognizant of what we are doing. ... Everyday life thus epitomizes the quintessential quality of taken-for-grantedness; it speaks to aspects of our behavior that seem to take place without our conscious awareness or assent *and to mundane events that unfold imperceptibly just below our field of vision*.<sup>12</sup>

My research needed to actively and consciously "see" the domestic everyday it was studying; there was an imperative to have awareness, a focused engagement. In order to learn something new from the familiar some device was needed that could generate a shift in perception. This required a two staged approach. Firstly stasis was created by the recording in *The Daily Log*. Once the passage of time was captured I had a platform from which to "see" as I created *The Codex Series* and *Her Room*.

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Figure 9. Susan Collis, "The oyster's our world," 2004.

Wooden stepladder, mother of pearl, shell, coral, freshwater pearl, cultured pearls, white opal, diamond. 81.3 x 38 x 58 cm. Source: "Susan Collis," Seventeen, accessed June 11, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/q3v4ws5>

Collis uses subtle defamiliarisation as a device for challenging "seeing" as it is normally undertaken. She replaces apparent flaws and marks of time with precious materials in a way that is imperceptible without intense observation.

"Everyday objects are presented etched, splattered and stained with marks of work, wear and tear ... Collis is interested in the shift of perception that takes place upon discovery that they are, in fact, careful, intentional acts, and that the materials used are traditionally valued for their financial or decorative properties. A tired stepladder covered with paint drips from years of use has been simulated by the meticulous inlaying of diamonds, pearls, opals and other prized materials."<sup>9</sup>

9. "Susan Collis," Seventeen, accessed June 11, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/q3v4ws5>

11. "To See" in this context means, "to perceive the meaning or importance of," Defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary accessed June 21 2015 from: <http://tinyurl.com/76cstrn>

12. Felski, "Everyday Life - Introduction," *New Literary History* 33, no. 4 (2002): 608, accessed March 19, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20057747> 608. [Italics mine]

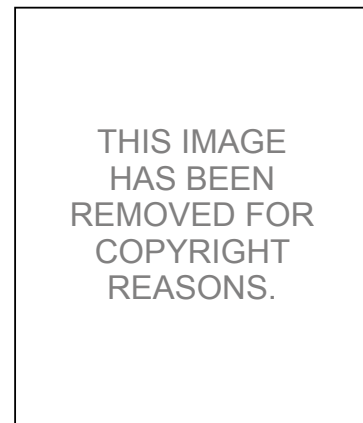
This “seeing” had to reach deeper than the natural distracted mode of perception in order to analyse and understand what was “unfolding imperceptibly just below [my] field of vision”. This “seeing” needed to be not only of the actions that comprised the domestic everyday but also of the intellectual and emotional landscape shaping and being shaped by the repetitive and sustained practices of them through time: into my “inscape”. LeFebvre recognised the importance of this engagement claiming participation was needed to extend the experience of looking into that of “seeing”.<sup>13</sup> Multimedia artist Gusmão, speaking about her observational practice recording street life opines:

Observing is a form of intervention . . . . Looking is a way of touching. If the manner of looking is honest, the image [recording] will reveal the essence of subjects, objects, and the situation surrounding them.<sup>14</sup>

Gusmão describes her engagement as an “honest”, intervention. In my research practice my acts of “seeing” became the active intervention registering my “honest” insights, captured directly through my diaristic recordings. Across an extended passage of time by mindfully observing my quotidian I was able to trace the layers of meanings of the “felt density” in the engagements, their essence. I came to “see” how and why this domestic everyday was perpetuated, creating a different perspective on my familiar territory.

13. Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, trans. John Moore, Translated ed., vol. 1 (London: 1947), 237.

14. Gabriela Gusmão, “Looking Is a Way of Touching,” *The Journal of Modern Craft*, 2, no. 2 (2009): 207 & 209, accessed May 26, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967809X463114> [My parentheses].



**Figure 10. Gabriela Gusmão, “Solid Residual Furniture: Seats, Compressed Wood and Cardboard on the Sand, Rio,” 2002.**

Photograph. Line Drawing. Source: Gabriela Gusmão, “Looking is a Way of Touching,” *The Journal of Modern Craft*, 2, no. 2 (2009): 201-209, accessed May 26, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967809X463114>

Gusmão’s extended observational recording practice was located in the public sphere of urban street life based on the material objects of the street dwellers. She used multiple recording processes including taking “notes, or ‘simultaneous transcription’... producing results that were also “new, unique, and surprising.”<sup>10</sup> Gusmão describes the resulting shifts in her perspectives of her subject matter that deconstructed her existing ideas and enabled her to gain new insights.

10. Gabriela Gusmão, “Looking is a Way of Touching,” *The Journal of Modern Craft*, 2, no. 2 (2009): 201-209, accessed May 26, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967809X463114>

## 2. 4. The Practices Of Diaristic Recording: *The Codex Series* and *Her Room*

"We become who we are through acts of repetition."<sup>15</sup>

There were two important aspects to my diary practices, *The Codex Series* and *Her Room*; they each produced differently coded daily records for 365 days and they were sites designed to make visible the normally imperceptible actualities revealed by the practice of "seeing". Preventing the escape of the mundane by recording actions (especially immaterial actions) is an act of concretisation inescapably filtered through the recorder.<sup>16</sup> Filters designed to protect privacy and intimacy while enabling honesty, facilitated the exposure of "essence" rather than an explicitly autobiographical revelation. In both my sequential dated diaristic practices filtering was achieved by the use of symbolic coding developing a practice of defamiliarisation and distancing. Gardiner describes this use of defamiliarisation and processes of estrangement as a way to view the everyday from the aspect of its complexities and nuances, generating new awareness and perceptions about the real nature of the everyday.<sup>17</sup>

15. Felski, "The Invention of Everyday Life," 21.

16. It is pragmatically impossible to record absolutely every detail of everyday domestic life, consequentially multiple layers of the selection or filtering process occur.

17. These processes include those of Bakhtin, Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, Heller, and Lefebvre among others. See Michael E Gardiner, "Everyday Knowledge," *Theory, Culture and Society* 23, no. 205 (2006): 207, accessed March 15, 2014, <http://tcs.sagepub.com/content/23/2-3/205>

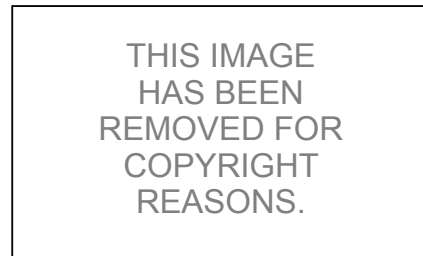


Figure 11. Steven McPherson, "Diaries."

Collaged various materials. Source: Steve McPherson, "Diary/Journals", Graph Paper Press, accessed July 26, 2014, <http://www.stevenmcpherson.co.uk/2009/11/23/diaryjournals/>

The description of the selective creation process McPherson uses in his diaries references the creation of stasis, memory maintenance, and the authorial selection process inherent in diaristic practice.

"For over 15 years Steven McPherson has made and used books in his art works. His diaries, journals and notebooks are a growing wunderkammer library that ordinarily describe events of the everyday and uniquely exist as part book, part sculpture. Each double page is a space to be filled ... posited and edited until relationships are formed, meaning merged and accounts described. This process ... combines to form the bloated tome of personal identifiable and un-identifiable histories."<sup>11</sup>

11. Steve McPherson, "Diary/Journals", Graph Paper Press, accessed July 26, 2014, [www.stevenmcpherson.co.uk](http://www.stevenmcpherson.co.uk)

This empowered a more intense, layered and intimate recording of my domestic everyday as I appraised the “seeing”, responding to it and reflecting on it through the translation into coded materiality. Gusfield states that “all symbolic analysis...identifies different levels of meanings, so that the activities are not understood only at the ostensible, conventional, and manifest level.” He describes the symbolic as the vehicle for “latent meanings, not immediately apparent but perceptible,”<sup>18</sup> which are beyond the rational.



**Figure 12. Dieter Roth, “Diaries,” 1967.**

Assorted media, book form. Source: Alastair Sooke, “Dieter Roth: Diaries, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, review, *Telegraph*, August 6, 2012, accessed July 28, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/nkd4pft>

Dieter Roth had one of the most complex extensive diaristic practices publicly recorded, grounded in the belief that the ephemera of the everyday were art and as such were worthy of recording and monumentalising. He used the diaries as sites of stasis.

“Roth’s diaries provide an extraordinary insight into his personal life and craft and exhibit how, unbeknownst to many, the two were inextricably linked.

The extensive journals contain everything from to-do lists and calendars to profound reflections poems, creative ponderings and work plans. They communicate perfectly the striking connection between Roth’s life and his art, as well as his belief in the significance of authorship and creative self-presentation.”<sup>12</sup>

12. Beeson, Emily, “Camden Arts Centre’s Dieter Roth’s Diaries Offers Insight into an Elusive Artist’s Life”, *Culture24*, accessed July 28, 2014, <http://www.culture24.org.uk/art/art434107>.

18. Joseph Gusfield and James Michalowicz, “Secular Symbolism: Studies of Ritual Ceremony, and the Symbolic Order in Modern Life,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 10 (1984) 420, accessed April 17, 2014, <http://www.dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.10.080184.002221>

The first of my records that used symbolic fabrication material for the description of tasks were the collage diaries, *The Codex Series*. Materials contaminated with private meanings and memories<sup>19</sup> were symbolically assigned to each action and engagement of my quotidian. The use of these coded materials expressed psychic meaning beyond what a vocabulary could convey, free from any cultural burdens of meanings associated with language. The physicality of the diaries and the method used for construction enabled me to explore my inscape, reflecting on my private emotive and intuitive responses to the practical reality of the domestic realm. This was reflection at a visceral level, made manifest in an optical and tactile form - a liminal act recording other liminal acts.

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19. This is further explained in Appendix IV.



**Figure 13. Karen Nielsen-Fried, "Place of Mind Series - Remainder of Days,"**

Assorted Collage materials, 824 x 547. Source: "Place of Mind," Karen Nielsen-Fried, accessed July 12, 2015, [http://www.karennielsenfried.com/Place\\_of\\_Mind.html](http://www.karennielsenfried.com/Place_of_Mind.html)

"Image-making is my way of examining, synthesizing, and making a visual record of non-verbal responses to the complex experience of being. I want my work to lead to a consideration of the profound experience of beauty and mystery in the context of impermanence and the passage of time."<sup>13</sup>

13. "Place of Mind," Karen Nielsen-Fried, accessed July 12, 2015, [http://www.karennielsenfried.com/Place\\_of\\_Mind.html](http://www.karennielsenfried.com/Place_of_Mind.html)



The second of my symbolically coded diary practices was *Her Room*, which used the code of language and a distortional substrate for defamiliarisation. The symbolic coding contained in our words, our language, is culturally constructed. Alongside this there is a further coding of language that arises from the connectedness within the domestic sphere.<sup>20</sup>

The defamiliarising in the second symbolic recording practice was achieved by using a re-contextualised substrate to hold reflective linguistic observations. By using a porous substrate<sup>21</sup> that accommodated the written trace in a continuous pathway both across and down its surface, the site was formed for intellectual evaluation of what I was “seeing” enabling an even deeper “seeing”. In the safety provided by the obfuscation inherent in this recording process, the site existed to record ideas and beliefs from the deepest parts of my cultural conditioning and personal memory experiences; to bring them into focus; to “see” my personal site of action through its surface of habituated familiarity. This record made a public space for my safely veiled private trace, a liminal site at which I could uncover the tacitly and intuitively held essences; how my values were informing my days.

20. Our daily language is naturally coded and highly symbolic within the specific domestic context. Simple phrases carry burdens of meaning that would not be intelligible outside the generating context. For example, in this research context “have you done the ducks?” references a combined sets of actions around the feeding and housing of the duck flock. ( See Appendix III) This symbolic language is part of the ritualistic nature of this domestic everyday.

21. The substrate was silk gauze, 140 cm wide and 3.0 metres long.



Figure 14. Ann Hamilton, “bounden,” 1997.

Materials: Hand stitched organza, wood embroidery frames, chairs, wall tearing water. Source: “bounden,” Anne Hamilton Studio, accessed June 2, 2015, <http://www.annhamiltonstudio.com/projects/bounden.html>

Hamilton uses “time as process and material” and in the way she places her language by her hand it forms the

“tactile and metaphorical centre of her installation. To enter their liminality is to be drawn equally into the sensory and linguistic capacities of comprehension that construct our faculties of memory, reason and imagination.”<sup>14</sup>

In her text selections for this installation she explored the liminal space between the objective voice and the subjective voice. In writing *Her Room* my subjective “seeing” was transcribed from my “objective” log record, forming the fabric of a memory object

14. “bounden”, Ann Hamilton Studio, accessed June 2, 2015, <http://www.annhamiltonstudio.com/projects/bounden.html>

## 2. 5. Giving Form

“In everyday life the person...shapes his world (his immediate environment) and in this way he shapes himself.” (1984a:6).<sup>22</sup>

The domestic everyday is formed by selective engagements with the physical and social landscapes comprising the public sphere. We are located in a place, a physical landscape that has been shaped by the culture that contains us in that place, and which we form by our presence in it. As Tilden observes the “land becomes landscape once humans have touched it - once it contains and embodies our stories.”<sup>23</sup> The diary practices of *The Codex Series* and *Her Room* were sites of “seeing”, direct recording: bringing the “inscape” into the public, making what was intrinsically invisible, visible: but they also evidenced the taking of what was on the outside (public) and making it intimate, personal, domestic, re-formed. The concretisation in these diaries revealed this process of shaping and being shaped by the non-domestic, evidencing how much porosity was operating with the public sphere primarily through technological engagements. These engagements range widely and include such things as using road networks, telephones, the internet, and even supermarkets. Traditionally the public realm was considered

the site of technology whereas the domestic realm was without this emphasis; my observations established this was no longer the case. The way these engagements happen reciprocally informs the nature of the public sphere - the physical and cultural landscapes. It is a symbiotic interaction. The observation of the extent of this interaction brought forth the need to develop a metaphorical expression that materialised these active processes forming the new domestic and personal landscapes in the technological liminality between the quotidian and the public.

The choice to use a handwoven expression was made as this uses a technological process that has been absorbed into the domestic realm. Hand weaving has been assigned symbolic domestic significance through a long cultural heritage.<sup>24</sup> As a method it aligns neatly both with many of the attributes of the domestic everyday and the nature of liminal process.

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22. Gardiner, “Agnes Heller: Rationality, Ethics and Everyday Life,” 133.

23. Norma Tilden, “Stratigraphies: Writing a Suspect Terrain,” *Biography* 25, no. 1 (2002): 25, accessed December 9, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bio.2002.0014>

24. The Greek Myth of Penelope and Odysseus; the biblical references for example Proverbs 31:13, 22, 24. King James Version.

Weaving is action, making new, metaphorically resonant with the everyday praxis of responsive active selection from material of the public sphere to contribute to the shape and nature of the domestic everyday. Weaving creates a fusion, representing the in-between “space” described by Gami<sup>25</sup> that generates “new” expressions of daily life, new stages of “self”.<sup>26</sup> Following a series of trials, selections of socially symbolic materials were woven with other materials specific to my domestic arena to create *Days*.

The engagement of my personal sphere<sup>27</sup> as the active agent of selection and construction aligned with the value filtering that informed the nature and content of these transfers in the everyday. The discarded materials that were used as weft included reclaimed electronic cables, product packaging and the local daily newspaper. These metaphorically represented different parts of the public sphere that were then selectively combined to make the “new” of the domestic and private realms.

25. See page 21.

26. See Section 1.2 for Arendt’s constructs of new and action

27. This was my tacit knowledge and expertise as a weaver with an established handweaving practice.



**Figure 15. Tatiana Blass, “Penelope,” 2011.**

Carpet, loom and wool and chenille yarn, dimensions variable. Morumbi’s Chapel. Source: “Penelope,” Tatiana Blass, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://www.tatianablass.com.br/obras/66>

Blass uses the culturally sedimented symbolisms of weaving in this work to make a rich cultural statement about the place of the church in the structure of the society.

“The work consists of a 14-meter long red carpet extending from the chapel entrance to the main altar, where its end is attached to a hand loom equipped with foot pedal, thus giving the impression that the carpet weaving is under way. On the other side of the loom, tangled yarns are stretched out to pass through holes in the wattle-and-daub wall and reach the outside area. The red yarn takes over the greenery of the museum garden, covering the lawn and climbing shrubs and trees. In this process, it creates an ambiguous movement of construction and de-construction.”<sup>15</sup>

15. “Penelope,” Tatiana Blass, accessed March 27, 2014, <http://www.tatianablass.com.br/obras/66>

### CHAPTER 3. MATERIALISING THE LIMINAL EVERYDAY

To contemplate something as art is to remove it, at least temporarily, from the pragmatic needs and demands of the quotidian.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Felski. "The Invention of Everyday Life," 17.

### 3. 1. Work One: *The Daily Log* (549 Day Duration. Begun March 2014, ended September 2015)

As I began this research I had assumptions about what occupied my every day. I was always busy getting through all the actions and engagements that needed my attention. The list of jobs just ran through my head and were ticked off (or not) as the day progressed.

My first research priority was to establish exactly what did happen in my domestic mundane everyday life. I undertook a methodical, pragmatic record in a commercial diary. This record travelled with me and, as actions and engagements were performed through the day, they were recorded in a cryptic shorthand before they got overlooked in the busy-ness, capturing what normally escaped focused recall.<sup>2</sup> Through this base recording I was made aware that my observational skills were superficial and unengaged. Initially I was not even remembering how my time passed and was certainly not “seeing” its passage. This “log” held the made-in-real-time record from which I subsequently drew the content of my “seeing” and reflective recording practices. This record captured the illusive ephemeral everyday that sometimes left very little trace.

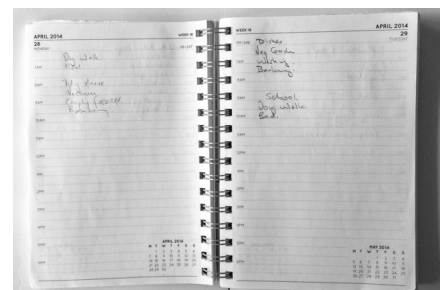
Figure 16. *The Daily Log*.

The made-in-real-time record that captured the actions and engagements in my domestic everyday that informed the rest of the research practice.

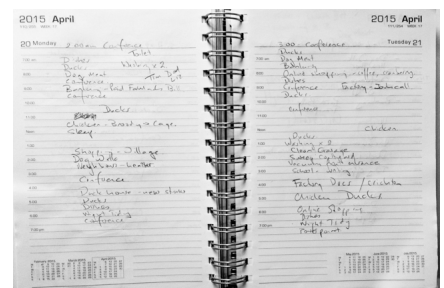
This was a quick record to ensure that time was not absorbed in generating it in order to reduce its impact on the timescape. It needed to be efficient and cumulative. Its use was necessarily habituated to underpin the research project.

The record served as an aide-memoire but it also evidenced the outcome of my “seeing” practice becoming increasingly habituated, and of progressively refined skill. Sherman “regards habituation as the development of ‘increasingly fine powers of discernment’ in our ‘perceptual, affective and deliberative capabilities’.”<sup>16</sup>

16. Sherman 1999, 232-233  
Quoted in Diana Hsieh, “The Habits of Aristotle” (2002) 6, accessed May 04, 2015 from: [www.philosophyinaction.com/docs/thoa.pdf](http://www.philosophyinaction.com/docs/thoa.pdf)



A



B

2. These notations reflect the coded nature of everyday domestic language. See footnote 20 on p. 36.

### 3. 2. Work Two: *The Codex Series* (365 Days)

"The diary allows (the creator) to impart stasis to the flow of events."<sup>3</sup>

*The Daily Log* imparted a stasis to my mundane, from which the twelve handmade books in *The Codex Series* developed as a site for "seeing" the "felt density of aesthetic experience."<sup>4</sup>

Bakhtin states that lived events have "a sensuous and tangible nature. ... (An) irrepressible complexity and ambiguity ... marks the everyday world." He maintains using conventional transcription systems to record the everyday "inevitably suppresses the 'eventness', or sensory particularity, of embodied social existence."<sup>5</sup> To translate the over 70 different actions captured in the pages of *The Daily Log* I developed the material coding method as explained in Section 2.4.<sup>6</sup> Each of the diaries in *The Codex Series* contain the days of a calendar month, each page of the diary is two faced - the folio rectum is the morning (a.m) and the folio versum is the afternoon and evening (p.m). The liminal synthesis process

transcribed the feelings behind the exact iteration of an event (action); sedimented collage code materials empowered a visceral, somatic and haptic response to the nuances of my actions. Molesworth quotes Roland Barthes' observation that "collages are not decorative, they do not juxtapose, they conglomerate ... their truth is etymological, they take literally the collé, the glue at the origin of their name: what they produce is the glutinous, alimentary past."<sup>7</sup>

Each of these diaries is a site of reinterpreted preservation or meaning maintenance. I considered the use of the book form to symbolically represent the "home" containing the evidences of the life passage recorded in the daily pages. The covers are created by processes symbolically parallel to many of my actions in the domestic everyday.

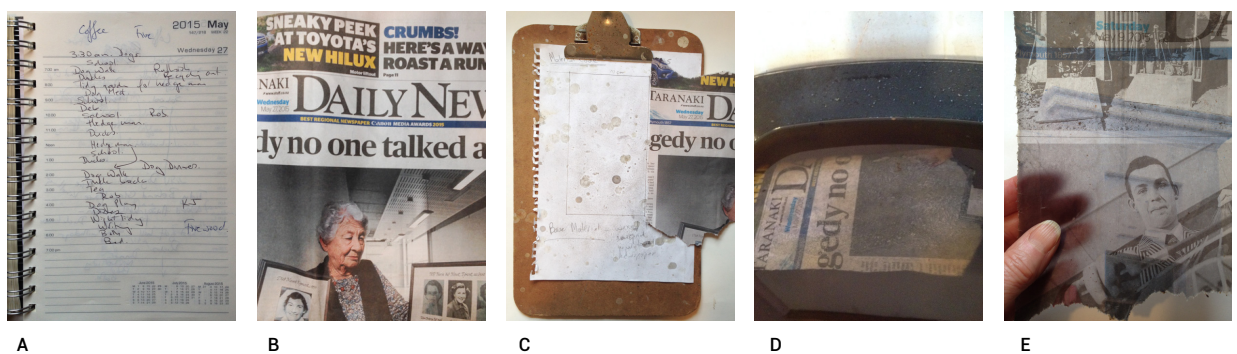
3. Marleen Barr, "Deborah Norris Logan, Feminist Criticism, and Identity Theory: Interpreting a Woman's Diary without the Danger of Separatism," *Biography* 8, no. 1 (1985): 16, accessed August 5, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bio.2010.0500> [My parentheses]

4. Rita Felski, "Everyday Aesthetics," *Minnesota Review* 71-72, Winter/spring (2009): 179, accessed February 12, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/00265667-2009-71-72-171>

5. Gardiner, "Bakhtin's Prosaic Imagination," 48.

6. There are two expanded explanations of these coded tasks in Appendix III and Appendix IV

7. Roland Barthes, "The Responsibility of Forms," trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill & Wang, 1985). Quoted in Helen Molesworth, "Before Bed," October 63, Winter 1993 (1993): 81-82, accessed Nov. 11, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/778865>



**Figure 17. The Codex Series. Developing the Base Media of the Daily Pages for the Collage Process.**

These diaries were designed as symbolic records of a domestic everyday. The processes used for this materialisation were selected because of their symbolic evoking of attributes of the domestic everyday. These informing resonances are explained through the sequential image series of the making. The processes used are all accretional, slow, imbedded in the passage of "natural" time and carry the trace of the maker's hand.

A. *The Daily Log* - base record of the days' ephemeral passages. These jottings are the evidence of the individual as seen in their actions.

B. Front Page of Taranaki Daily news - selected to locate this domestic everyday in the specific surrounding cultural and public terrain and timescape. This provided the chronological structure to anchor the year long record in a culturally understandable format.

C. Date Portion of Front Page - torn approximately to template to reflect how the numbers of hours spent awake was not fixed but rather reflected what had to be attended to in the 24hr period.

D. Newspaper Section in Molten Wax - wax mixture contains both paraffin and beeswax symbolic of the pragmatic and the valuable. This process symbolises the liminal filtering and synthesis that is continuously occurring in the domestic everyday actions of value.

E. The Waxed Page Cooled - the wax penetrates the paper completely resulting in a visual liminality rendering both surfaces simultaneously visible. This also transforms the soft flexible nature of the paper into a more brittle and rigid media. Whatever is transferred into the domestic realm by liminal process is always changed in the transfer.

**Figure 18. *The Codex Series*. Tools and Coding.**

A Portion of the code pages - code materials attached. This is one of several working sheets of code instructions developed to translate the daily Log into the daily pages of *The Codex Series*.

The Tjanting used to apply the liquid hot wax which bonds the materials to the base page creating the collage record. This bond is a fusion but even so it remains brittle and resonates with the fragility of the domestic which needs care and attention to endure.



A



B

**Figure 19. *The Codex Series*. A Day's Page.**

A. One Day - all the actions and engagements until midday, (rectum)

B. Same Day -all the actions and engagements from midday until midnight, (versum)



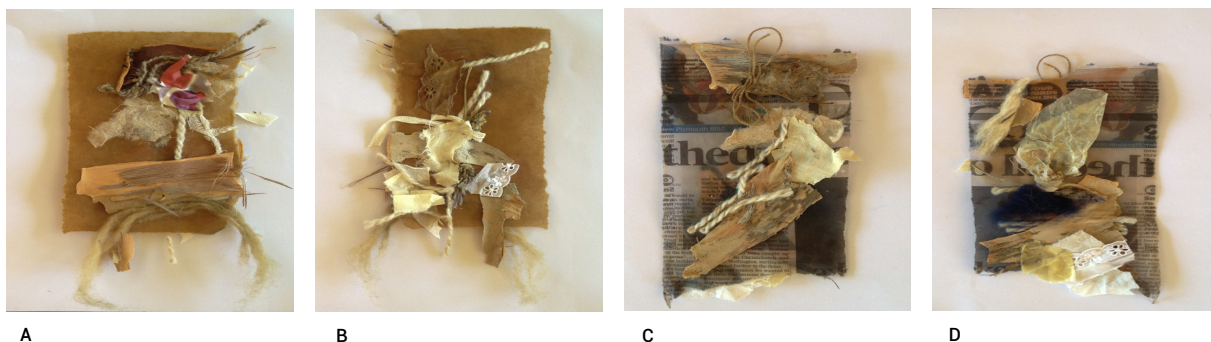


Figure 20. *The Codex Series*. Explanation of The Coding on Two Daily Pages.

This particular day is a Sunday and there is no newspaper delivered on Sundays. I used papers that had a seasonal resonance to create the base for the collage.

**A. Folio Rectum. The morning.**

Layered bark - school work ( 2 long sessions)  
Dark woollen yarn - dog walk  
Handmade flax paper - three dogs ( 1 fragment each) on walk  
Muslin strands - loads of laundry  
Hand dyed multicoloured silk - handwashing delicate clothes  
Eco-dyed fine sliver - watering the garden

**B. Folio Versum . The afternoon and evening**

Stained anglaise - lunchtime dishes  
Natural woollen yarn - care of ducklings  
Silk knitted ribbon - dog playing  
Lavender flower - working in the flower garden  
Layered bark - school work (2 sessions)  
Paper towel - night tidy  
Calico - making the bed  
White broderie anglaise - night kitchen tidy and dishes.

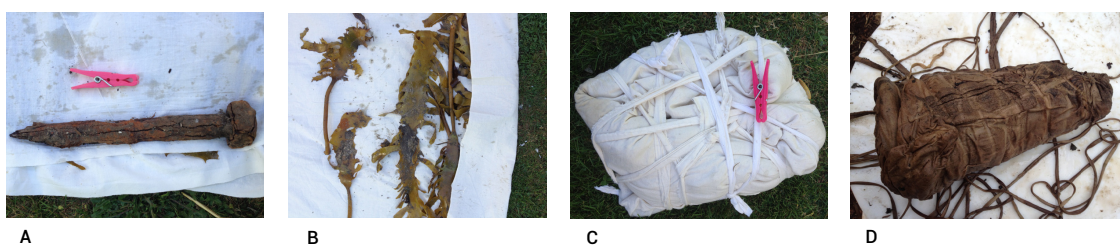
The following is a day the newspaper is delivered.

**C. Folio Rectum. The morning.**

Layered bark - school work ( 2 long sessions)  
Dark woollen yarn - dog walk  
Handmade flax paper - three dogs ( 1 fragment each) on walk  
Linen fabric - family financial business  
Natural woollen yarn - care of ducklings

**D. Folio Versum . The afternoon and evening**

Eco-dyed silk sliver - cleaning the toilet  
Natural woollen yarn - care of ducklings  
Blue wool sliver - care of sheep-  
Lavender flower - working in the flower garden  
Layered bark - school work (2 sessions)  
Paper towel - night tidy  
Calico - making the bed  
White broderie anglaise - night kitchen tidy and dishes.  
Waxed blood stained tissue paper - time with husband



**Figure 21. *The Codex Series*. Eco-dying The Fabrics to be used for The Covers and Spines. I**

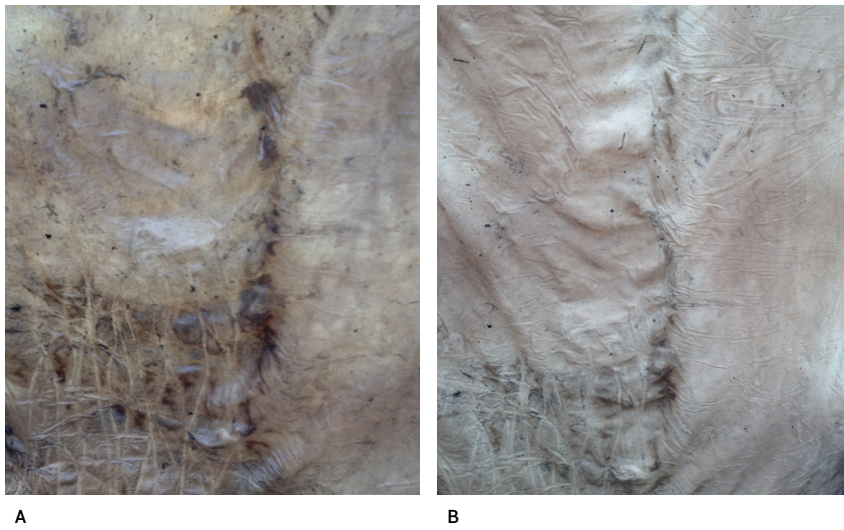
Eco-dying and printing is a slow, direct chemical transferral whereby a trace is created of the objects and plants that are incorporated into the bundles as the external dye solution penetrates into the structure of the fabric. Each layer in the bundle has different components and these cause subtly differing chemical reactions creating the prints. It is a complex liminal transfer process evoking the reinterpretive preservation of the domestic everyday. These fabrics become "contaminated" objects through this process, holding transformed memory of the elements that produced them. This process was used because of this symbolic resonance.

A. The calico, also used as one of the coding materials, was mordanted by soaking in seawater for a week and was then hung to dry. This fabric is challenging to eco-dye as it is not highly receptive to pigment transfer, requiring pre-mordanting. It also requires an extended processing time, producing subdued final results. This resonated with my insights into domestic affective care, one of the dominant action types I recorded in my domestic everyday. The rusty spike is a locally found object, that operates as a chemical bonding element in the dying process.

B. Giant Kelp from the local beach enclosed with found object in the cloth as part of the wrapping to make the eco-print through the layers of cloth. This found object was collected on a dog walk, as was the giant kelp. This imbedded my immediate physical landscape into the fabric.

C. Bundle of fabric tied up securely ready for dye bath. Binding material acts as a resist, blocking dye penetration, increasing the final patterning.

D. A wet dyed bundle removed from the dye bath. Through *The Codex Series* different seasonal eco-dye baths were made. This engaged the cyclical time of seasonal change as part of the total materialisation process. The distillation of the dye from the plant matter required a cooking process using several days heating and cooling. The dying of the bundles also engaged this repetitive heating and cooling practice - essentially slow cooking. These processes and materials eventually anchor the fabrics created for *The Codex Series* in my specific domestic location, transferring the locus of the domestic realm into the fabrics that then make the "home" to support and contain each of the collaged pages.



**Figure 22. *The Codex Series*. Eco-dyeing The Fabrics to be used for The Covers and Spines. II**

A. The wet eco-dyed cloth hung to dry.

B. The eco-dyed cloth dried.

This fabric is now elevated from mere calico to something aesthetically beautiful, precious, it is "contaminated" with the evidence of the making choices. It is a product, also, of the passage of time, evidence of a site of value. This fabric is further processed by steaming to permanently embed the traces into the fabric structure. This fabric is changed in its nature by the liminal processes it has been through, it has a new identity.

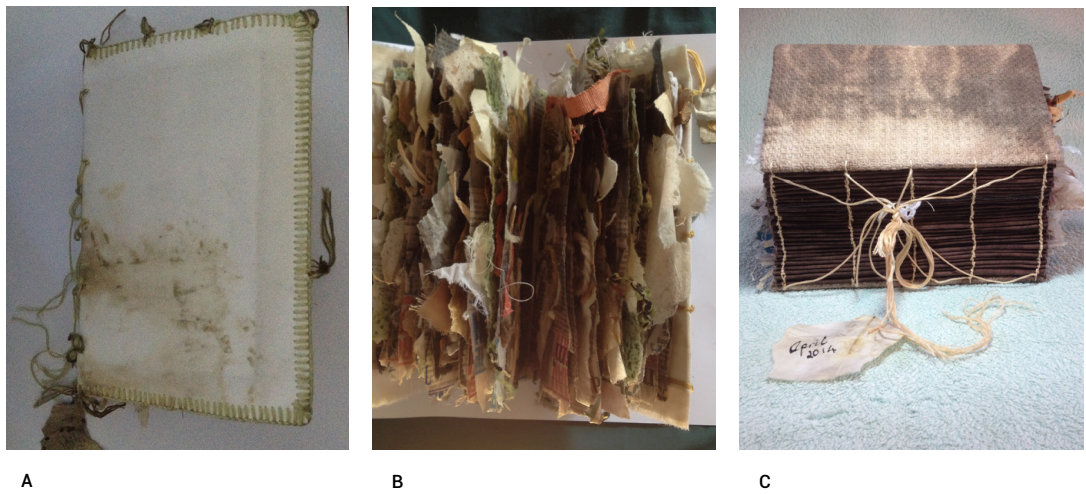


**Figure 23. *The Codex Series*. Housing the Daily Pages, Preparations.**

A. Final steamed fabric for covers. The pages needed protection, as they were brittle to pressure and easily damaged. The cover itself can do this damage, but anything less rigid did not provide stability through the form, which was important. I found that double layered recycled corrugated cardboard provided pressure protection. This was then dressed in the "contaminated" fabrics already described. The exact construct of the covers changed as the series evolved and I engaged with the already completed diaries. One instance of this was where I decided the cover protected the pages better if the cloth was left beyond the cardboard inner. Each cover is individuated in its finishing. These covers are the "place" for the daily pages, providing the stability, security and identity maintenance as the "place" of home does for its dwellers.

B. Spine strips were made from the same material as the covers, supported by iron-on Vilene to strengthen and stabilise. These spine strips were then attached by hand to the pages. This was a delicate process, as the base waxed page could not be bent. Fine silk sewing threads were used. Fabric spines enabled the creation of the book form, stabilising the wax pages. Without these the books could not be read, the pages would tear around the stitching if turned. The stitching was performed naturally without guides and reflected the moment in time, carrying the trace of the maker's body. This slow process, importantly, converted the diaries from objects to gaze upon to objects to engage with; they were created to be emotive vessels for people to experience "contagion" from.

C. Pages attached to each other and the back cover awaiting the top cover attachment. Each page was attached to the previous one by a series of linking stitches across the whole width before the next page was added to the stack. An extra knot stitch between the pages allowed for the sculptural volume of the collaged pages. This produced a fairly loose, fluid book form in comparison to a conventional binding. These processes evoked actions of attentive care in the domestic everyday, adjusting processes to individual needs, intuitively and empathetically responsive.



**Figure 24. *The Codex Series*. Housing the Daily Pages, Bound In Book Form.**

Each of these diaries were complex conceptual and material constructions evoking the dynamic, elusive, liminal nature of the quotidian. The decision to contain the 365 day cycle of this record in book form acknowledged the social structures that shape time's passage in my mundane. There is a sense of the physical passage of time in the act of turning pages of a diary. Book forms have established social coding as vessels of value and this was an important consideration - the actions and engagements recorded on the pages of these books are sites of value that merit respectful handling. They are the trace of a specific time of a person's life, an unrepeatable, irreplaceable expenditure of a unique individual life energy.

### 3. 3. Work Three: *Her Room* (365 Days)

"We routinely trace or record ourselves in order to discover and develop new expressions of our subjectivity."<sup>8</sup>

On-going reflective observations were written by hand across a site of contemplation, capturing the thoughts informing my domestic life. This practice created a fabric of meaning by the liminal transfer from my subconscious thoughts into a tangible visible form, revealing my mindful new "seeing".

The perversion of the obvious nature of this record by the selection of the diaphanous substrate empowered self-expression in what was knowingly going to be a publicly viewed textual diary. A utilitarian black ballpoint pen for thought about the pragmatic and an HB pencil for non-pragmatic personal thought, created the double-faced recording and the line length added to the obfuscation of this intimate record. This rendered the easily decoded symbols of our written language into the ethereal, evoking the

fleeting nature of thought.<sup>9</sup> Therefore this liminal materialisation of the private sphere was unfiltered by logic, reason or self-protection. The slow making process of longhand writing evidenced the human factor of the creation, with daily variations responding to the physicality of the maker and also reflective of the nature of the particular everyday. A more relaxed day would generate a more intense reflective period shown in denser writing of a more controlled nature; an over extended day would be evidenced with widely spaced, hurried writing reflecting the scattered thoughts and the sense of urgency of the day.<sup>10</sup>

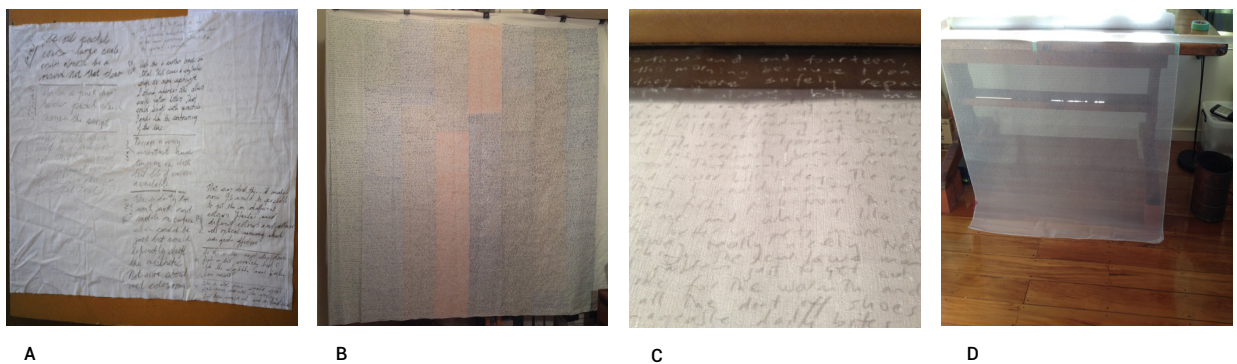
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8. Christian Quendler, "A Series of Dated Traces: Diaries and Film," *Biography* 36, no. 2 (2013): 340, accessed July 4, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bio.2013.0028>

9. The interesting aspect of this was the actual handwriting that "arrived" on the surfaces of the diary, the script, is not one that I ever use or have ever used personally. I have never been instructed to write this way either. It always happened without any faltering.

10. See also Gusmao on p.32 where she describes the meditative process of directly drawing - this was the nature of this text-based practice.





**Figure 25. Her Room. Substrate and Media Trials.**

An extensive trialing process was undertaken of differing writing media and fabric substrates to establish the combination, which evoked an affective resonance with the inner experiences.

A. Trialling a range of media on calico included different pencils, pens and ink, and markers of differing nib design.

B. Various colour shifts were trialled where a "rule" had defined an area to be written each day rather than a length of time. The sequential colour trials used dip nib pen and ink. Use of colour made the text emotionally preloaded so was rejected. These trials triggered the realisation that I needed a double surfaced expression, as every time I presented to the "canvas" my text would be about my inner thoughts and not specifically about domestic actions as had been the intent. This substrate was canvas duck, selected to resonant with the pragmatic record. I then sought to find an appropriate substrate for this inner expression to march in tandem with the domestic expression for this to be evocative of my domestic everyday.

C. Trial with calico and HB pencil for one face, black silk crepe and white pencil for other face. Effect was too fugitive and an incomplete transfer between all the surfaces with the writing on the calico not being readable on the folio versum.

D. Silk voile fabric for substrate. HB pencil and common black ball point pen for media. Silk voile is commonly used for bridal veils, has a surface stiffness that facilitated easy writing but also allowed liminal transfer. Writing is continuous across the width of the fabric for a "rule" based depth per day; time used was variable depending on the day. This media enabled a liminal expression.



A



B

**Figure 26. *Her Room*. Trial Installation.**

The construct of this materialisation was to create a "spatial" incarnation of the inner timescape by creating one year's worth of written panels that are hung to create a room shape, complete with doorway. The "reader" of the diary can walk completely around both faces but to actually "read" the traces requires intense focus. This resonated with the awareness I have of the difficulty of completely "knowing" another person, even if the relationship is intimate.

A. A trial installation of parts of this work was undertaken. A close up of two panels hanging.

B. An over view of the trial. This trial was not of the complete work, it is only two sides of the four that will comprise the final installation. The shape of *Her Room* is not square but rectangular with one face longer than the other three. There is a doorway, created by a partial drop, seen on the LH side. This is to enable viewers to enter the room. The three short sides are 4.2 metres long, the long one is 5.6 metres long. The height is 3 metres.



### 3. 4. Work Four: *Days*

"The mundane draws us into the world of material necessity, where every task can be done with skill but any small mistake can have far-reaching consequences."<sup>11</sup>

This section begins by setting out a series of stitched and woven trials undertaken to find a form which specifically expressed the liminality between the public sphere and the domestic everyday. My "seeing" practice had revealed this ripple effect of consequences from choices.<sup>12</sup> The continuously operating selection of liminal transfers between the public realm and the personal and domestic is also subject to possible far reaching consequences and is therefore attended to with great vigilance. Examples such as the need to maintain current computer virus protection and the selection of foods purchased for the home, are sites of continuous choices, all of which have ripple effects that may be either positive or negative. Effectively executed handweaving is nuanced and dependent on imbedded skills that are honed with time, as are actions in the mundane. Multiple elements can be interwoven to create a unique fabric, just as unique lives are created in the domestic everyday.

**Figure 27. *Days*.  
Materialisation Trials.**

A series of stitched experiments were undertaken exploring the use of the picket fence as a symbolic vehicle for the expression of the durational nature of the everyday with its transferrals between spheres of influence. These were valuable for refining the focus of the "seeing". However the picket fence symbolism was evaluated as distracting from what was becoming the main focus as the practice proceeded. It was another line of enquiry altogether and one certainly worth pursuing in the future.



A



B

11. Robert Hariman, "Terrible Beauty and Mundane Detail: Aesthetic Knowledge in the Practice of Everyday Life," *Augmentation and Advocacy* 35, no. 1 (1998): 4, accessed May 24, 2014, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/203267685?>

12. See also Appendix III. where this is discussed in a real life situation.



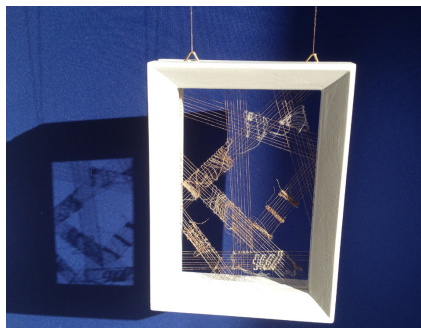
A



B



C



D

**Figure 28. Days. Materialisation Trials of Woven Formats.**

A. Tapestry woven "pickets" with a surface indicative of mosses and lichens. Initial idea was a series of these that could show the progression of weathering of the "pickets" through the duration of the research study and these units would be assembled to make the symbolic fence. As already discussed this symbolism was set aside.

B. Picket fence trial for linear fabric format woven on floor loom using inset techniques.

C. Using a multisided frame loom, trials of day weavings were undertaken. These used a range of materials. In this case the warps were eco-dyed silk threads and the wefts were unwoven threads from the cover fabrics used for *The Codex Series*. The days intersected and meshed with each other through weaving and knotting techniques. They were made and framed in weekly units.

D. Explorations of hanging these weavings with shadowing were undertaken. As well as this, different weights of yarns were trialled as well as longer sequencing within each frame.

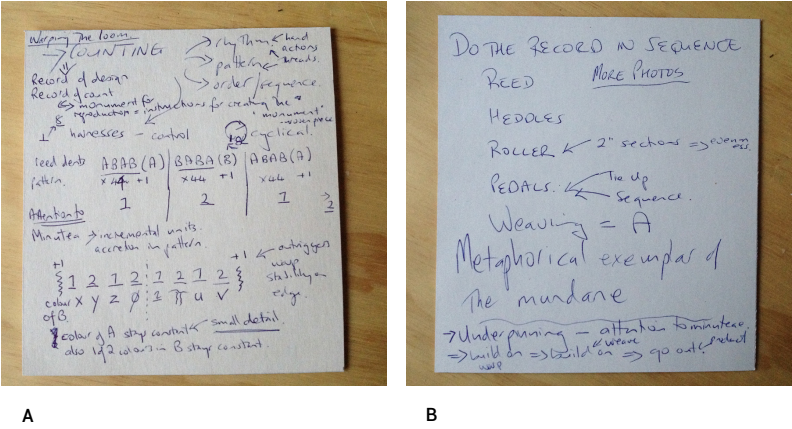
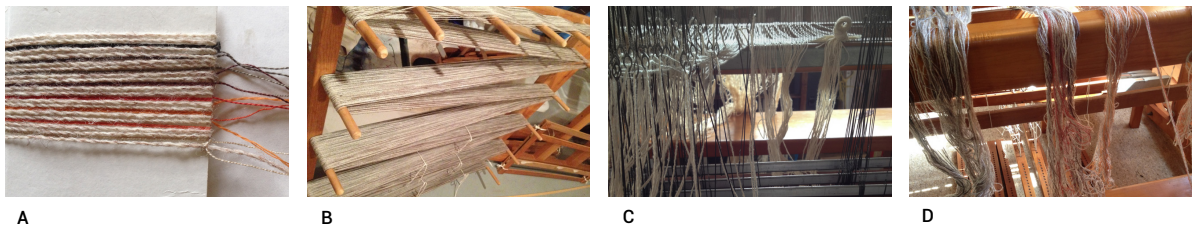


Figure 29. Days. Trialling the Durational Woven Format. I

Images of the planning and its meanings within the design of the weaving. The foundational sequencing for the loom threading and details of the design of the warp are set out here. My thinking about how the various aspects of the process related to the attributes of the everyday as I sought resonance in symbolic parallels is also recorded, including the significances attached to them as layers of meanings to be carried into the structure of the made outcome.

These working notes supplement the ideas explored in both *The Codex Series* and *Her Room*, and the attributes of the domestic everyday that are in Appendix II



**Figure 30. Days. Trialling the Durational Woven Format. II**

A. Warp winding trial of colour shifts for warp design. This was designed to create a shift across the surface of the cloth from dark to lighter. Seven colours used in the shift to represent days of the week. The warp threads that have been selected are all high grade knitting yarns, normally used in my practice for weaving fabrics. The threads need to be handled with attention to avoid breakage when wefts are not on shuttles, evoking the fragility of identity that is maintained in the domestic.

B. Warp wound on the warping board. In this rule bound part of the practice the foundational order is laid down and the fundamental nature of the fabric determined. Subtle detail is built into the fabric at this point in the order of the different yarns.

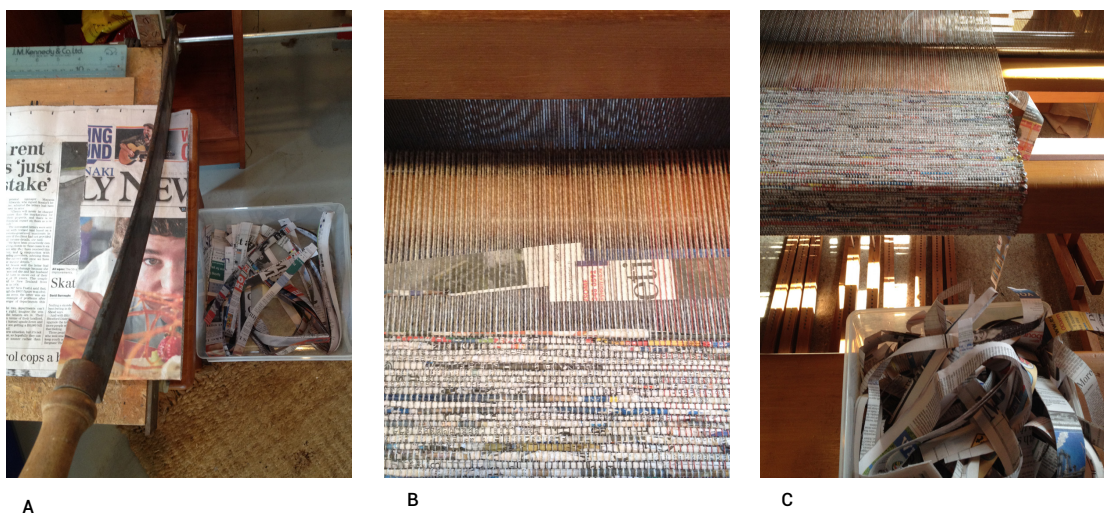
The exact rhythmical process of warp winding must be precisely performed, consistent pathways used and continuous even tensions applied or the warp becomes uneven and the tension for weaving is hard to have correct further down the sequence of processes. The performance of this operation is a site of entrenched tacit knowledge, somatic awareness and haptic sensitivity. Numerical patterns and accuracy are integral at this stage, carrying through the entire weaving process. Everything is counted and recounted to avoid errors. Weaving is a site of focus on minute detail, as is the domestic everyday - this attention accumulates to make a viable whole, but any inattention makes a weakness or flaw.

C. Dressing the loom with a warp. This is a one by one process, in a very ritualised sequence, ensuring the balanced spread of the warp across the loom's width. At this stage the pattern potential of the fabric is created through the threading order. The sequence through the eight harness frames determines what can subsequently be enacted by the tie-up and treadling order of the pedals. Errors at this stage create flaws in the fabric. Due to the particular loom being used in this practice, this stage requires sitting inside the loom, a site of concentrated physical investment as well as attentive focus.

D. Rolled through to the back roller. The parallel alignment and fine tuning of the tension on the warp threads occur at this stage, requiring multiple passes across the front beam adjusting incrementally until the front apron sits evenly tensioned.

There are standard tie-up patterns for pedal banks, in this instance the pedals were tied for 8-harness twill. Once the pedals are all connected to the lamms the warp is opened and wooden packers are placed alternately across the weft on tabby shots. This shows up any issues with tension irregularities or basic tabby threading mistakes. When this is all correct a packer weft is woven firstly in tabby to sett the width of the fabric, then in the desired pattern to re-check for pattern threading mistakes. If everything is without error, the main headings are woven and the body of the fabric created.

The resonance with the mundane in this process is apparent in all the attention to detail through repetitive and sequential tasking. It is a site of tacit and intuitive knowledge informing the judgements made throughout the process, the nuances of each element contributing to the whole. The ripple effect is very operative here.



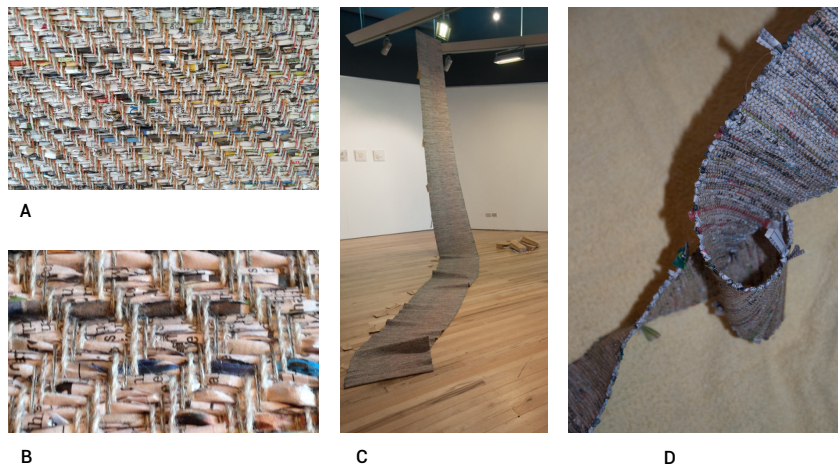
**Figure 31. Days. Trialling the Durational Woven Format. III**

A. Taranaki Daily News in the hand guillotine, being cut into strips for the weft. Apart from the front section used for *The Codex Series* the entire daily paper was woven in this trial. The cutting was done in a loose manner resulting in variable widths and lengths. This was in alignment with the constantly changing nature of the mundane.

B. Paper inserted into weft by hand before being beaten into position. Here is the site of fusion - the public being made into the domestic through the agency of the personal.

C. Edge of fabric on loom, the paper ready to carry into the next insertion row.





**Figure 32. *Days*. Trialling the Durational Woven Format. IV**

The trial was composed of three week's worth of newspapers woven in their entirety in a continuous sequence. The days were marked off with tags to show the variable nature of each day as indicated by the paper volume and subsequent woven area. the weeks were marked by shifts in the treadling pattern producing firstly tabby weave, then 8 harness straight draw twill, then 8 harness pointed twill. This was hung at the gallery as a trial.

A. 8 Harness straight draw twill.

B. 8 Harness pointed twill

C. Overview. Large trial. Approximate size 7.5 metres length x 60 cm width. This process and the use of the newspaper were evaluated as a resonant combination but the actual fabrication format needed more experimentation to produce *Days* in its final form. The varied woven structures were evaluated as not significantly resonant and were not included in ongoing trials.

D. Further experiment with finer woven strips that have greater flexibility. This is an initial unit similar to those that will be combined to form the final installation piece. Approximate size 2 metres x 12 cm.

#### CHAPTER 4. THESIS EXHIBITION

## Thesis Exhibition

The examination Exhibition was installed at the Percy Thomson Gallery in Stratford, Taranaki, and ran from 18th September to the 11th October 2015. This gallery space had been chosen and booked at the start of the research project. This enabled a consideration of the spatial controls as well as the conceptual constructs for Her Room, as well as enabling repeated consideration of the spatial combination of the three installation elements.



A



B

**Figure 33. Installation at Percy Thomson Gallery.**

A. Panoramic view of gallery space with *Liminal Sites* Installation. From LH side - *Days*, the Middle area - *The Codex Series*, RH side - *Her Room*.

B. Overview of Installation at opening.



*Her Room* was installed at the entry to the gallery space with the doorway positioned at the side furthest from the main entry door to encourage viewers to circumnavigate the sides of the room to find the entry point. The air movement created by the air conditioning system highlighted the conceptual notion of the work as a diaphragm or living, breathing record, enhanced the installation seeming to bring it to life.



A



B



C

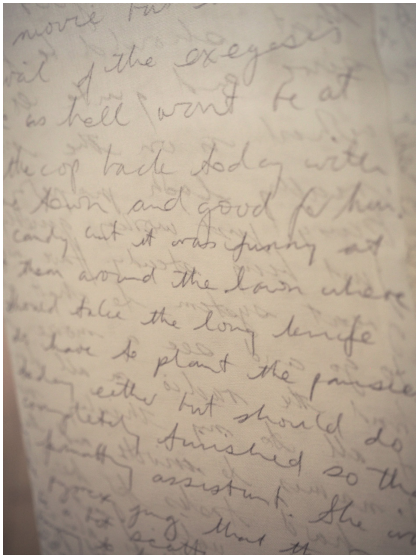
**Figure 34. *Her Room*.**

A. *Her Room* from the front door entrance to gallery.

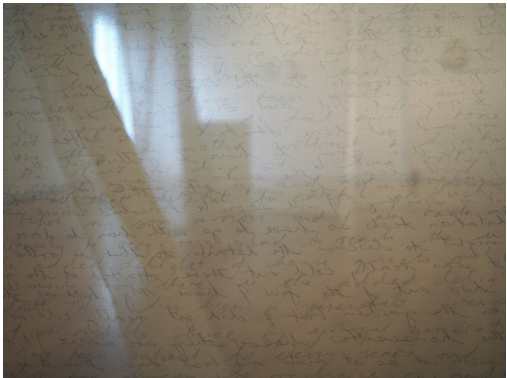
B. *Her Room*.

C. *Her Room* showing the doorway.

The materials and processes had been selected to provide privacy filters in order that the actual textual content would be hard to read off the installed work. This outcome was not as successful as I had desired, many people taking considerable time to read portions of the dairy record.



A



B

Figure 35. Details of Her Room.

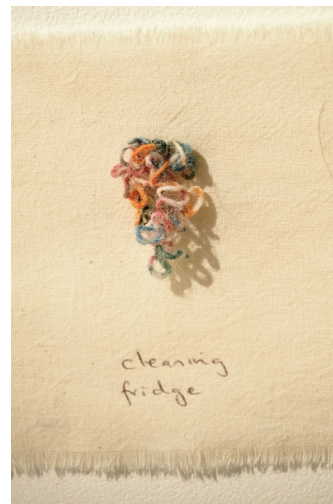
A. Close-up of text faces of Her Room.

B. Text faces of Her Room.

*The Codex Series* was displayed chronologically on a purpose made shelf, with seating stations for the viewers to read the individual books. The code materials were exhibited above the table in a non-specific order so that direct interpretation required effort but was attainable. This active engagement with the diaries was successfully achieved.



A



B

**Figure 36. *The Codex Series*.**

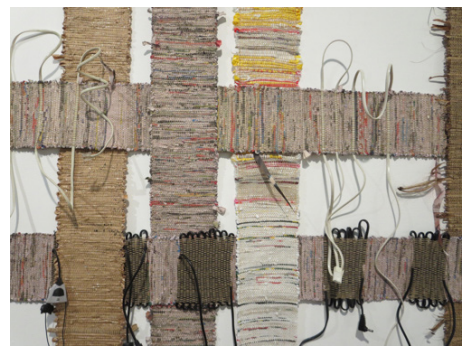
A. Overview of *The Codex Series* with the Code ribbon.

B. Sample of an item on the Code ribbon.

*Days* was composed of seven discrete woven strips that were interlaced and twisted to produce the final wall mounted form.



A



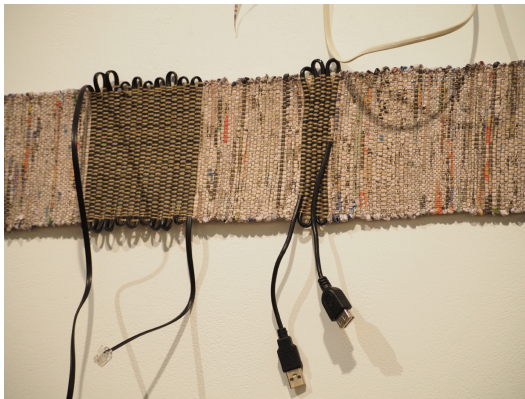
B

**Figure 37. *Days. I***

A. Overview of *Days*.

B. Partial view of interlacing of elements of *Days*.

The two horizontally positioned strips of woven newspapers were representative of the digital and electrical liminality of the everyday.



A



B

**Figure 38. *Days. II***

A. Detail of lower horizontal element of *Days*.

B. Detail of upper horizontal element of *Days*.

Each of the five vertical strips were symbolic. On the LH outer edge the strip was woven with barley straw to represent the man-made landscape; The LH strip in the centre cluster of three vertical elements was woven from recycled brown bags that I purchase organic fair trade locally roasted coffee beans in, representing liminal transfer of my values to my consumer choices subsequently informing commerce: the adjacent strip was totally newspaper, representing the power of the word, books, papers etc: the RH strip in the central cluster was recycled plastic bags from supermarkets and couriers acknowledging the reality of my engagement with the world of consumption: the outermost RH strip was woven from dried cabbage tree leaves to represent the natural environment that is not cultivated by humans.



A



B

**Figure 39. Details of Days.**

A. Detail showing the woven barley straw.

B. Detail showing the cabbage tree leaf strip on the far right.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

As Lao Tzu said, "Time is a created thing. To say, 'I don't have time,' is like saying, 'I don't want to.'"<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lao Tzu Quoted in Joshua Becker, "Elevate the Important," *Becoming Minimalist* July 2015, accessed July 22, 2015, <http://www.becomingminimalist.com>

## Conclusion

The domestic everyday that informed this research practice revealed itself to be an active site of the “performance” of time’s passage, alive, elusive and fluidly unpredictable. To attempt to insert such an extended durational research practice into the life praxis without distortion of that praxis was naïve in its optimism. Although the original time design of the practices was for small blocks of time repeatedly spent each day at certain times in the practices, because of the nature of the everyday, it was not possible to sustain this across the total eighteen month duration. The domestic everyday has a form that is created in the response to all its spheres as well as its liminal flows. Illness, fatigue, climate events, societal occurrences, mechanical or digital failures - the list goes on - all or any of such occurrences shape the texture of how the elements in the domestic everyday weave together. The insertion of the extra actions of the habituated research practices into this responsive timescape distorted other aspects of that timescape.

The difficulty of transferring this personal investigation into the public realm meant that the entire practice operated in a liminal space: that space between personal, domestic and public, consequently influencing the nature of that space.

My search for an understanding of the domestic everyday was fraught due to the complexity of this everyday and its intimate connection to my physical person and to my “inscape”. Performing such detailed analysis for so long became an exhausting psychological experience. The continuous liminal transfers in the research practices as the invisible was materialised and made public were complex and demanding to sustain. I came to understand this is the reason why we live our everyday without continuous constant observation of all its minutiae. We are comforted and supported by the familiar situations and habitual actions in the domestic everyday, to a large extent, because we don’t require intense intellectual or physical focus to operate in that sphere. This is the substantial difference from operating in the public sphere. I have come to understand that this is one of the primary reasons for the domestic everyday’s importance for me as an individual and, I would propose, also for others in our society.

The contradictions inherent in this endeavor: to engage in such a close reading of the everyday is to attempt an impossible analysis of what the everyday is, that is resolved by affirming the Felski claim that the everyday just is.



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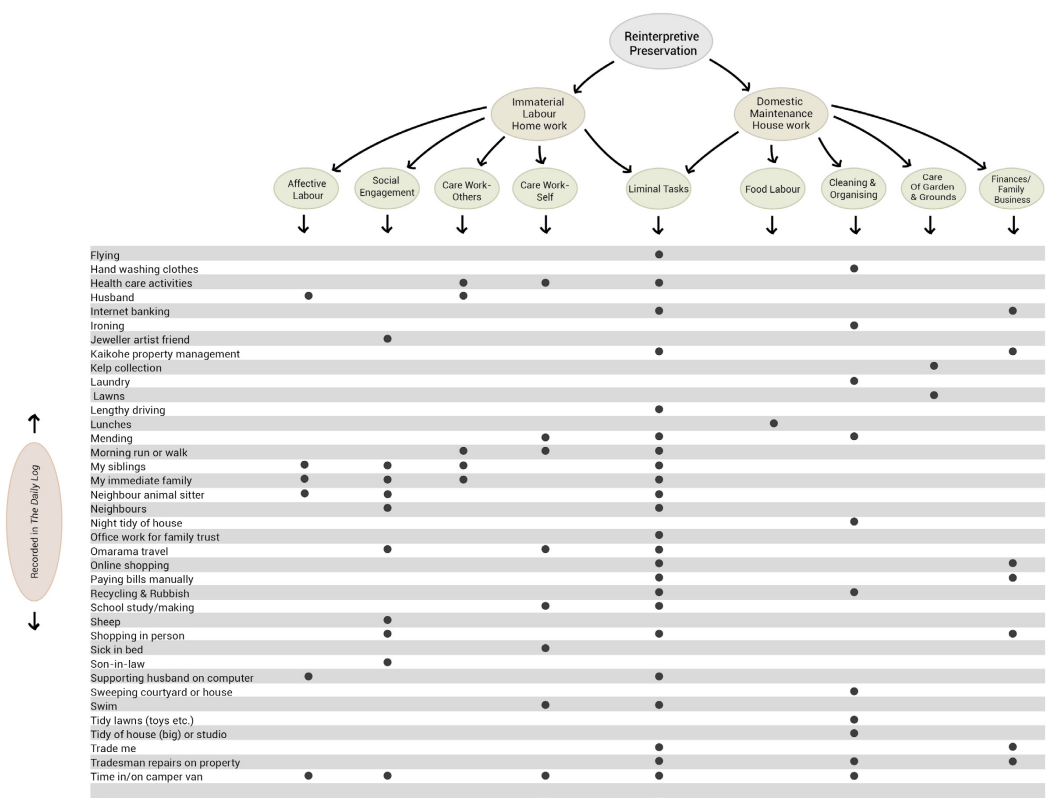
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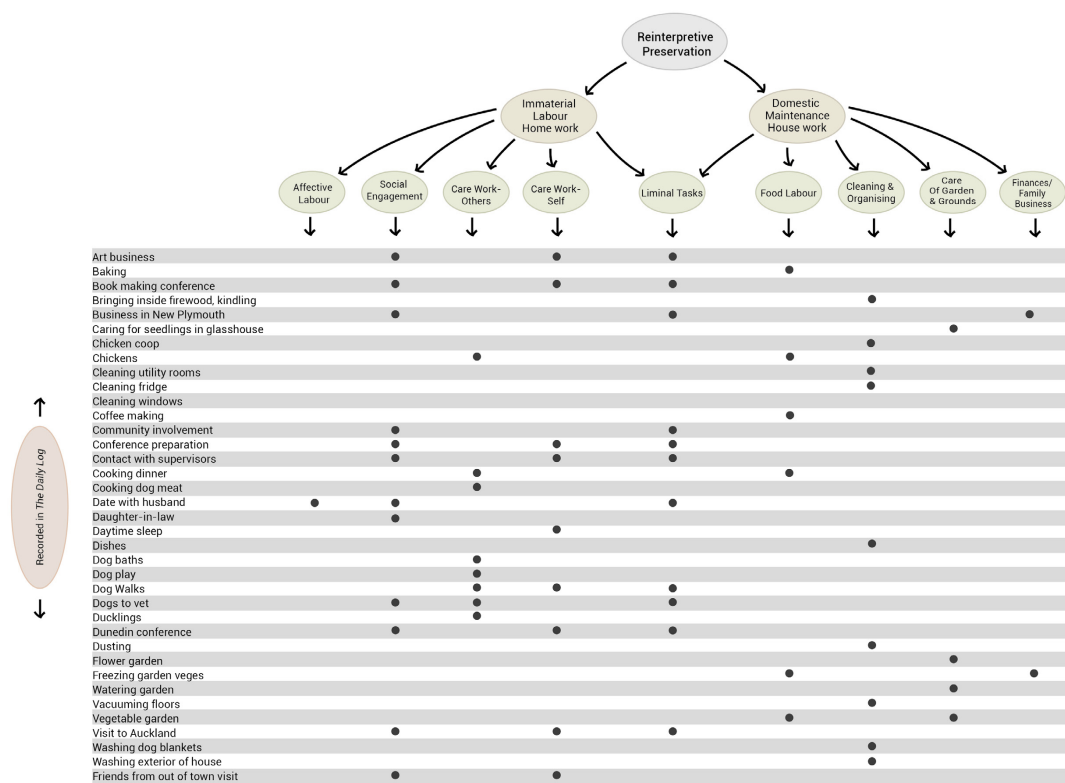
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## APPENDICES

Appendix I Table 2. The Tasks Of An Actual Domestic Everyday





## Appendix II. Attributes Of A Domestic Everyday

Early in the process it became apparent that the three key facets (space, time and mode) share attributes, and are inextricably interwoven with each other and within the three realms of the everyday. It was made evident in my attempt at structural analysis of the logged tasks, and in the theoretical construct of boundaries between the three spheres of the domestic everyday, that the use of such defined structures subverts the recording of the holistic integrity of the mundane. This was also the case

with the use of these facets as independent aspects of the quotidian to explore the nature of my domestic everyday. Such structural analyses provide focal points and more understanding of the nature of the everyday through what escapes their definition rather than what is contained by it. The domestic everyday is elusive and fluid and holistically organic - it is a living praxis in constant shifting flux. Below is a selected list of these attributes.

**Table 3: Selected Attributes of the Domestic Everyday**

Affective sphere	Fragility, vulnerability	Site of agency
Anchored in time and place	Gentleness of handling	Site of empowerment
Attributes of the domestic everyday	Memory vessels	Site of enduring meaning
Care of detail	Multi-level communication	Site of intuitive interaction
Circadian time	Peace/conflict	Somatic
Confirmation	Precious objects	Spiritual domain
Cyclical patterns	Privacy	Stasis
Empathy/ sensitivity	Regimented/ free	Struggle/Support
Evolving	Routine	Tacit knowledge, skill
Familiarity	Safety	Tensions/relaxation



### Appendix III. Table 4. The Code List Used In *The Codex Series* Daily Pages

1. Cooking dinner - eco-dyed peach fluffy wool sliver	28. Rubbish - wool flannel cloth	53. Husband's son - old mould liner fabric
2. Swim - blue thread (silk)	29. Recycling - fine green lace	54. Dusting - bloodstained woollen twill fabric
3. Dishes - broderie anglaise	30. Cooking dog meat - bloodsoaked silk satin	55. Office work for family trust - white linen fabric
4. Morning walk - woollen yarn	31. Art business - commercially procured handmade bark paper	56. Dogs to vet - fragment of newspaper
5. Chicken coop - part of a feather	32. Neighbour animal sitter - dried leaf	57. Time in/on camper van - green and black bouclé ribbon
6. Coffee making - broderie anglaise trim binding	33. School study/making - tree bark	58. Daughter-in-law - orange and white crochet
7. Washing - thin selvedge strip of muslin	34. Watering garden - thin eco-dyed sliver	59. Cleaning fridge - crinkly acrylic multi-coloured yarn
8. Vacuuming floors - vacuum cleaner bag contents	35. Neighbours - ink-stained tissue paper	60. Kaikohe property management - rust leather strip
9. Tidying studio - newsprint paper	36. Tidy lawns (toys and shits) - blood stained sliver	61. Date with husband - blue glue-painted watercolour paper
10. Night tidy of house - interleaved paper towel	37. Dog baths - dark olive green ribbon	62. Hand washing - hand painted silk scrap
11. Tidy of house (big) - green, yellow and orange glue-painted watercolour paper	38. Washing dog blanket - dirty cotton muslin	63. Daytime sleep - cream acrylic fabric
12. Cleaning toilet -eco-dyed silk batt	39. Caring for seedlings in glasshouse - white tissue paper	64. Sweeping courtyard - pale green ribbon
13. Baking - lace	40. Bringing inside firewood, pinecones, kindling - burned match stick	65. Sweeping house - dark blue-green ribbon
14. Lunches - silk satin	41. Lawns - grass	66. Washing exterior of house - rust coloured ribbon
15. Sheep - blue wool sliver	42. Morning run - coloured bead wire	67. Contact with primary supervisor - reclaimed candlewick
16. Kelp collection - Puka leaf	43. Dog play - knitted silk ribbon	68. Neighbourhood involvement - attending lionesses - gold ribbon
17. My son - white cotton voile	44. Cleaning bathroom - pink shiny ribbon	69. Visit to Auckland - mosquito netting
18. Flower garden - a flower	45. Supporting husband on computer - handmade pink fleck paper	70. Older sister - light blue fabric
19. Vegetable garden - hand-made manure paper	46. Online shopping - handmade blue paper	71. Book making conference - cream lace ribbon
20. Ironing - old sacking	47. Mending - white wool thrum	72. Sick in bed - mesh curtain
21. Internet banking - chopped fine threads	48. Health care activities - khaki cotton fabric	73. Business in New Plymouth - rust lace ribbon
22. Husband - bloodstained tissue paper	49. My younger sister - peach coloured fine fabric	74. Paying bills manually - silver mesh
23. My father - bloodstained cheese cloth	50. Jeweller artist - flowery material	
24. My daughter and her partner - blood soaked, boiled calico	51. Chickens and ducks - bamboo piece	
25. My brother and nephews - aqua silk crinkle cloth	52. Lengthy driving - coarse rust cotton fabric	
26. Dogs - flax handmade paper		
27. Shopping - incense sticks		

The following observations about some of the more common coded actions were recorded in my research blog 15/11/2014.

I chose primarily to use materials that were in my studio - things that I use or have used for various parts of my making career over the years. This also was significant as all these materials have emotional currency attached to them in some form or another - not that I am always even aware of this as conscious knowledge. They are 'contaminated' materials - they evoke memories for me. This became apparent to me when undertaking this process of analysing the code/material assignation I had "arrived" at. Other materials were selected more literally - material from the vacuum cleaner bag is used to indicate vacuuming, a flower to indicate working specifically in the flower beds, a piece of feather to indicate cleaning the chook house, etc. Some items will not have any apparent correlation between the material selected and the activity undertaken except at a tacit level. These would include for example fine green ribbon for sweeping the courtyard and garage. The following is an explanation of the materials used for five more common domestic tasks than caring for ducks.

#### **1. Making my bed - natural calico.**

My bed is dressed in white and blue, I have always had white sheets on my bed. As a child my mother purchased bolts of sheet width unbleached calico and I learned to sew these sheets on her machine hemming them and then making pillow cases. In my practice I use calico for many things

including trials for dying, for lining items, for wrapping finished work to keep it safe. This material is loaded with notions of simple safety and comfort for me. It is rugged and reliable, something I have consistently continued to use through my life.

#### **2. Evening Dishes - White Broderie Anglaise Lace Trim Unbound.**

I am not the main cook in our house, but I am the cleaning up person. Even if there are only two of us in the home and the meal is simple, the pile of pots and dishes at the end of the evening meal is always large and the kitchen a big mess. This material, white cotton broderie anglaise lace trim, I have used, in the past, to trim decor ranges of scatter cushions, aprons, chair swabs etc. It reminds me of maid's aprons, cottage style homemaking etc. This is the role I play in this evening task - setting to right the chaos of the food making and eating so the ants don't come in, the dishwasher is loaded and everything else is hand washed, dried and put away for the next day's use. We often have large numbers of people at the table and accommodate lots of differing dietary needs so food is a huge focus in our home. This fabric is crisp, clean and "pure" and that resonates with the restored cleanliness of the kitchen at the end of the work.

### **3. Night Tidy - Interleaved Cream Paper Towel.**

This task is the removal of the day's leavings from the living areas; newspapers, mail, empty bottles and cups, random shopping things, stuff that is dropped on the dining table through the day, dog treats, etc. These are all put away for a clean slate for the next morning. The dogs' water bowls all cleaned and filled, the water glasses for the night filled, the coffee maker prepared for the morning, my walking/running/swimming gear set out for quick start in the morning. The day's washing, if there was any, folded and put away. The doors are locked, the doorways cleared, the drapes attended to, the nightlight put on. This paper-towel is the one I use in the studio to do wipe down cleaning, I don't use it in the house. To me it represents a mop-up/set straight/quick process, clearing the decks for the next lot of use. It has an abrasive surface texture and comes in interleaved stacks and is really basic - unbleached etc. This is the nature of these night time tidy-up chores. They are a superficial sorting and preparation for the night and the next day.

### **4. Morning Coffee - Binding.**

Our coffee is fresh ground each morning and the percolator set on the burner to boil, while it boils the person who put it on hops back into bed with all the dogs (3) who have been let out of their night box. Then the

other person gets up when it boils and brings the mugs into the bedroom where we drink them slowly and plan the day. Nothing happens until the coffee is put on to boil. It is the one consistent ritual of the house. It is often the only real contact we have with each other for a large part of the day, binding us together, hence the use of the binding strip removed from the Broderie Anglaise.

### **5. My Husband - Blood-Stained Tissue Paper.**

This tissue paper is a product of my recent exploratory practice, it takes on a skin-like nature when it is waxed, the blood not being very widely or consistently spread on the paper and this turning deep brown on being heated in the wax. This material was the only thing I could possibly use to depict my engagement with my husband as it is complex, highly variable, sensitive, strategic, essential, sometimes smothering and other times liberating, intense through to indifferent. This particular material conveys these things to me and it is so versatile in terms of how it can be used in the creation of these records that it responds perfectly to the exact nature of the particular event being recorded. It is 'primal' and the relationship has primacy in my life. A visceral selection.