

Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies!

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Exegesis in support of practice-based thesis

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Table of Contents

<i>ABSTRACT</i>	3
<i>ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP</i>	4
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i>	5
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	7
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	9
<i>STATEMENT OF CLAIM</i>	10
<i>1. LIVE LAUGH LOVE HOME</i>	13
<i>1.1 Rule Rent Rob</i>	15
<i>1.2 Get into Character! There's Work to be Done!</i>	17
<i>1.3 Humour is the Antidote</i>	20
<i>1.4 Structures of Power and Silent Resistance</i>	22
<i>1.5 Quiet Enjoyment</i>	25
<i>2. WANT A PAY RISE? BECOME A HOUSE</i>	27
<i>2.1 Monopoly Homes</i>	30
<i>2.2 Commodification of the Tenant</i>	32
<i>2.3 I Just Want to be Comfortable!</i>	34
<i>2.4 Reasonable Condition</i>	37
<i>3. DOING NOTHING PRODUCTIVE ON-SCREEN</i>	38
<i>3.1 The Productive Addiction of Capitalism</i>	40
<i>3.2 Unproductive Yet Productive Labour</i>	41
<i>3.3 Temporary Artworks in Temporary Housing</i>	46
<i>HOUSING MY ARTWORKS</i>	49
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	50
<i>STATEMENT OF DEFENCE</i>	51
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	54
<i>MASTERS EXHIBITION DOCUMENTATION</i>	58
<i>EXHIBITION STRATEGY</i>	64

Abstract

This practice-led project seeks to critique housing within capitalism, utilising video and performative approaches to explore issues relating to home ownership within a performative framework of art making.

By employing Generation Z humour and costume as both strategy and method via actions through video to address an audience, this project seeks to provide commentary on the current housing crisis within Tāmāki Makaurau, Auckland.

As this project exists within the digital realm and employs performative actions of absurdity, new spaces are opened to examine productivity and performance and to challenge the notion of home ownership.

By undertaking temporary and 'pointless' actions using costumes, the project flies in the face of the limited acts and deeds tenants can do within a rental space.

The use of costumes gives voice to a range of anarchic personas, which are deployed to create a disruptive form of engagement within the rental space.

This engagement is through the process of Gen Z humour and performs a protest within the home, through the autobiographical experience of the artist.

By constructing humorous and absurd gestures in the face of the landlord living next door, this research aims to exploit the measures of capital that regulate and negatively affect the composure of multitude.

By dismissing capitalist power through performative actions, this project is a protest for the right to a secure home, giving power back to both the audience and the artist.

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

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

Signed

1st / August 2023

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Stringer, C. (2023) *STORE YOUR STUFF 'ERE (FREE OF CHARGE)*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/rjLIDMmyP4w>.

Figure 2. Stringer, C. (2023) *LIVE LAUGH LOVE, HAVE A CUPPA!* [Still taken from performance video] Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/j10hHN9ju4Q>.

Figure 3. Stringer, C. (2022) *Thanks for the BED THAT WAS SO KIND (I BORROW YOUR BED)*, [Still taken from performance video], Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/MQLluyvSQ7M>.

Figure 4. Kosloff, L. (2006) *Slapstick Tactics, Spirit and Muscle*, [Image], *Gertrude Contemporary Artspace*, curated by Juliana Engberg, ACCA, Melbourne 2006 <https://gertrude.org.au/artist/laresa-kosloff>.

Figure 5. Stringer, C. (2023) *ANOTHER PERSON'S TRASH IS ANOTHER PERSON'S TREASURE*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/y7r6VX1lzGE>.

Figure 6. Stringer, C. (2023) *Housing; Stretch beyond your means*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/JAN6tB5nySY>.

Figure 7. Stringer, C. (2022) *I'm your storage expert!* [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/8q9twhMiT7E>.

Figure 8. Stringer, C. (2023) *I CONNECT YOUR BOUNDARIES*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/CAHC1YwsraM>.

Figure 9. Nauman, B. (1968) *Wall-Floor Positions*, [Image], *Salt Beyoglu, Floor 2*, <https://saltonline.org/en/769/wall-floor-positions-bruce-nauman>

Figure 10. Stringer, C. (2022) *Letting My Wild Side Out*, [Still taken from performance video], Salisbury Reserve, <https://youtu.be/aqoXEjMgkBQ>.

Figure 11. Stringer, C. (2022) *If you want a pay rise, the solution is clear: Be a house*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/bXS2E2ZQ2Eg>.

Figure 12. Stringer, C. (2022) *TAG! You're it!* [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/dV9zPwwrZ8k>.

Figure 13. Stringer, C. (2022) *Tenant Maintenance*, [Still taken from performance video], Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/VjhjysTri5k>.

Figure 14. Stringer, C. (2022) *I SWEAR TO GOD I'M A GOOD TENANT PLEASE BELIEVE ME*, [Still taken from performance video], Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/scVfy5eEkiU>.

Figure 15. Patterson, C. (2019) *Untitled*, [Digital video], Exhibition: Friday 22 November 10:00am – Wednesday 18 December 1:00pm, 2019. Curated by Sarah Bentley. <https://artspace-aotearoa.nz/events/screening-programme>.

Figure 16. Stringer, C. (2022) *The Bond Olympics*, [Still taken from performance video], Bradbury Road, <https://vimeo.com/740578613?share=copy>.

Figure 17. Stringer, C. (2023) *A fast deck examination*, [Still taken from performance video], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/ryCATqbV4ZI>.

Figure 18. Takala, P. (2014) *The Trainee*, [Video], *Or Nothing* Exhibition, <http://ornothing.org/exhibition/pt.php>.

Figure 19. White, G. (2022) *Scenic Journey*, [Video], *Circuit*, <https://www.circuit.org.nz/work/scenic-journey>.

Figure 20. Stringer, C. (2022) *the bed was so comfortable!* [Still taken from performance video], Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/BA5E6iyxG3o>.

Figure 21. Sierra, S. (2004) *Polyurethane Sprayed on the Backs of Ten Workers*, [Image], *Artfacts*, Lisson Gallery, <https://artfacts.net/artist/santiago-sierra/9963>.

Figure 22. Stringer, C. (2023) *Transporting goods to and from*, [Three video stills], Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/HbCn-S8makl>.

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INTRODUCTION



Charlie Stringer, *STORE YOUR STUFF 'ERE (FREE OF CHARGE)*, March 2023, Still taken from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/rjLIDMmyP4w>.

Actions of resistance hold value in the dismissal of ownership within capitalism. In this project, protest and absurdist methods were used to respond to an auto-biographical experience of living within a tenancy agreement, and in doing so opened new spaces for enquiry. This methodological approach allows for a humorous and responsive understanding that provides insights into the interplay between the personal and interconnected experiences of “tenancy.” The structure of this document will explore the rights of both the tenant and the landlord, and how Generation Z (Gen Z) humour communicates the absurdity of action as a protest for change.

**STATEMENT
OF
CLAIM**

It is important, firstly, to understand my style of writing, I am writing and making work from a personal perspective. Personal, pointless and passionate paragraphs that point to the never-ending problems that plague housing and capitalism.

If you've had this writing sent to you or have been gifted it by a loved one or friend, you don't have to be a mind reader to know something about your living situation. You may have been sent this for several reasons...

TO ACKNOWLEDGE:¹

The landlord and the tenant agree that the house *the tenant* is residing in should be maintained in a reasonable condition.

The landlord and tenant agree that the house *the tenant* is residing in should meet and comply with all the relevant safety standards of the Residential Tenancies Act 1986.²

The landlord and tenant agree that *the tenant* shall have quiet enjoyment of the house *the tenant* is residing in.

If You're a Tenant Reading This:

There are a few responsibilities you as the tenant must first note down as these are extremely important to maintain a healthy living situation. You must pay the rent, as and when it is due, and you must keep the premises reasonably clean and reasonably tidy. Sound simple? You're good to go.

But make sure you understand what reasonable *means* because this is important. Your understanding of reasonable cleanliness could be different to your landlord's understanding of reasonable cleanliness. It is essential that you discover what their expectations are before you get told off. No one wants to end up on the naughty step.

¹ Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, "Residential Tenancies Act 1986." October 1, 2010, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM3283908.html>.

² Ibid, 11.

If You're a Landlord Reading This:

There are a few responsibilities you as the landlord must note down, these are extremely important to maintain a healthy bond between yourself and your tenants. You must provide the premises in a reasonable state of cleanliness. Your understanding of the term reasonable may differ from your tenant's definition of reasonable; if this is the case, let them know! Nothing can be achieved without communication.

Lastly, we have the aspect of *quiet enjoyment*. This is for both of you, tenant and landlord, so listen carefully. The tenant is entitled to quiet enjoyment of the premises without any interruption by the landlord³. What constitutes a breach of quiet enjoyment? The landlord cannot harass the tenant or interfere with their reasonable peace, comfort, and privacy. So, in conclusion, keep to yourself landlord, and allow the tenant to quietly enjoy your property. It may be tempting to have a little nose around the property, as it is owned by you, but control yourself, please!

If your current situation complies with all the above agreements, congratulations! You have provided a comfortable, quiet and enjoyable home. If you are slightly unsure of the above agreements, it is time to seek some extremely pointless actions that will help you to discover what a reasonable living space is.

³ Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, "Residential Tenancies Act 1986." October 1, 2010, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM3283908.html>.

CHAPTER 1: Live Laugh Love Home

Live Laugh Love, is a heavily merchandised slogan that appears in many households, where it is usually stamped on a blank canvas or made into a homely sculpture. It has become a meme on the internet and is often posted as a shallow, generic slogan. It began as a poetic response to a 1904 call to define success, by Bessie Anderson Stanely for *Brown Book Magazine*⁴, “He achieved success who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much.”⁵ The saying now has an entirely new meaning and has become a mocking and satirical saying edged with dark humour.

I use *Live Laugh Love* and other corny home slogans as a method and starting point from which to generate works that where the slogan often ends up being completely irrelevant to satirical and absurd humour I present. As a welcoming gift into our new family homes, my Mum would always receive some gimmicky “new home” ornaments. Of course, I find absolutely nothing wrong with a nice gesture, but I find the slogans of comfort and welcome humorous. They are in stark contrast to the irony behind rising house prices and the ongoing housing crisis. You must live, laugh and love through the housing crisis!

The concept of domestic space has been a notion I have been working with since the beginning of my artistic practice. *Live Laugh Love* is the satirical language for the spaces I rent: I find myself Living, Laughing and Loving through the economic strain of the capitalistic realm, and under the rules of the landlord who owns the property. The aspect of Living, Laughing and Loving that is particularly significant within my practice is Laughing. This is the result of the humorous methods I use to engage with the absurdity of the power imbalance I find myself in.

My practice is heavily influenced by Generation Z humour, which is characterised by irony and sarcasm, and exists entirely on the internet. For each life experience I come across, I quickly perform a response which I then record to put into my documentation. Using home slogans in a satirical and absurdist way has become a method through which to examine capitalism. Outside of the internet, my artistic practice is just my life.

⁴ Brie Dyas, “This Is the Origin of ‘Live, Laugh, Love,’” August 6, 2017, <https://www.housebeautiful.com/lifestyle/a7206/where-did-live-love-laugh-come-from/>.

⁵ Ibid, 13.



Charlie Stringer, *LIVE LAUGH LOVE, HAVE A CUPPA!*⁶ March 2023, Still taken from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/j10hHN9ju4Q>.

⁶ Capitalisation conventions within my artwork titles vary in how I am feeling within my video performances. The capitals are significant to visualise a sense of urgency and activism, and lower case display my sense of hopelessness and quiet enjoyment.

Rule Rent Rob

The firmly established power imbalance in which I reside is undermined by my quick punchline actions and comedic gestures. By revelling in absurd humour, the heaviness of the subject matter is diminished, making it easier for me to process the reality that my landlord has power over me and my actions. Gen Z humour is quick, dark and absurd all at the same time, and my project operates through its obscure nature. This humour is a by-product of “the gloomy concoction of having too many things to deal with and not being old enough or having enough time to tackle them.”⁷ The slogan *Live Laugh Love* has been a particular point of humour for Gen Z, as it is basically impossible for us ever to own a home due to decades of housing commodification. *Live Laugh Love* is the slogan most popular with Millennials and Generation X, rather than the age-old slogan, *Home Sweet Home*.

A popular slogan within my childhood household was *Keep Calm and Carry on*. My Mum bought me this in poster form for my 12th birthday. Bright red and stamped with the Queen’s crown, it hung above my bed for years. Originating as part of Britain’s wartime propaganda, it was intended to raise morale during World War 2, but I can’t say it kept my worries about school at bay. The intention to *Keep Calm and Carry on*, despite the economic issues my family faced after buying a house, followed by the great recession of 2008, felt almost impossible.

I always felt jokes and satire about serious situations softened the blow of heavy reality. Mass-produced and capitalised WORDS attempt to keep the peace and remind us to keep going no matter what situation we are in. The Gen Z humour that I utilise within my practice publicly mocks the economic and power establishment, rather than tiptoeing around the actuality of how these power systems alienate and displace those who aren’t economically powerful. My work actively investigates how absurdist acts undermine power.

⁷ Natalie Gabor, “A Crash Course in Gen Z Humor.” November 25, 2021, <https://partner.studentbeans.com/blog/gen-z-trends/a-crash-course-in-gen-z-humor/>



Charlie Stringer, *Thanks for the BED THAT WAS SO KIND (I BORROW YOUR BED)*, August 2022, Still from performance video, Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/MQLluyvSQ7M>.

Get into Character! There's Work to be Done!

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Figure 4. Kosloff, L. (2006) *Slapstick Tactics, Spirit and Muscle*, [Image], *Gertrude Contemporary Artspace*, curated by Juliana Engberg, ACCA, Melbourne 2006
<https://gertrude.org.au/artist/laresa-kosloff>.

In Laresa Kosloff's artwork, *Slapstick Tactics, Spirit and Muscle 2006*, she performs awkward and disembodied actions in abstract geometric costumes. "Comedy and chaos converge, and firmly established utopias are undermined by incompetence and awkward, comedic gestures."⁸ The use of clumsy movements within the performance contrast with the formal and structural expressive paintings she wears.

One way of opposing an ideology, as Kosloff does in her opposition to modernism, is to take a depiction of the ideology and turn it into a comedy. Kosloff works through a contemporary and modernist lens, whereas my practice operates through the experience of the everyday. My actions on camera come straight from not knowing what to do with my situation. The subject matter of ownership and neoliberalism in which my project operates is a real and shared experience for most. The comedic depiction of my subject matter is expressed using

⁸ Liza Vasiliou, "NEW '06," January 2006, <https://files.cargocollective.com/c999316/Liza-Vasiliou--Spirit-muscle-.pdf>.

the leopard print costume. This costume creates a new character for my actions, through which I can be confident and bold. Within the article, '*The Trashy, Expensive, Contradictory Reputation of Leopard Print*', Author, Collette Shade refers to Diane Von Furstenburg in her Leopard print dress. Shade states, "Leopard conveys in Western fashion is highly mutable—especially when it comes to signifying class. These images evoke a kind of old-money femininity bolstered by the kind of unimpeachable confidence that comes from having a great investment portfolio."⁹ Utilising leopard print for my performance-based video works allowed a sense of rebellion and power play.



Charlie Stringer, *ANOTHER PERSON'S TRASH IS ANOTHER PERSON'S TREASURE*, April 2023, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/y7r6VX1lzGE>.

My costumes, such as the Hi-Vis suit, react to the power imbalance situation I am in. I utilised the Hi-Vis suit to become a maintenance person who would keep my rental¹⁰ in good condition. As I am acting in a costume, the situation becomes a very real parody. I become the character that I am portraying. Costume and body were utilised by early performance artists for political acts; for example, Carolee Schneemann used both her body and fur bikinis as the costume for her work *Meat Joy*, 1964. Author, Helen Barrett states, "In art, women are often objectified and cast as muses. In reclaiming the role, Schneemann brings her own body alive. She's challenging the prescribed ideas and asking the question: 'Can I

⁹ Colette Shade, "The Trashy, Expensive, Contradictory Reputation of Leopard Print," March 7, 2018, <https://www.racked.com/2018/3/7/17053964/leopard-print-history>.

¹⁰ 'My rental' – Referring to current address, 16 Wanganui Avenue.

be both image and image maker?”¹¹ By using costume, Schneemann questions feminist concerns and misogyny and utilises this method to liberate the human body.

The costumes that I use work in a way that imitates the “maintenance” of the rental property, and the infantilising treatment that the tenant receives. I feel like I’m being watched like a small child in a kindergarten: You can have quiet enjoyment of the premises, but don’t get any paint on the walls, please! The leopard suit has the qualities of a children’s costume but also holds political meaning within its patterns. A leopard never changes its spots!



Charlie Stringer, *Housing; Stretch Beyond your Means*, March 2023, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/JAN6tB5nySY>.

¹¹ Helen Barrett, “What Performance Artists Wear,” June 9, 2022, <https://www.ft.com/content/713a530b-e9ea-4b41-a175-fcf88b72b524>.

Humour is the Antidote

Humour is the main method within my practice, specifically the kind of humour found in Gen Z culture that relies on quick and punchy jokes to operate and is characterised by layers of irony. Gen Z humour often employs, “post irony”¹² and “meta irony,”¹³ with the latter being especially unique to my generation. Meta irony involves using oneself as part of the comedic result, consequently blurring the line between the sincerity of the joke and the ironic mockery of sincerity. Ultimately, the creator’s intention is the key factor in whether the joke is meant to be taken seriously or not. To put it simply, Gen Z humour is one big inside joke that we all know is nonsense, but we have all come to accept and enjoy.

Employing my generational humour within my practice is important when speaking to my generation. We are the ones that must deal with the sky-high housing prices as tenants and aspiring first-home buyers. Utilising Gen Z humour is a tactic to protest my own housing situation. This is where the punchline lies, in my reality. My practice presents the punchline of the joke in the videos I produce. The “joke” is carefully crafted through a method that analyses my personal circumstances within the renting and home ownership situation, and the shared experience of the housing crisis within Tāmaki Makaurau. The inseparability of life and art forms the methodology of this research project.

The humour presented within my practice is satire and is *tactically absurd*. In his thesis, “The Use of Tactical Absurdity in (Post-)Conceptual Art Practice,” Dave Ball explains that “the term ‘tactical absurdity’ is coined precisely to draw attention to an irresolvable tension inherent in the use of absurdity as a device, particularly in an artistic frame.”¹⁴ The *irresolvable tension* within my own practice is my autobiographical experience of the everyday, this being the implications of my own tenancy. To use absurdity as a device, and to use absurdity *tactically* is to use it deliberately with the intention of meaning. Tactics are used to “negotiate, disrupt, or to hijack a given system of power.”¹⁵ Operating as a form of humorous disruption, to be tactically absurd is to host an intervention within a given site of order, in this case, my practice is hosted within the landlord’s property. Posing as a form of resistance, and an action of opposition, my practice is an intervention in the conformist conventions of the power imbalance between the landlord and the tenant. Ball states that

¹² Megan Shoop, “What Is Post-Irony?,” March 23, 2023, <https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-is-post-irony.htm>.

¹³ Earnest Pettie, “Meta Irony and Gen Z,” June 2, 2022, <https://www.earnestpettie.com/the-meta-irony-of-gen-z/#:~:text=Meta%2Dirony%20is%20irony%20that,are%20actually%20commentary%20on%20reality>.

¹⁴ Dave Ball, “The Use of Tactical Absurdity in (Post-)Conceptual Art Practice,” September 2020, <http://daveballartist.co.uk/2020/DaveBall-phd-thesis-final-version.pdf>.

¹⁵ Ibid, 20.

there is an apparent oxymoron¹⁶ between the two words *tactical* and *absurd* coupled together. Generation Z humour adds a layer of irony and the absurd to these interventional tactics. This leads to a productive tension between the two terms, which also occurs within my practice-driven research.



Charlie Stringer, *I'm your storage expert!* October 2022, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/8q9twhMiT7E>.

In my video, *I'm your storage expert!* the “storage expert,” a character used in my practice, is shown amongst the storage, trying to get to the mattress propped against the doors. They then lie on the edge of the mattress for 32 seconds until the end of the video. The idea of changing character to achieve absurdity is deployed to create a disruptive form of engagement: by dressing in the Hi-Vis overalls, the persona of the artist changes into a storage expert who doesn't really do anything. In this video, the *tactical* refers to how the character operates: a storage expert who is there to achieve the specific result of tidying up and organising the storage. The *absurdity* occurs when they lie on the propped-up mattress instead. There is absolutely nothing productive about what the character is doing. The tactic of the title and the character versus the absurdity of the action creates the productive tension within the video. The oxymoron is apparent between the absurdity and the tactical. The storage needed to be cleared to gain access to the shed, but with little expertise in how to disperse the belongings of the landlord and the other tenants, a character was deployed to channel a *storage expert*. Of course, the expert was a phoney who ended up becoming storage amongst the storage.

¹⁶ Ibid, 20.

Structures of Power and Silent Resistance

My actions are to be considered as “singularities that compose the multitude,”¹⁷ as analysis of the structures of power, and as practical organisations of political activity. The imbalance of power creates value in the actions that I present, being pointless but also having a sense of voice. In his essay “Commonwealth: An exchange”, geographer David Harvey argues, “Value is created when resistance becomes overflowing, creative, and boundless and thus when human activity exceeds and determines a rupture in the balance of power.”¹⁸

Throughout my videos, I aim to take control through futile acts, in multiple small measures to resist the capitalistic focus on productivity.

The element of capitalism I am focusing on within my work is private property and personal economic gain through ownership. Private property ownership is central to the capitalist economy but is harmful towards those who do not own private property, displacing people within society. From this, a split arises between within those with more economic power and those with less. This power dynamic occurs “when the relations between the constituent elements of the biopolitical process and the structure of biopower are thrown off balance.”¹⁹

Analysing these structures of power through pointless actions enables the power of absurdity to disrupt the hierarchy.

¹⁷ David Harvey, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri, “Commonwealth: An Exchange,” November 2009, <https://www.artforum.com/print/200909/david-harvey-michael-hardt-and-antonio-negri-24011>.

¹⁸ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹ Ibid, 22.



Charlie Stringer, *I CONNECT YOUR BOUNDARIES*, April 2023, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/CAHC1YwsraM>.

In my performance video, *I CONNECT YOUR BOUNDARIES*, I explore the overgrown area behind the shed and in the boundary between my neighbour and me. In the action I perform, the boundaries between our houses are connected as one, through my body. There is an element of interconnection to this work, as well as the built-up boundaries of capitalism and the sense of private vs public. The power of the overgrown and the absurdity of the action inverts the power of hierarchy and the control of privacy. By balancing amongst the overgrown foliage, my body acts as a connection and attempts to throw the idea of private ownership out of balance.

The use of the body to connect elements of space has been used in the work of early performance artists such as Bruce Nauman. In Nauman's earliest work, *Wall/Floor Positions*, he uses his body as a prop to connect the wall and floor within his studio. By using his body and different poses, he explores the idea of space and the dimensions in which he works. Nauman works from the "conviction that everything happening in the studio can be art."²⁰ Within my practice, I respond to everything that occurs within my autobiographical life by recording my actions on video. By giving equal measure to the literal experiences and the physical actions on screen, the idea of the power imbalance is rejected through a responsive, action-led protest.

²⁰ Bruce Nauman and Sueh Li Tan, *Wall-Floor Positions*, January 29, 2014, <https://saltonline.org/en/769/wall-floor-positions-bruce-nauman>.

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Figure 9. Nauman, B. (1968) Wall-Floor Positions, [Image], Salt Beyoglu, Floor 2,
<https://saltonline.org/en/769/wall-floor-positions-bruce-nauman>

Quiet Enjoyment

(1) Every tenant of a boarding house is entitled to the quiet enjoyment of the premises, without interruption by the landlord or another tenant of the boarding house.

(2) The landlord must not cause or permit any interference with the reasonable peace, comfort, or privacy of the tenant in the use of the premises by the tenant.²¹



Charlie Stringer, *Letting My Wild Side Out*, September 2022, Still from performance video, Salisbury Reserve, <https://youtu.be/aqoXEjMgkBQ>.

In my work *Letting my Wild side out*, I branched out to the local children's park. The video work opens with the camera being switched on and then the "Leopard" proceeding to swing backwards and forwards for forty seconds. It is a quick and repetitive action. The Leopard then runs back to the camera to end the video. The childlike aspects of fun within the video created a sense of freedom, and this adolescent feeling of not being boxed-in led to the Jungle Gym series. The conceptual ideas that underpin these *wild* actions fold into the more specific, pointless concerns around tenancy. As a counterpoint to these concerns there is a logic behind this standalone series; they express the freedom experienced when outside of the home, not being watched by the landlord. They're the only videos in which I express longer and more relaxed gestures. I don't have the same anxiety that lies within the "at home" videos.

²¹ Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, "Residential Tenancies Act 1986," 2010, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM3283908.html>.

At the Jungle Gym, I am allowed to breach the quiet enjoyment of the tenancy agreement, as this is within a different social contract of public behaviour. "Quiet enjoyment" means being able to enjoy reasonable peace, comfort and privacy, and allowing others to enjoy the same. Tenants have the right to the "quiet enjoyment of the house they rent. This means the landlord can't harass the tenant or interfere with their reasonable peace, comfort and privacy."²² At the Jungle Gym, however, there is no feeling of being watched on a *stage*, no silenced actions, and there is no maximum capacity for quiet enjoyment. Ironically, I feel a greater capacity for quiet enjoyment in public. The act of playing on the swing has a sense of innocence and control, as I can control the intensity of the swinging action: by performing an action in public, I have power over the gesture, so a sense of freedom is achieved within this realm.

My silent and pointless actions play with the *quiet enjoyment* section of the Residential Tenancy Act 1986. The term itself is silenced. I am enjoying the boundaries of my property within the terms of the tenancy agreement given to me. Ordinarily, my actions are restricted to the terms of the landlord's perception of quiet enjoyment. By being restricted, the actions become single movements within the cramped and constricted realities of what is expected of me. My body is the catalyst that reacts to and challenges the power structures above me; limited movement for a limited political structure!

²² Ministry Of Housing, "The Residential Tenancies Act 1986," December 17, 1986, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM94278.html>.

CHAPTER 2: Want a Pay Rise? Become a House

In today's housing reality, what matters is how a building performs within an economic system rather than how it operates as a home. Housing is heavily commodified, with residents living in money-making, monopoly plots so that commodification is a strategy for capital accumulation as well as governance; it acts as the political as well as the economic.. New Zealand TV programmes such as *The Block* have contestants competing to see who can renovate a property to make the most money at auction. A game show where contestants treat properties as if they're tradeable Pokémon cards is indicative of a relationship with housing as investment, rather than housing as homes for people.

The housing market is primarily about capital gain rather than about the human right to have a home, and it is this concern that my practice has been focusing on. Within Tāmaki Makaurau, the owners of the most expensive homes in New Zealand made capital gains of up to *1.8 million*²³ for each year they owned properties. The house that took the capital crown for the most expensive property sale in 2022 went to a mansion sold on Paritai Drive for an extravagant 20 million. It isn't surprising that the same house that sold for 20 million in 2022, "sold for 7.35 million in 2015, making for a 12.65m capital gain during the seven years and two months since the previous owners had it."²⁴ Buy and sell at the right time? You're in for an astronomical boom in capital gains! What causes these absurd house prices within Auckland? Supply and demand! Demand for investment in the real estate market makes it almost impossible for first-time buyers to get into the market, and the lack of supply within housing makes the housing prices rise, which makes the justification for more investment. It's a constant merry-go-round—a quick stroke of luck and you can gain more capital in one sale than someone else can in their entire lifetime.

²³ Tom Hunt, "The Eye-Watering Capital Gains That Owners of NZ's Most Expensive Homes Have Made," September 1, 2023, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/housing-affordability/130683822/the-eyewatering-capital-gains-that-owners-of-nzs-most-expensive-homes-have-made>.

²⁴ Ibid, 27.



Charlie Stringer, *If you want a pay rise, the solution is clear: Be a house*, November 2022, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/bXS2E2ZQ2Eg>.

In my work, *If you want a pay rise, the solution is clear: Be a house (2022)*²⁵ the video performs as a parody of an advertisement to sell the storage within the shed. In order to gain access to the shed, as tenants we needed to sell some of the landlord's belongings and spare furniture. To sell the belongings that weren't ours, the *sign-spinning* persona was created. Sign-spinners, otherwise known as "human directionals"²⁶ are employed to advertise for a business on the side of the street to passing motorists, although as most sign spinners do not allow enough time for potential customers to read the sign, the action becomes pointless. The action itself is tactically absurd: while it is created to gain economic value, it comes across as farcical in its circus-like movements.

I created this persona by spinning hand-made signs in front of the camera (the audience). Essentially, the storage is being sold to the artmaking. The use of the sign *I SELL YOUR STORAGE*, written on a wooden plank in vivid, creates the idea of quickly mocked-up signage. Absolutely no time nor effort has gone into the advertising aesthetic of the storage. The use of language, in the "I" and the "YOUR," creates ownership and allocation to the unwanted belongings. IT IS BOLD AND OBVIOUS! A cry for help, if you must. We just wanted use of the shed, and to get rid of the collection of stuff occupying it.

²⁵ The title of this artwork came from this article about the rise of housing prices.

Emma Vitz, "How Big a Payrise Do You Need to Keep up with the Housing Market?," June 13, 2022, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/money/13-06-2022/how-big-a-pay-rise-do-you-need-to-keep-up-with-the-housing-market>.

²⁶ Michael Pollick, "What Is Sign Spinning?," February 24, 2023, <https://www.smartcapitalmind.com/what-is-sign-spinning.htm>.

The title of the video, *If you want a pay rise, the solution is clear: Be a house* conveys the idea of the ever-rising prices of occupation and property. To attain capital gains, you must keep your receipts on the *improvements* of your home, and the capital value of your home must increase in value. So, if you want a pay rise, the solution is crystal clear: BE A HOUSE. The idea of *selling storage* on behalf of the landlord plays into the concept of being the pawn maximising the economic benefit for the owner of the home. The discarded belongings, such as the La-Z-Boy lounge are being sold by the tenant to create a larger space of occupation for themselves. The relationship between the title of the video and the action of the work is disclosed through the operation of becoming the house by maximising the occupational space and creating profit.

As this chapter explores the concept of the competitive game of housing ownership and the implications of commodifying housing through capitalism, I will briefly outline the game of Monopoly.

Monopoly Homes

If you're lucky enough to own a property in Auckland, you have the huge advantage of being able to make a few extra dollars quickly and to make it onto the property ladder as a landlord or a speculator. The Auckland housing market is like a game of Monopoly where the losers and the winners sit at each end of the table. Within, "Housing Economy Played like a Monopoly Game", Artist and writer Christine Rose states, "Fortunes are not decided by virtue of hard work, but by access to property ownership and the ongoing financial leverage it provides in a predominantly housing economy."²⁷ Monopoly is a demonstration of how capitalism works within the real-world economy. The accumulation of wealth and the implications that come with it are clear in the game: when most players become bankrupt, someone will walk away as the richest champion!

Think about Monopoly; It was a board game that originated from Elizabeth Magie, someone who wanted to challenge and take on the capitalist system of property ownership. Magie first called the board game, *The Landlord's Game*,²⁸ and used it as a publicity stunt to poke fun at housing and capitalism. One might wonder if Magie would be devastated if she knew that Monopoly has developed into a game that celebrates the hoarding of properties!

Ownership of property is also represented by the *Game of Life*,²⁹ By working very hard, you may be able to collect enough money to be able to afford a deposit on a house (If you're dedicated). I wanted to challenge the concept of ownership by creating a game. For example, a game of tag. In my video, *TAG you're it!* I run between the shed (the storage spot) and the collection of belongings that my flat wanted to get rid of. The action of running between the two through the hanging washing (knocking a towel to the floor) and tagging them becomes a repetitive act. What is the point of this? Absolutely nothing. I spend more time making myself tired from running between the two than achieving anything. There's a sense of urgency between the belongings and the shed, separated by the hanging washing. Running from space to space feels like a game in which I am getting nowhere. What can you do when you're stuck in a situation that feels like it's out of your control? I'm bored, let's play a game!

²⁷ Christine Rose, "Housing Economy Played Like a Monopoly Game," April 22, 2015, <https://briefingpapers.co.nz/housing-economy-played-like-a-monopoly-game/>.

²⁸ Mary Pilon, "The Secret History of Monopoly: The Capitalists Board Game Left Wing History," November 4, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/apr/11/secret-history-monopoly-capitalist-game-leftwing-origins>.

²⁹ Daroolz, "Game of Life Rules In Simple Steps - Latest Version," n.d., <https://daroolz.com/play/gameoflife/#:~:text=Buy%20on%20Amazon-,What%20is%20the%20goal%3F,and%20have%20children%20and%20retire>.



Charlie Stringer, *TAG! You're it!*, December 2022, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue., <https://youtu.be/dV9zPwwrZ8k>.

Commodification of the Tenant

Housing has become commodified in today's reality. In their book *In Defence of Housing*, David Madden and Marcuse explore the reality of profit over social need in areas where communities are faced with displacement and gentrification. Hyper-commodification has everything to do with the displacement of communities; as Madden and Marcuse argue, "Under hyper-commodification, all the material and legal structures of housing—buildings, land, labour, property rights—are turned into commodities. In the process, the capacity of a building to function as a home becomes secondary. What matters is how a building functions in circuits of economic accumulation."³⁰ With this, comes an entrenchment of power: the more property that is owned by one individual, the greater the economic benefit and the greater the social power.

Housing has become an extension of the human body. My extended self has become the commodified house in which I reside. The extended self consists of possessions and belongings, whether this be housing or money—they become a part of who we are. I have never been in the position of being a homeowner. Within Aotearoa, tenants risk eviction more readily and have fewer protections than in other countries, and this creates a sense of vulnerability and a fear about the expectations of the landlord.³¹ Everyone has different opinions on what "reasonably tidy" is, for example, and with the uncertainty of what the Landlord considers reasonable comes the anxiety of what those expectations may be. This idea led to the *I'm a Tenant* series. The videos consist of repetitive cleaning tasks I had set out for myself before the Landlord came for an inspection.

³⁰ David Madden, *In Defence Of Housing: The Politics Crisis*, 2016, https://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/2016_Madden_Marcuse_Defense_Housing_book.pdf.

³¹ Tina Morrison, "Tenants Are Staying in Homes Longer, Human Rights Commissioner Says," November 8, 2022, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/property/130405108/tenants-are-staying-in-homes-longer-human-rights-commission-says#:~:text=Tenants%20are%20staying%20in%20homes%20longer%2C%20Human%20Rights%20Commission%20says,-Tina%20Morrison05&text=Aotearoa%20New%20Zealand%20historically%20has,to%20the%20Human%20Rights%20Commission.>



Charlie Stringer, *Tenant Maintenance*, July 2022, Still from performance video, Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/VjhjysTri5k>.



Charlie Stringer, *I SWEAR TO GOD I'M A GOOD TENANT PLEASE BELIEVE ME*, August 2022, Still from performance video, Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/scVfy5eEklU>.

Keeping the landlord happy was my focus; I just wanted a warm, dry, and secure place to live. In my video work, *Tenant Maintenance*, I equipped myself with one mop and a Bunnings hat to maintain the mould that was growing on the roof.³² The action of mopping

³² Colleen Hawkes, "Couple 'stoked with Their Bunnings DIY House, but There's Competition," May 19, 2019, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/latest/11281124/couple-stoked-with-their-bunnings-diy-house-but-theres-competition>.

the roof vigorously was tactical in order to meet the requirement of a reasonably tidy home. The Bunnings hat creates the DIY (do it yourself) persona, showing the tenant's maintenance role within the home and the tenancy.

The constant worry to keep the house in a *reasonably tidy* condition created an implication of my own anxiety, and this found its way into my actions on and off-screen. Tenant maintenance became a huge part of who I was. In my video work, *I SWEAR TO GOD I'M A GOOD TENANT PLEASE BELIEVE ME*, I equipped myself with two mops and one feather duster. There is a tactical absurdity through these actions, as they are presented as clumsy and erratic, with the tactic to get the house clean. On-screen, there is no character using costume and persona—instead, it is the use of my everyday anxiety. The autobiographical way in which I document my work also became a part of my cleaning routine. The art-making is my subjective experience. The sense of urgency within the unknown created my extended sense of anxiety, as the maintenance of the house became a new everyday routine.

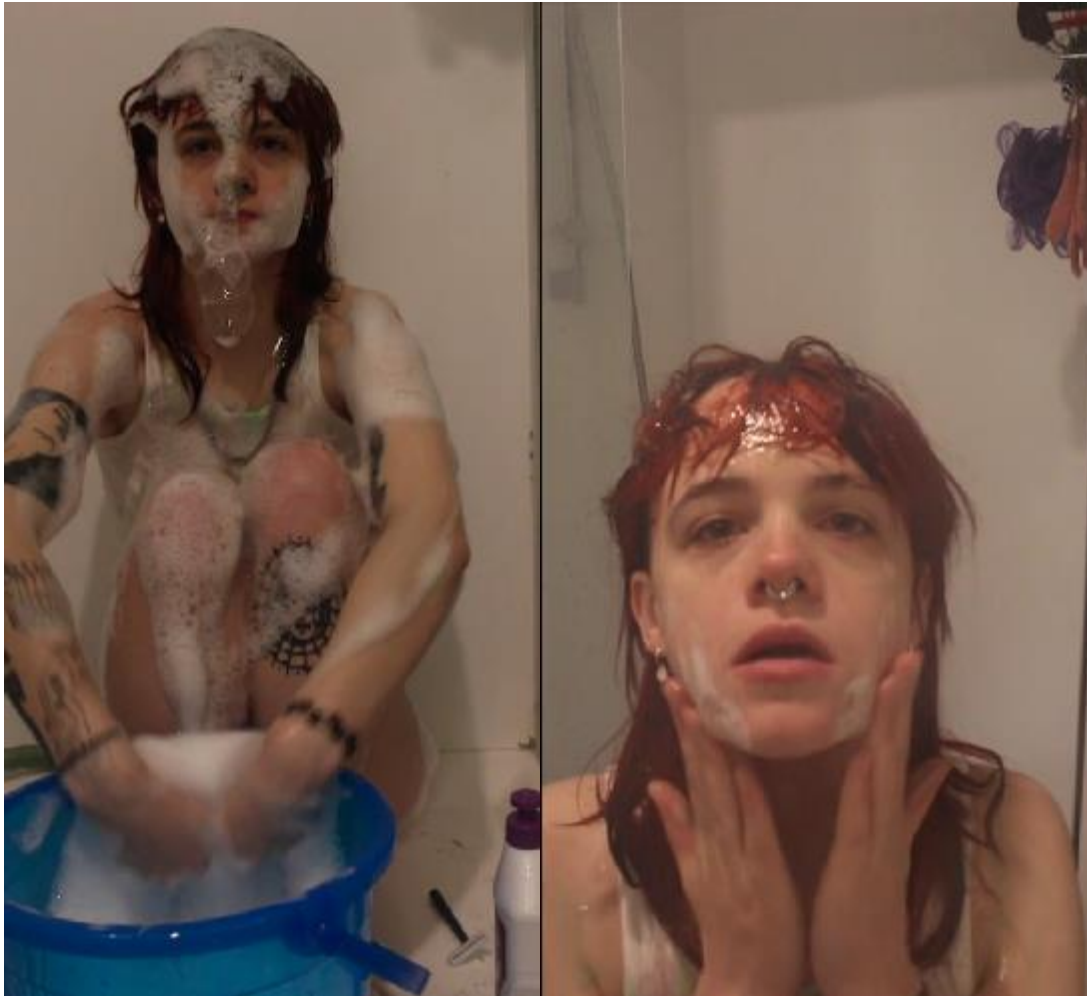
I Just Want to be Comfortable!

Another artist whose practice addresses concerns about housing is Campbell Patterson. In Patterson's video work, *Untitled* (2019), he soaks his underwear in orange juice and repetitively stands on a sponge. There is a sense of discomfort for the viewer as the sticky OJ soaks Patterson's jeans and legs. The deeper concern he plays with is the cost of returning to his hometown and the hopelessness that comes with the cost. Within artist writer, Serena Bentley's catalogue essay, she states, "We all enjoy the comfort of a clean pair of underpants. Sodden and stamped upon they become an analogy for Patterson's frustrations."³³ The discomfort and alienation of wanting to relocate back to his hometown is conveyed through the unpleasant repetitive movements of stomping on a soaked sponge. There is a constant state of readiness when renting a home—you never know when the landlord will decide to pay a visit or upend your home. Patterson uses discomfort as a tool to manifest his frustrations.

³³ Bentley, Serena. "Campbell Patterson: *Untitled*, 2019." Catalogue Essay from the *Personal Space* exhibition. 2019. https://www.circuit.org.nz/work/untitled_patterson



Campbell Patterson, *Untitled*, November 2019, Digital video, <https://artspace-aotearoa.nz/events/screening-programme>, Auckland.



Charlie Stringer, *The Bond Olympics*, August 2022, Still from performance video, Bradbury Road, <https://vimeo.com/740578613?share=copy>.

In my earlier videos, such as *The Bond Olympics*, I utilised the feeling of discomfort and physical pain to similarly manifest the feeling of frustration and unreadiness. *The Bond Olympics* was created after the landlord's inspection at my old tenancy and was a response to their suggestion that I wash my dishes. I felt like a child, being told off by my parent, and this child-like feeling manifested into a video in which I washed myself, instead of the dishes, with washing up liquid. As the liquid seeps into my eyes, I grow increasingly impatient and annoyed. I named the video *The Bond Olympics* because, as the tenant, I really wanted my bond back! By doing the action of *washing up* but in an absurd way, I created a sense of rejection and dismissal towards the landlord's instructions. Just let me be! I want to be comfortable in my own home!

Reasonable Condition

The landlord shall—(a) provide the premises in a reasonable state of cleanliness.

(1) The tenant shall—(c) keep the premises reasonably clean and reasonably tidy.

(iii) leave the premises in a reasonably clean and reasonably tidy condition and remove or arrange for the removal from the premises of all rubbish.³⁴

My repetitive and compulsive actions play with the *reasonably tidy* section of the Residential Tenancy Act, 1986. The term *reasonably*, refers to an acceptable degree of tidiness of the property, but is a subjective judgement. Individuals have different concepts of what *reasonably tidy* might be, causing tension between the tenant and landlord about what is expected. My repetitive and compulsive actions, on-screen and off-screen, ensured a state of cleanliness but created a sense of labour and anxiety through tactical absurdity. The repetition of actions is the mechanism for the repeated expectations placed upon the tenant. Give me a break—this is hardly reasonable!

³⁴ Ministry Of Housing, “The Residential Tenancies Act 1986,” December 17, 1986, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM94278.html>.

CHAPTER 3: Doing Nothing Productive on Screen.

How do I relax without thinking about the boatload of work I need to do? It may be simple, and I may need to lie down! But I cannot stop my brain from persuading me to be productive with my day. My self-deprecating labour is not productive labour, it is totally *unproductive*. I'm criticising the subject of labour but practising it within my personal life constantly. In my world, the domestic space has become the core of my "*immaterial work*"³⁵ and is not bound by spatial restrictions, as it can exist entirely online. Within, "The productive home. Towards a new Domestic Environment with Immaterial Work", the author, Flavio Martella describes Immaterial work as work that exists within the digital revolution.

Throughout COVID-19, lockdowns took workers out of their workplaces and in doing so, new ways to remain productive were created. The new productive dynamics have been supplemented into the domestic space, and we are now paying our employer's real estate costs. There is a new everyday-productive lifestyle within the home. It is now increasingly hard to separate your home life from your work life.

Within my practice, my work exists entirely online and is site-specific and responsive, so my domestic space is the epicentre of my *immaterial work*. The dynamics of the home are co-existent with the immaterial productivity I practise. This creates a productive tension between my work life and my domestic life. This chapter explores how productive processes within the domestic space respond to each other, and how the productive labour creates an artwork.

³⁵ Flavio Martella, "The Productive Home. Towards a New Domestic Environment with Immaterial Work.," January 7, 2021, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02673037.2022.2100328>.



Charlie Stringer, *A fast deck examination*, February 2023, Still from performance video, Wanganui Avenue, <https://youtu.be/ryCATqbV4ZI>.

The Productive Addiction of Capitalism

I am addicted to being productive. I am a by-product of the Capitalist reality, working myself to death. There's a term for how I, and presumably a lot of others, feel—it's called "productivity guilt."³⁶ We habitually link our behaviour, performance, and self-worth to how productive we are. When creating "pointless situations" as video works within my practice, I felt I needed to produce a mass volume to be worthy of any creative merit. The subject of productivity I am questioning is the productivity I present. The actions are named "pointless" because they have no place within capitalism, as they have no economic and productive purpose. Each action and move I make counter-acts with another. These actions are traded commodities, yet their process and the related labour exist through stress and anxiety, which can be considered a capitalist condition. This differs from the capitalistic labour that produces landfill. The body of the labourer is used to expedite the production of profit, leading to the production of waste. That's the beauty of these pointless actions: they're working against anything productively beneficial because they're totally futile.

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Figure 18. Takala, P. (2014) *The Trainee*, [Video], *Or Nothing* Exhibition, <http://ornothing.org/exhibition/pt.php>.

An artist working within the realm of capitalist productivity, Pilvi Takala, presents her month-long intervention in an international accounting firm and named the work, *The Trainee*. Working as a trainee within a company called Deloitte, Takala sat in her open-plan office

³⁶ Maddy Osman, "Productivity Guilt Is Killing Your Work: How to Overcome It," August 2, 2023, <https://blog.hubspot.com/the-hustle/productivity-guilt>.

space doing absolutely nothing all day. “These acts or rather the absence of visible action slowly makes the atmosphere around the trainee unbearable, forcing colleagues to search for solutions and to come up with explanations for the situation.”³⁷ There is potential for resistance to the anti-doing actions Takala makes, and they threaten the peace of the workers. “What provokes people about this ‘non-doing,’ aside from the strangeness, is the element of resistance. The non-doing person isn’t committed to any activity, so they have the potential for anything. It is non-doing that lacks a place in the general order of things, and thus it is a threat to order.”³⁸ The element of resistance in my practice works between the sense of unproductive labour and the labour of holding certain positions on camera. It is a threat to the order, because there is no sense that comes from my actions, just an “anti-doing” doing. Takala’s non-doing actions are similar to the pointless actions I perform on camera. The element of resistance to the power dynamic of the landlord and tenant resides in my actions. By quietly threatening social norms with simple actions, the act of doing nothing becomes everything.

Unproductive, Yet Productive Labour

Engaging with the terms of the tenancy agreement, specifically the section “quiet enjoyment,”³⁹ allows my actions to be seen as pointless because they’re silenced and restricted. *Pointless* means to have no purpose, to be a waste of time. Time is important to my practice, as I choose to work within the constraints of the “productive” sense of time I put on myself. In wasting time, I am being productive with my time. This productive sense of time consists of doing quick punchline actions on camera. It is counter-intuitive because productivity and growth underpin capitalism. Sleep, according to Art Critic, Jonathan Crary, within Nicholas Lezard’s article quotes, “that we are now in an extreme process of twenty-first-century capitalism, where the marketplace operates 24/7, pushing us into constant productivity.”⁴⁰ Only our ability to be productive and fast-paced beings matters in this economy!

³⁷ Takala Pilvi, “Pilvi Takala: The Trainee 2008,” January 2008, <https://pilvitakala.com/the-trainee>.

³⁸ Ibid, 41.

³⁹ Ministry Of Housing, “The Residential Tenancies Act 1986,” December 17, 1986, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0120/latest/DLM94278.html>.

⁴⁰ Nicholas Lezard, “24/7 Late Capitalism And the Ends of Sleep By Jonathan Crary: A Review,” July 22, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/jul/22/24-7-late-capitalism-ends-sleep-jonathan-crary-review>.

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Figure 19. White, G. (2022) *Scenic Journey*, [Video], *Circuit*,
<https://www.circuit.org.nz/work/scenic-journey>.

In Gabriel White's work, *Scenic Journey*, White is shown pushing a JJ's Waste Bin up a steep incline. There is a sense of intense labour, as he uses the entirety of his body to push the bin, and to slowly let it roll back down under his control. The figure he creates by pushing the bin in this manner correlates to the mythological Sisyphus. Sisyphus, according to Greek mythology was condemned to push a rock to the top of the hill, only for it to roll back down every time he reached the top. The unproductive Sisyphean narrative comes with the repetitive cycle of labour-intensive pushing, to never reach the top. *Scenic Journey* is edited to overlap in the middle of the video—visually the viewers cannot see if White ever reaches the top—and halfway up the incline is the only place the viewers see White go. The work was created during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, an extremely confounding time for capitalism.



Charlie Stringer, *the bed was so comfortable!* August 2022, Still from performance video, Bradbury Road, <https://youtu.be/BA5E6iyxG3o>.

A series of pointless operations is a video series in which I utilised productive labour to be totally unproductive. An example from this series is *the bed was so comfortable!*

“Thanks for the bed, that was so kind of you to provide me with a comfortable bed. I want to make the most of your bed, so I’ll become a bed sandwich.” The action of lying in between the mattress and the bed frame is nonsensical but is an act that responds to the power establishment within which I find myself: I am sandwiched between my own productive and housing anxieties, a good night’s sleep, and the fact that the bed isn’t even my bed. Holding this pose for two minutes and fifteen seconds is the unproductive labour within my video. The sense of the laboured body links into capitalist modernity, as the human body is transformed into a technology of mass production. The production of labour is implanted in the abstraction of capital, as Thomas Piketty remarks, “The history of real estate is not the history of land, it is not the history of financial assets; all these different assets come with different power relationships, and with different social compromises to determine their rate of return, and the labour return that is used together with these assets.”⁴¹ The rate of return is not only determined by the financial assets but is also implicated by the power imbalances and inequality between those who gain financial returns and those who don’t. Capital accumulation is multi-dimensional and abstract, in the sense that power relationships and inequality are embedded in the production of capital.

⁴¹ Nick Pearce and Martin O’Neill, “Juncture Interview: Thomas Piketty on Capital, Labour, Growth and Inequality,” May 14, 2014, <https://www.ippr.org/juncture/juncture-interview-thomas-piketty-on-capital-in-the-twenty-first-century>.

Within their the article entitled “The Body as Infrastructure,” Luis Andueza, Archie Davies, Alex Loftus, and Hannah Schling propose that, “Bodies facilitate the smooth functioning of capitalism through the production of commodities and circulation of goods.”⁴² There is no social construct of capitalism without the exploited and evolved human body to assist it. The fundamental flaw to this is that bodies are not equipped to meet the extent of productivity that is required by capitalism.

An artist working with bodies and labour under capitalism is Santiago Sierra. In Sierra's work, *Polyurethane Sprayed on the Backs of Ten Workers*,⁴³ he stages the idea of the routine nature of capitalism's exploitation of the human body. Sierra hired ten local Iraqi immigrants to stand still within the gallery during the exhibition as an example of badly paid labour. He used polyurethane as a spray because while protects, it also releases toxic fumes. This relates to the 2002 Prestige oil spill workers, off the Galician Coast of Spain, who experienced prolonged respiratory problems. Sierra quotes within an Art Forum interview, “An image of disaster, a painting of power trying to objectify the body.”⁴⁴ Sierra explores the important notion of the damaging effects of capitalism's currency on the human body and uses it to draw the audience into the exhibition space.

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Figure 21. Sierra, S. (2004) *Polyurethane Sprayed on the Backs of Ten Workers*, [Image], *Artfacts*, Lisson Gallery, <https://artfacts.net/artist/santiago-sierra/9963>.

⁴² Luis Andueza et al., “The Body as Infrastructure,” June 7, 2020, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2514848620937231>.

⁴³ Martin Herbert and Santiago Sierra, “*MATERIAL WITNESS: SANTIAGO SIERRA*”, September 2004, <https://www.artforum.com/print/200407/material-witness-santiago-sierra-7392>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 44.

Bodies can also “pose a threat, a disruptive influence, to such flows, simultaneously opening up the possibility for an expansion of emotion, sociality, care and ways of being.”⁴⁵There is a clear distinction between the body as a working cog in the system, and the abstraction between the body and personal identity. Self-identity can challenge and disrupt the ideology of capitalism, as the concept of the *self* has a voice. Within my practice, I utilise my *body* as the infrastructure and my *personhood* as the disruptive element to achieve tactical absurdity.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 44.

Temporary Artworks in Temporary Housing

The camera is my audience, the landlord is my audience, I am my audience—in the moment of making. The documentation is the performance in which my actions reside and is integral to how my practice exists. Within Phillip Auslander’s text, “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” he states, “the identity of documented performances as performances is not dependent on the presence of an initial audience, so that we cannot dismiss studio fabrications of one sort or another from the category of performance art because they were not performed for a physically present audience.”⁴⁶ My temporary artworks are complete in their performed documentation. The camera is not an external factor and is positioned within the operation space with me, being a part of the performance.

⁴⁶ Phillip Auslander, *The Performativity of Performance Documentation*, September 2006, <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/stable/4140006>.



Charlie Stringer, *Transporting goods to and from*, February 2023, Three video stills, Wanganui Ave, <https://youtu.be/HbCn-S8makl>.

Within my video *Transporting goods to and from*, the camera is placed to face the performed action of pushing the trolley backwards and forwards, and then the camera is placed within the trolley and taken to and from. The repetitive action of pushing the trolley backwards and forwards with the camera within creates a first-person point of view. The first-person point of view is situated with the intense rattling of the trolley, creating a chaotic and irritating experience for the viewer. The camera is not just the documenter and becomes the extension of the performed action.

There is an intrinsic link between the camera and the performance, as the artwork would not visually exist without the camera's documentation. However, the artwork is practised within my everyday experience. My performances are staged to be videoed but also have a meaningful prior existence through my autobiographical existence. It is important to note that the "lack of a physical audience," and the presence of the artist and the landlord as the audience, co-exist with my personal reality. I utilise the deck (opposite the backdoor and outside the shed) as my stage, the home as the place where my character can make quick costume changes, and my camera and my landlord next door as the audience.

By consistently interacting within my living environment, the videos I produce change and develop rapidly. The videos are temporary artworks within my temporary housing. The fast-paced nature of the punchline humour and the duration of the video coincides with the rapid increase of housing prices and the acceleration of society.

Housing my Artworks

My video works will be transported from the home and online space to the gallery space, acting as a trade show. This trade show will perform as an event that will demonstrate the services available that the tenant provides the landlord. The services available are as follows: maintenance upkeep, cleaning services, and storage providers. These works will be transported and stored via the storage expert. Housing my artworks and showing the incredible storage techniques displayed by the tenant, creates a fantastic leg-up in securing my spot within my tenancy.

Come along if you want to know how to be a good tenant.

Conclusion

The human right to housing is impacted by capitalism's emphasis on private property, which can lead to unequal distribution of housing needs for those who are economically disadvantaged. Recognising the intersection between capitalism and housing rights is crucial to gauge the systemic issues, and to create access to safe and affordable housing.

The connections built between the titles of my artworks and the chapter titles of my exegesis work together to provide provocative punchlines, stimulate curiosity around the housing crisis, and align with my research objective. My practice explores the intersection between capitalism and human rights and strives to provide a voice for tenants and first-time buyers of my generation in Aotearoa.

Through exploration, this personal, extremely persistent practice is full of laughs and cackles! It speaks to my own autobiographical experience, as well as the experience of renters in Aotearoa. Read your rights as a tenant! You're worth more than your position within housing. Stand up and become a house! Stretch beyond your means.

**STATEMENT
OF
DEFENCE**

I, Charlie Stringer, currently residing at Wanganui Avenue, Auckland, defend my right as a tenant in Aotearoa to have a secure position within the tenancy agreement.

Welcome to the end of my writing! It was a wild ride. Now, let's go over three idiot-proof tips that will make you glad you read this exegesis.

1. If you are a Tenant, you are living in your home, on their street. But remember, read your rights within your Tenancy!
2. Remember to warm up before doing pointless actions!
3. If you are feeling sick and tired of your living situation, humour is a very short-term and long-term antidote.

For advice and documentation:

Please visit: <https://charlstringer.wordpress.com/thesis-year-documentation/>

The password is: Pointless

Laughter is the best medicine they say, I don't, I reckon Panadol might give it a good kicking!

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Master's Exhibition Documentation

Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies, AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 3024 x 4032, 15 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies, AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph Taken by Paul Chapman, 3000 x 2000, 16 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies, AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 2592 x 1728, 16 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies, AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 2592 x 1728, 16 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies (*Information Station*), AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 2592 x 1728, 16 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies
(*Information Station*), AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 1456 x 2593, 16 June 2023.



Pointless Actions: An Extremely Pointless Guide to Renting a House for Dummies (*Look Up!*), AUT St Paul Street Gallery 3, Photograph, 1728 x 2592, 16 June 2023.



Video Documentation

Stringer, C. (2023) *WALK WITH ME THROUGH MY HOUSE*, [video], St Paul Street Gallery 3, AUT, 15 June 2023, <https://youtube.com/shorts/AsLA6ogzYFE>.

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Exhibition Strategy

This installation is temporary, futile and obsessive.

The installation is tactically absurd. The strategy is to have no strategy.

The installation is loud and tinny. Weak and metallic.

Upon entry, *Look up!* There's a game of *Tag, you're it!* You can barely see what is happening but if you get on your tiptoes, you can almost catch a glance.

Upon entry and exit, go to the *Information Station!* You'll learn lots of valuable information.

Amongst the storage shelves and range of TV's, elements of *quiet enjoyment* and *reasonable cleanliness* are challenged and protested.

The trade show was originally made to be a space to show the incredible storage techniques displayed by the tenant, creating a fantastic leg-up in securing my spot within my tenancy.

I no longer want a leg-up.

I brought myself to the gallery, I am the storage of my own frustrations and chores needing to be done within someone else's property.

I find myself in the pockets of each individual video install, almost like rooms within a house.

I have become a house.