section one

introduction


Angel on an open road

foreword

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

(Okri, 1997, p. 114)

forword

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

the thesis

This thesis is about storytelling. It is an investigation into the structure and aesthetics of image-based narrative and how that might be used to contribute to human experience[1]. It involves the design and realisation of a short film that draws its inspiration from a creative consideration of structural forms in selected narrative music videos and television advertisements. The work also reflects on the anti-language[2] bog-speak[3], to develop an inaudible, typographic voice for the film.

The thesis has three parts.
The first and primary section is the short film .
The second is an exhibition of images, props and environments created for the film.
The third is this exegesis. This document is designed to contextualise and explain key features of the project.

---

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

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

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

nature of an exegesis
An exegesis is not a dissertation. The word is derived from the Greek *exegeesthai*, meaning to explain, and is used in this thesis to denote a substantial introduction and commentary which sets the short film "in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context"[4].
A specific feature of an exegesis in art and design research is its close discourse with the created artifact. In this respect the explanations and reflections presented in this present document cross-reference to key developments in the design of the short film . Contexts, whether historical, theoretical or critical, serve to question the creative work forward, and the pertinence of their contributions are discussed in terms of this dynamic.

proportion
Although it is general practice for a postgraduate thesis to stipulate the proportionate relationship between the exegesis and the practical body of work, in this project they are inextricably linked. The exegesis explains and contextualises the creative production[5]. However, the body of research, while fed by investigations documented in the exegesis and appendices, is developed inside the film. The film is a contribution to new knowledge and experience, and also constitutes the site of creative experimentation within the thesis.
In the light of this, it is important to see the exegesis as explaining and contextualising the research and not as the central body of the research.

structure of the exegesis
The exegesis is divided into five sections.

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

---

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

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

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

narrative music video and television commercial design
The film's design considerations are drawn from narrative music video[6] and television commercials, rather than cinema. Therefore, this section of the exegesis examines influential narrative devices and features within this medium. The areas considered include image, space, time, enigma, closure, sound and narration. Consideration of these treatments is interfaced with experiments developed in the short film.

typographical concerns and anti-language
This section of the exegesis begins with a consideration of the voice of type as a documenter of the "other". It then examines a particular underground community and key features of the anti-language they use. Two themes evident in this language form (detachment and ecclesiasticism) are then tested and evaluated against the design of the film's typographical voice.
The section concludes with an analysis of the nature of type as a narrative voice, and how this has influenced design decisions in the film.

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

the film

boy is a fifteen-minute, fictional, narrative film[7].

Its non-spoken story flows as a single, linear thread, referencing aesthetic and stylistic approaches taken to advertising narratives in New Zealand[8].
A significant feature of the film is the highly condensed nature of the story. The narrative (that might normally be told as a 55 minute drama) is heavily compressed into less than a quarter of that time. As a result, edited sequences average 3.2 seconds in duration. The effect establishes an unusually condensed, dreamlike, visually rich form of storytelling that alludes to the world of music video and television commercials, but uses these references to develop a highly intricate, intensified form of storytelling for cinema.
Because it has no audible dialogue, the film constructs its voices through the creative use of imagery and type. Written words as thoughts, comment on developments in the narrative as fragmented or poetic text. The typographical language used, is either poetic, or references the little known New Zealand anti-language, bogspeak.

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

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

conclusion

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

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

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

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

...

positioning the researcher
Stories are always a form of resistance.

Okri, 1997, p. 121

positioning the researcher

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

Scrivener (2000a) suggests that

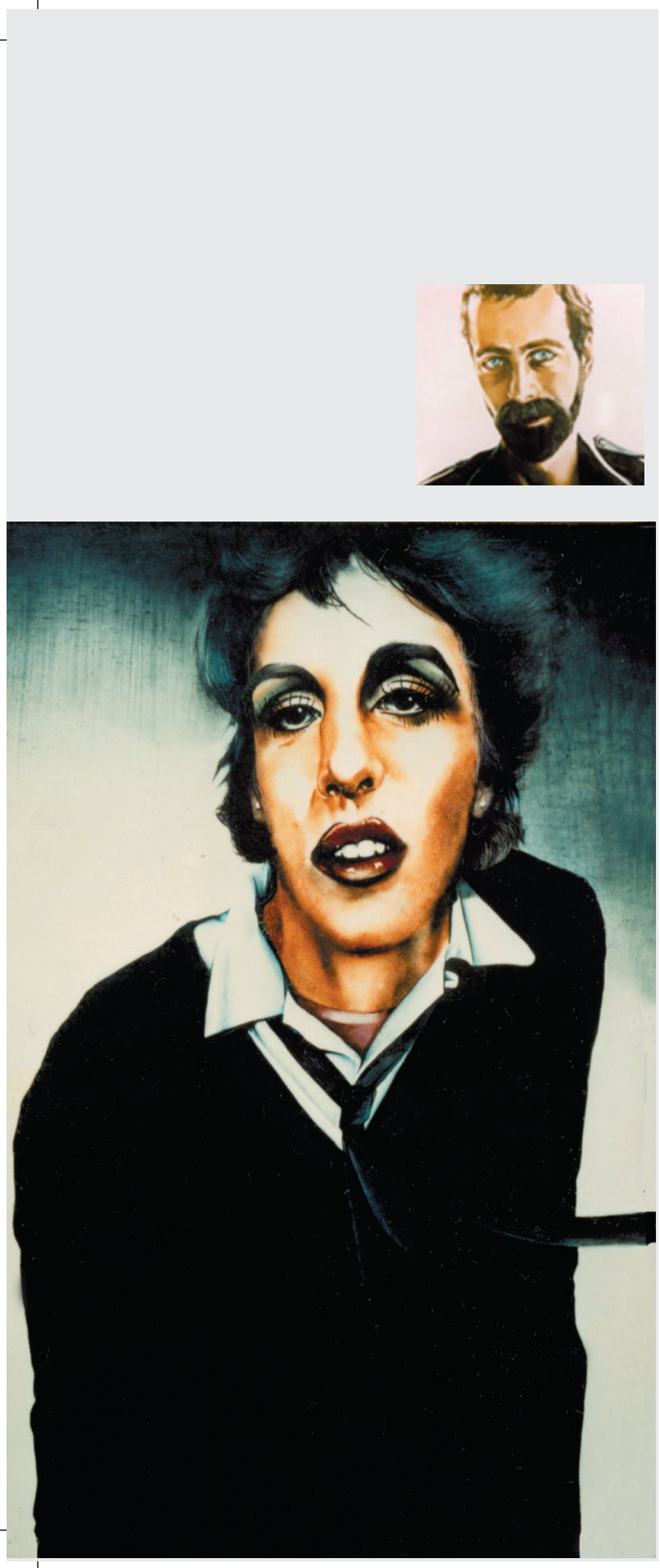
> *a creative-production project will be grounded in a practitioner's current practice and realized in future projects. Consequently, it should begin with a reflection on past practice and appreciative system.* (p. 9)

writing, painting and design

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

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

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



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

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

Boys at the Bar (1989)
Oil on wood.

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

Conversely, my design work for television and print is more ubiquitous. However, because of its need to operate inside a client's paradigm of values, I see this work as generally lacking the potential, beyond its ability to enhance messages about commodities and services, to contribute significantly to the human experience.
However, it is from the practice of intensifying meaning in design for advertising[2] that I became interested in the power and potential of structures this form of communication has developed, especially the unique ways that it tells stories. It appeared to me that some of the structures used to intensify meaning in television advertising and music video could be creatively employed in the design of short film.

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

---

[2] This is what Tibor Kalman (1998) refers to as the designer's professional engagement with *"enhancing a product beyond its truth"* (p. 9).

[3] Preliminary notes for Ph.D. project proposal.

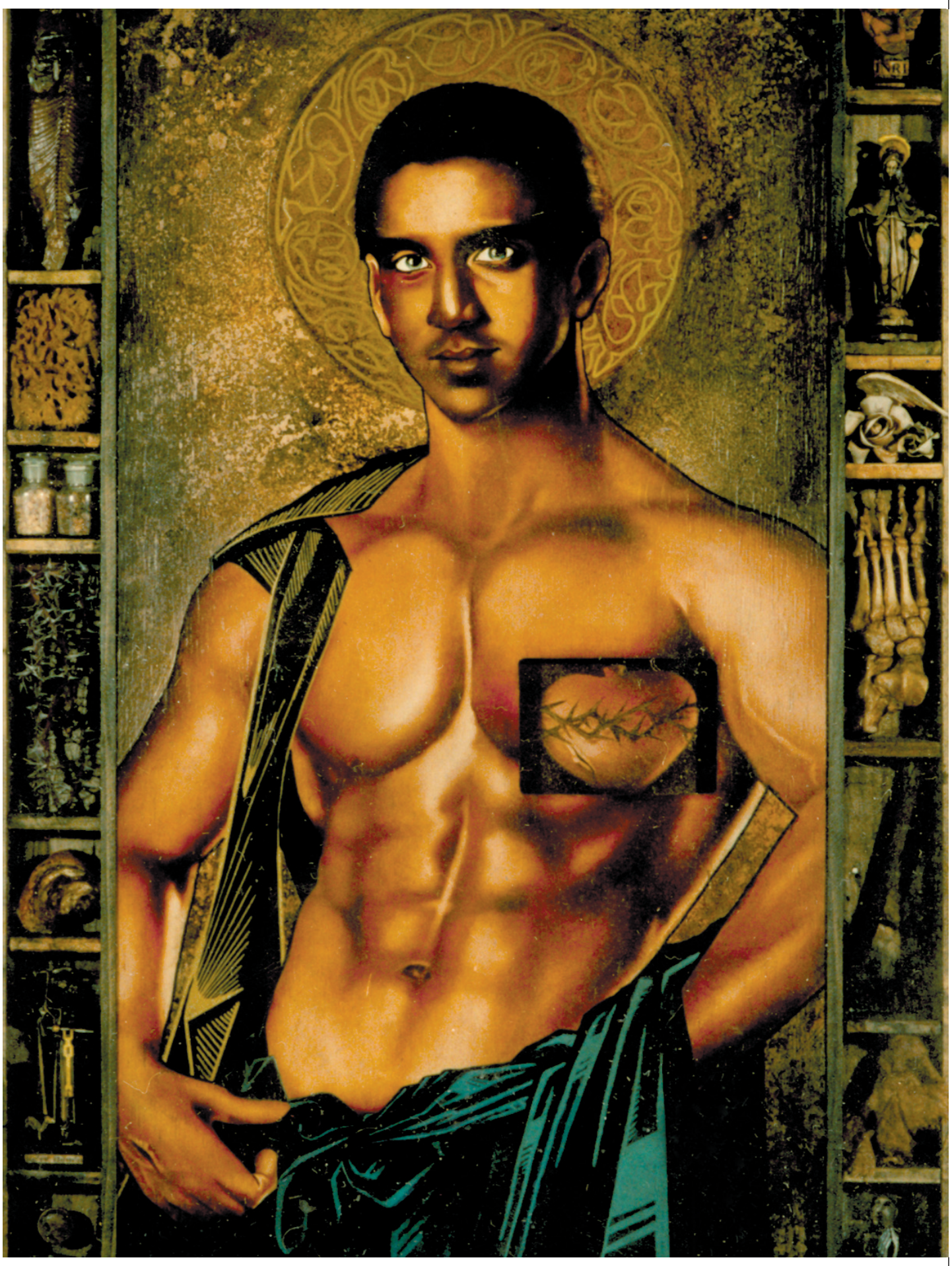


Fig. 1:3 Two paintings on glass from Ad te omnius caro veniet (1994), Madonna with Doll and Mesomorphic Jesus. These works formed part of a series of portraits about people in my extended family. The paintings questioned historical metaphors and systems of representation. Images within these paintings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

subject

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

I was born into a rural family of six children. My father was a shearing contractor and my mother, a farmer, and hairdresser for the women of the district. I grew up in a world where acceptability was prescribed inside what might be considered traditional values. In my early adolescence I realised I was gay [although such was my knowledge at the time, that I did not know there was a word for it]. At thirteen, however, I stumbled across bog cruising[4] and through my adolescence, my life (like that of many young, rural gay men) was divided into two spheres, the over-ground world of compliance and carefully constructed identity and the underground world of the bogs. The latter, with its alternative language, precocious awareness of police behaviour, threatening violence and sexual secrecy, formed one end of a continuum over which the pendulum of my teenage years swung. Information about one's life at either end of

[4] In this thesis I use the New Zealand term 'bog' to describe a public toilet. "Bog cruising" refers to the use of public toilets for meeting men for sex.

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

---

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

the writer's voice

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

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

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

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

The work generated in a creative production is a direct consequence of the designer's self-identification as a creator,[7] and it is because of this, I have adopted the writing position used. The work is subjective[8] and does not seek to employ a sense of detachment. However, the research process employs rigorous reflection on practice, critical analysis, and creative synthesis of generated data.

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

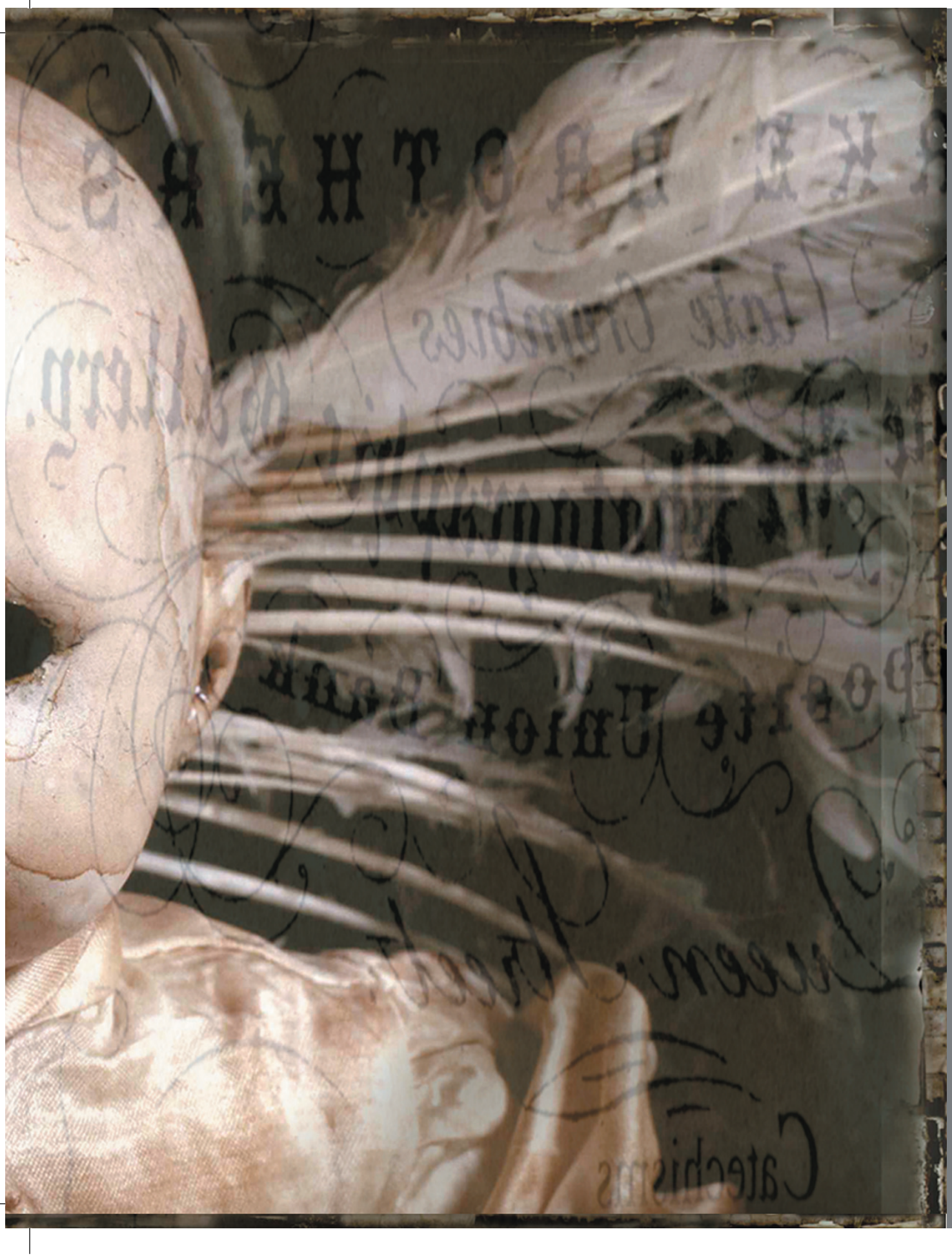
---

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

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

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


Union Bank
Queen Street.
Catechisms



review of theory, knowledge and information

History is the substance of recorded stories.

(Watts, 2003, p. 121)

introduction

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

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

archaeology of the music video

The first section of this review profiles significant creative works that have impacted on the present research project.
In considering narrative and stylistic structures in music video design, I have adopted the position taken by a range of researchers[1], who argue that music video design cannot be considered as something that simply appeared in 1981 with the advent of Music Television [MTV]. Certain structural and aesthetic devices relevant to the creative processing of this project have involved reflection on experiments from well before that date. Therefore, the present review of works impacting on this project is discussed as a brief archaeology of the media form.
In general, key considerations are documented at an early site of influence, indication of later creative research in the field is noted, then the feature is briefly discussed in terms of its impact on research for the film.

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

rhythm (1920s)
Rhythm is a significant concern in the design of *boy* because of the need to harmonise antithetical features like dislocation and continuity. In this film, sound and image are interwoven, each contributing in different and complementary ways to the flow and emphases in the narrative.
Early research by Oscar Fischinger developed a system of editing visuals to rhythmically coordinate with beats in the music. Fischinger developed promos for classical and jazz music after synchronised sound became possible in the late 1920s. His *Komposition in Blau** (1934), (fig. 1:4) cut to Nikoli's *Overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor,* was shown in cinemas and forms part of a portfolio of promotional works he created at that time[2].
Fischinger's early awareness of the interface between rhythm, volume and movement, profoundly influenced editing processes in music videos and served as a baseline for later developments in their design. Significant among these later developments were the animated videos surfacing from dance culture in the mid 1990s, and the pop video work of directors like David Fincher (*Vogue*, 1990; and *Who Is It?* * 1991). In general, these videos are profiled by their heavy use of image-changes synchronised to the beat of the music.

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

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

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

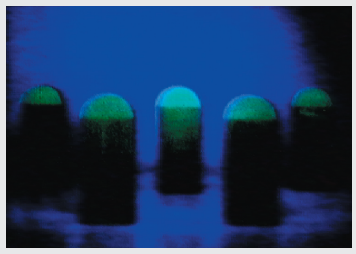


Fig. 1: 4 *Still from Fischinger's Komposition in Blau (1934)*
Fischinger's experiments involving cutting on and off music beats as a method of punctuating the structure of a sequence, is relevant to boy *because the film required the design of an editing system that moved from stark fragmentation to the illusion of smooth flow. Without substantially disrupting the average three-second duration of each shot, I needed to employ devices that gradually masked the rapid pace of the narrative, allowing it to drift inexorably to its conclusion.*

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

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

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

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

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

spatial and structural considerations (early 1960s)
In the early 1960s, a new form of video jukebox was developed in France. It was called the Scopitone and used rear projection of films onto a top mounted twenty-inch screen. They offered thirty-six promos that could be selected by preference. Unlike the Soundies, Scopitones were filmed in colour and were generally profiled by a much faster editing style.This system of almost frenetic cutting was heavily influenced by Claude Lelouch's work in the medium. However, in England there were marked exceptions to this pace. Like their European counterparts, many British promos profiled an extensive use of studio sets and the filming of fragmented sections of the body. However, much of their work avoided the rapid-fire editing conventions of French design. Indicative of this is *Do the locomotion**. This promo, filmed in a continuous flow, contained only two edits. In later music video design, this minimal editing approach became a common response to the hyper-cutting of 1980s[3].

influence
The minimal approach to editing is not a convention used in *boy* but the environments designed to hold the interest of these long-duration shots, are.
What is significant about *Do the Locomotion* is its distinctive treatment of space. The designer has fore-grounded objects to create

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

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

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

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

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

Fig. 1:6 *Comparison of stills from Do the Locomotion (1962) (left) and the aftermath of the queer bashing in* boy *(2004) (right).*
Bodies act as monumental masking devices through which other elements are witnessed. This use of tiering has the effect of breaking up simple shots and directing the eye to specific elements within the frame.

the mid 1960s
By the mid 1960s, Scopitones were beginning to become less popular. Berg (1987) suggests that this was primarily due to the increasing availability of broadcast television. In this decade a plethora of television music shows surfaced as a worldwide phenomenon[4]. These shows were generally modelled on a formula that employed a personality presenter, audience or programme dancers, and on-location performing artists. While the design of much music video at this time tended to profile devices like lip-synching, audience address and the primacy of the performance over the context, two designs developed in this period are of significance to this present research. In each of these texts, the designer broke with, or extended, conventions of the period.

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

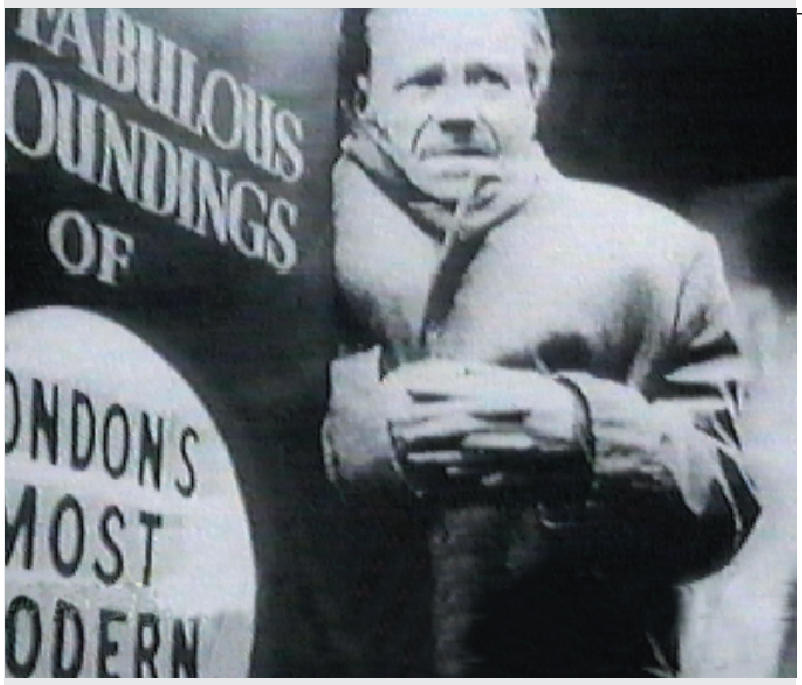


Fig. 1:7 *Stills of poverty among London's working classes, from Davies' Dead End Street (1966).*
The BBC initially banned this video because it was considered to be "tasteless", although it was never made clear whether this was because of the story line or the documentary imagery.

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

the beauty/abject dynamic

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

influence

This use of beautiful imagery as a method for intensifying the abject became a consideration in *boy* as I looked for more effective methods for dealing with the sense of time dislocation which one experiences during a physical assault. In the film, graceful, violent movement became part of scenes like the queer bashing in the school locker bay[5]. By orchestrating seductive colour palettes and graceful movement, I was able to create a form of antithesis, where the hypnotically beautiful was used to describe the abject. This approach is evident in the work of more recent music video directors like Romanek, Sigismondi, Cunningham, Tarsem and Stern[6]. Morton suggests that this technique can heighten the drama in a visual narrative *"because it involves the viewer in a form of unwilling complicity, where they are in aesthetic concord with the style, but witnessing a repellent episode in the narrative"* (p. 127).

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

---

[5] In *boy* a lot of the footage was shot 'off-speed', using an Arri3S, 35mm camera set to a frame rate either higher or lower than the normal 25fps (frames per second). In the queer bashing scene, the sequence was shot at 18 frames per second, which was then telecined (processed to tape), at 25 frames. This technique is called step-printing and produces a stepping/staccato effect, holding each frame for slightly longer than in standard 25fps mode.
When Nic Finlayson shot the slow motion sequences, the effect was produced in-camera by running the film through up to 150fps, so he was able to catch action at high speed. This is not something that can be done in post-production. Different sequences in the film were shot 33.3fps, 36fps and 50fps. This is called over-cranking the camera.

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

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

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

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

To achieve the narrative compression and enigmatic nature of the video, Mulcahy used a range of devices. Although shots appear to be lingering, they are generally cut to the most pertinent information necessary for the continuance of the story. This is a compression technique taken from television advertising, where a narrative is delivered in very short sequences, in a very short period of time[7]. By overstating the operatic nature of the imagery in *Vienna*, Mulcahy introduces a level of confusion into the unfolding narra-

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

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

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

influence

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

Fig. 1:10 Above and opposite, *Censored sequences from Pellington's Jeremy (1991).*
These scenes depicting the boy's suicide and Pellington's references to Nazi-style fascism in American education were cut from the film before it went to air. However, the narrative still manages to allude to these issues through connections between the remaining imagery. The video's narrative is only loosely linear, running from equilibrium through fragmented scenes of dysfunctional family life and demeaning school experiences, and finally reaching an anagnorisis with a series of shots of the boy before a wall of flame. The story resolves with the central character walking back into the classroom and shooting himself through the mouth. The video was of significance to boy *because of its innovative use of the written narrative voice and its demonstration of the potential for television audiences to read concurrent tellings of a narrative at relatively sophisticated levels*[9].

multi-narration (1990s)
Mulcahy's and Avis' innovations in the media form were further developed in 1991 in Mark Pellington's controversial video *Jeremy**. Directed for *Pearl Jam*, the work received considerable critical acclaim but was also re-cut several times prior to screening, because the marketing companies wanted to downplay the public suicide of the central character (fig. 1:10).
Pellington's narrative construction continued to build on devices that heightened the enigma in story lines[8] because this approach, developed through the 1980s, had demonstrated the ability to call viewers back to repeated screenings of the text. Jeremy unfolds with longer shots of the performer and fragmented images of the film's diegesis. However, what is significant about this text is its use of multiple narrators. The story is sung by Eddie Vedder; a consecutive flow of fragmented imagery unfurls another version of the narrative; and these tellings are intruded upon by a third voice, appearing as written statements. As the text develops, these narrations become more tightly cropped and frantic, and it is through this that the tension in the video is built.

---

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

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

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

In television commercials the approach was profiled in 1995 in the work of both Jonathan Barnbrook, and the design agency Tomato. Their commercials for Radio Scotland, (*True Romance*, Tartan Toyboys, Foggie Bummer*, Nae Hope, Graffiti*, and *Cockrel*), demonstrated the paralinguistic potential of typography. Type was used as a method for drawing emphasis to dialect and intonation, when it was laid as an emotive veneer over a series of audio monologues. These typographical treatments carried a high level of personality and were influential in the design of *boy* because they demonstrated, through movement and texture, the potential for type to operate as a form of idiolect.
In 2001, a commercial by Revista E' Paca for *EPOCA** magazine, demonstrated a refinement of these experiments. Here, type was used as a poetic monologue, operating as a concurrent narrator. The design profiled a typographic "voice-over" that, like the earlier work of Barnbrook and Tomato, demonstrated how the written word could be used as a spatio-temporal language. This language went well beyond a direct translation of audio elements in the text.

influence
These texts have been influential in design experiments involving typographic voices in *boy*. The experiments are discussed fully in chapter three of the exegesis, but may be broadly described as trialing the potential of type as a spatio-temporal form of narration that operates both homodiegetically and heterodiegetically.
The texts also contribute to experiments in the film dealing with the creation of typographical idiolect. The paralingusistic and poetic potential of type is a central concern of the creative research because of the film's need to develop inaudible voices. These voices needed to carry, in their physical appearance, the ethos of the worlds of which they spoke.

review of relevant music video theory

Although record companies had been designing brief promotional videos prior to 1980, academic analysis of music video did not significantly engage with the form until the launch of American Music Television (MTV), on August 1, 1981.
Analyses of music video following this phenomenon, can be broken down in to three broad categories, namely, historical studies, audience centered studies, and critical studies. Of these, historical and critical studies are most useful to this present research project because they either contextualise significant developments or analyse structural and aesthetic features in the media form.

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

enon of pre-MTV music video programming, and the popularity of Busby Berkley's musical extravaganzas. Burns and Thompson's research is particularly insightful in its analysis of how these phenomena created codes for interpreting visual and aural imagery in later music videos.
Archer's (1986) production of the BBC's four-hour documentary *Video Juke Box*, provided rare archival footage interspersed with interviews with the directors of the works. While lacking the critical rigor of an academic analysis, the documentary presented an insight into developments in the medium and exposure to rare archival footage, especially from England and Europe, prior to the advent of MTV.

Several researchers have examined institutional, economic and aesthetic factors impacting on exhibition and production of music video, for example, (Denisoff, 1988; Frith, 1993; Hartman, 1987; Lewis, 1990; Viera, 1987; and Zeichner 1983)[10]. However, in terms of the present research, it is Ellis' (1992), *Visible Fictions* that has been the most helpful. Presenting an insightful comparison between design for broadcast television and cinema, he examines the technical and commercial factors impacting on the production of visual texts in both areas. His work has been useful because of his attention to the impact of environment and technology on the respective media forms.
The other significant historical text is Shore's (1985) analysis of the history and commercial context of rock video. This has provided perhaps the most comprehensive overview of the early profiles of directors producing videos up to that date. His work discusses how auteurs referenced film and advertising to create the texture and structure of music video. While not academic, this publication has become an important text because of Shore's ability to draw together and demonstrate the relationships between the commercial imperatives of the rock industry and emerging graphic forms.

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

influence
These works are important to the present research because they indicate origins and early developments of both the aesthetics and structure of music videos. They position particular features of this media form within the contexts that shaped them, and provide locations for research beyond the comparatively narrow consideration of much contemporary analysis.
This research also offers a nexus for this thesis from which the often-contradictory analyses and rationales proffered by designers and academics may be considered.

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

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

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

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

influence

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

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

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

critical studies

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

identity

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

influence

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

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

gay and lesbian identity

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

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

influence

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

postmodern sensibility

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

Kinder (1984), profiled postmodern codes of spectator relations created by music video and drew parallels between watching music videos and dreaming. Aufderheide (1987) discussed music video in terms of its ability to encourage viewers to constantly recreate their identities. Jones (1988) argued that music video, by its use of a digital narrative structure, profoundly restructured visual perceptions of space and time[11].

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

related narrative theory

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

definitions and structure of narrative

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

delineates a new state of affairs. A version of this idea has been developed and simplified by Todorov (1977) in his definition of a minimal narrative as a move from equilibrium, through disequilibrium to a new equilibrium.
However, it is Mieke Bal's (1997) definition of a narrative as *"a series of connected events composed of language signs, caused or experienced by actors, presented as a finite, structured whole"* (p. 27), that I use in this present research to delineate narrative music videos from those, that either document an artist's performance, intercut a performance with other footage, or create a text of non sequential images that operate as an environment for the sound of the music[12]. By using this definition one is able to place emphasis on the transactional relationship between the performer and the narrative. This is the feature that essentially separates narrative videos from those that suggest stories. In this research, the transactional relationship between performer and events in the narrative is also helpful in separating homodiegetic and heterodiegetic positions within the texts.

the narrative voice

While Booth (1961), Lasswell (1948) and Stern (1991) have offered views on narrative that have been useful to this present research[13], it is the writings of Ellis (1992), Kozloff (1992), Mealing (2003) and Salen (2001) that have impacted the most significantly on the design of the narrative voices in this present project.

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

implications of its use. Mealing examines the paralinguistic "voice" of type as it has moved from still letterforms to a unique language form that operates in spatio-temporal environments[14].

narrative structure and style in television advertising

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

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

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

In terms of the design of *boy,* Gitlin (1987) provides perhaps the most pertinent analysis of the influence of advertising and music video design on television narrative[15] . He does this through a comparison

---

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

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

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

closure

While a range of writers has considered closure in narrative[16], it is Neupert's (1995) analysis of closure in his study of narration and endings in cinema that has offered two considerations for this present project. Neupert discusses film in terms of open and closed texts and his observation of specific devices used in cinematic narrative, including bracketing[17], and retrospection[18] are useful in understanding how music video may construct meaning and cohesion from seemingly disconnected imagery.

---

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

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

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

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

influence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

duction offers only a cursory analysis or explanation of the origins and cultural context of the language[19].

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

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

---

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

already in existence, it is the work of gay men who are personally involved with the culture of bog cruising which has been of significant assistance to this project. Their insights help to elucidate and explain in a New Zealand context, themes and rituals within the community. Many of these writers are men who have been involved in the BEAT projects[20] organised by the New Zealand and Australian AIDS groups. Goddard (1990) in *The Forgotten World*, provides one of the few acknowledgements of cultural practices, now generally assumed to have passed away, but still evidenced in rural and suburban cruising communities. Jenkin (1997) provides an historical and political overview of cruising in public places in New Zealand, and Smith (1993) provides a brief documentation of dynamics and rituals used by men in these communities.

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

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

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

influence

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

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

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

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

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

conclusion

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

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

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

methodology

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

(Okri, 1997, p. 119)

This chapter considers the methodology employed to create the short film *boy*. It outlines with reference to key processes and specific experiments, the complex and interrelated nature of reflection on practice[1] as a form of heuristic research.

The chapter begins with a consideration of the specific nature of the project within the research context of creative-production[2]. It then discusses some of the primary features of heuristic research driving the film's resolution, and finally examines these, through their appearance in the three primary arenas of ideation and development: dialogic designer's journals, sketching, and narration.

the project as creative production

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Schön's forms of experiment in practice

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

exploratory experiment

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

move-testing experiments

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

hypothesis testing experiments

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

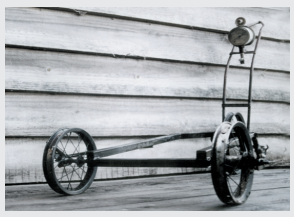


Fig. 1:12 *Sketches and prototypes for Sam's trolley (2000-2002).*
Many pages of sketches underpinned the development of final prop used in the film. Ideally I was seeking to create an artifact that was both fragile and purposeful, something that would visually build on Sam's distorted relationship with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

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

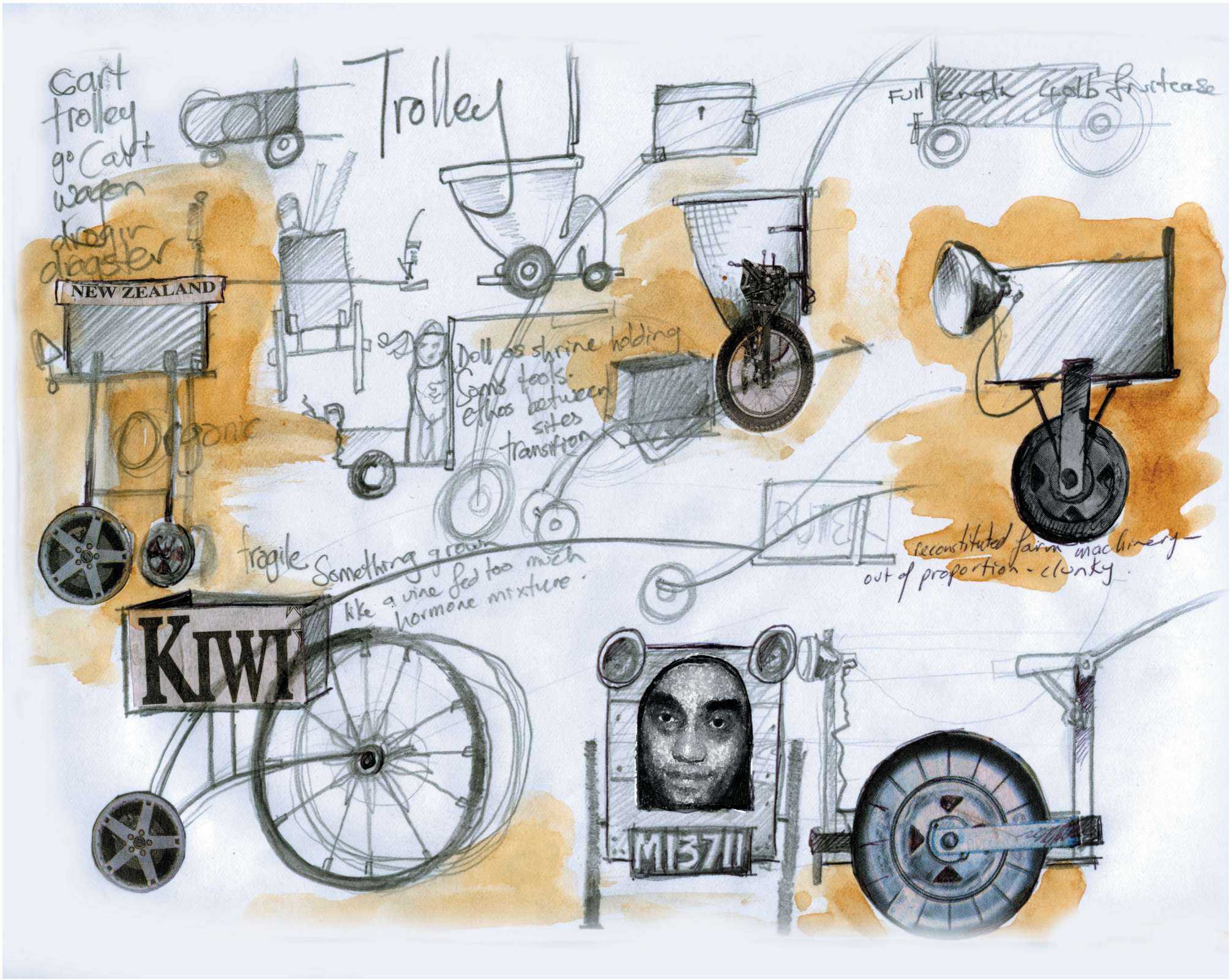
transactional relationships

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

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

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

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


Cart
trolley
go Cart
wagon
drag'r
dragster
Trolley
NEW ZEALAND
Doll as shrine holding
Como feels
ethos between
sites
transition
fragile Something grown
like a vine fed too much
hormone mixture.
KIWI
reconstituted farm machinery—
out of proportion - clunky.
MI3711

While *boy* is not strictly autobiographical, much of the decision-making was based on recollections and reflections on personal experience. I grew up in the community in which the story was filmed. I knew the streets, the pub, the school, and the hot pools, because they were places woven through my childhood. The interviews I conducted to build Sam's world of the bogs, were with friends. The language form they used (that I designed as the typographical profile of the film) was a language I had learned as an adolescent. The position I adopted in the process of gathering and verifying the lexicon that fed key questions and concerns in the project was that of an inside researcher[4].

Finally, the completed text is not a fixed, objective construction for disseminating information but a film designed to provoke reflection, through its deliberate alignment of incident, structure, and aesthetic.
Much of the decision-making leading to refinements in the text, was 'felt'. It came from long periods of contemplation on selected contexts, events and emerging experiments. These were often transformed intuitively. This is because as both Schön and Scrivener suggest

> *there is a recognition that the creator's interest is in transforming the situation (i.e. psychological, emotional and created) to something better (e.g., equilibrium between intention and realization).*
>
> (Scrivener, 2000a, p. 7)

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

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

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

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

research method

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

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

Schön's analysis of the nature of this type of research was something I only discovered after the project started. Initially I had begun with a fixed question that I sought to test and answer through a series of analyses and experiments[5].

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The protean and subjective nature of this project had a fundamental influence on its research design. Guba (1990) argues there are two philosophical considerations a researcher must address before designing a methodology for a practice-led project. He suggests the choice of methodology should be a consequence of epistemology and ontology. Thus, the methodology is developed inside an awareness of what the researcher considers knowable (or potentially knowable), what can be researched (or is irresolvable through practice alone), and an understanding of the relationship between the researcher and the knowable.
Thus a positivist paradigm of inquiry is profiled by realist ontology (reality exists as an external phenomenon), and an objectivist (or detached) epistemology. In contrast, a constructivist paradigm is profiled by relativist ontology (the acceptance of multiple realities that may exist as social and personal constructions) and a subjectivist epistemology.

Gray (1996) says

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

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

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

heuristics

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Second, they suggest that the researcher must be prepared for the research question to change during the research process. They argue that the research question may only be fully known after being successfully explored. This often means regarding changes as a positive sign of accumulating knowledge and insight. The authors suggest when this situation occurs, *"the research person is advised to continue the research under new headings despite institutional and planning problems that may arise"* (ibid. p. 7). While their consideration of the disruption is framed inside advice for non-design based disciplines[6], changes in both the preliminary research question and those emerging out of reflection on developments within it, meant that substantial restructurings were often required, sometimes inside very compressed timeframes. A significant example of this was the need, because of time and resource constraints, to suddenly cut carefully integrated scenes out of the film while we were shooting. This meant sudden and substantial restructurings of character and narrative development, and the loss of scenes that had been embedded into both the linear flow and the developing diegesis of the film.

---

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

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

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

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

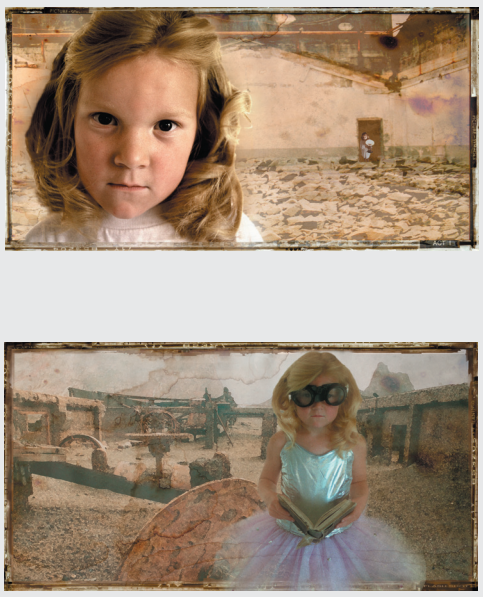


Fig. 1:13 *Indicatives of identical twins in the dump (2000).*

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

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

variation of perspectives

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

Fig. 1:14 Still frame from *The Coopers* 1997.
Traditionally my approach to film and theatre narrative has employed the gradual presentation of a range of episodes that resolve into coherence as the text progresses. In *The Coopers*, as in my writing for theatre, the work developed in a linear fashion from a written script .

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

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

dialogic designer's journal

The journal[7] is a flexible, non-linear system of data gathering and processing that enables unique systems of grouping and dialogic reflection on emerging ideas.

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

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

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

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

---

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

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

The journal also has the advantage of being reflective, reflexive and portable. The journals used in this project record observations, impressions and reflections from the outset of the research. Newbury (2001) argues that the journal is *"a self reflexive and media literate chronicle of the researcher's entry into, engagement with and departure from the field"* (p. 7). Because of the portability of a journal, it is a helpful method of recording information in a relatively non-threatening manner[8]. At the beginning of this project I spent considerable time recording buildings, people and locations in these documents. These recordings were media discursive, moving between sketching, drawing, creative writing, small paintings and photography. Prosser and Schwartz (1998) make a distinction between a visual diary [subjective] and a visual

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

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

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

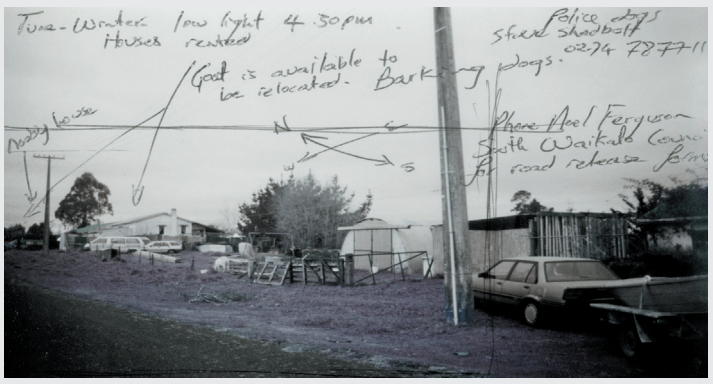
record [objective], though I would suggest that with designer's journals these distinctions could be somewhat blurred. Although research is generally experienced subjectively[9], the journal is also a method of recording site-specific information. This includes gathering technical data like light direction, shadow densities, location ownership, and information relating to seasonal changes accessed from local people who stop to talk with you while you are working. These notes are generally scrawled down onto pictures rather than written on separate pages as it helps to facilitate a quick reference system when I need to follow up on information at a later date. (Fig. 1:16)

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

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

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

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



sketching

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

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

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

The three purposes of sketching used as a method of researching this present project differ widely in application and purpose. While sketching as a method of processing and communicating ideas has been widely discussed, (Ferguson, 1992; Goel, 1995; Goldschmidt, 1991; Herbert, 1998; Hwang & Ullman, 1990; Pipes, 1990; Purcell & Gero, 1998; Rogers, 2000; and Scrivener, 2000b), much of the emphasis of research in the area of design has focused on what Rogers (2000) considers are three primary forms: concept sketching, presentation drawing, and drawing for manufacture[10].

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

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

as a method of communicating with oneself. Schön (1983) suggests that through sketching, designers construct a "virtual world" where *"the pace of action can be varied at will. The designer can slow down and think about what he [sic] is doing"* (p. 159).

contemplative sketching

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

> *creativity is linked to a state of consciousness where images appear. This is usually a passive state where we are not trying to be creative but are receptive to experience and ideas.* (p. 74)

The sketching and notes on the car are concerned less with the creation of fictional narratives and more with recording impressions of brutal neglect and indifference. These ideas were later trialed on characters in the film rather than sets and artifacts, and were eventually personified in the behavior of the skinheads.

Fig. 1:18 *Contemplative sketches of Princes street Putaruru (2001) and a car dumped on Sealy street Arapuni (2002).*

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

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

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

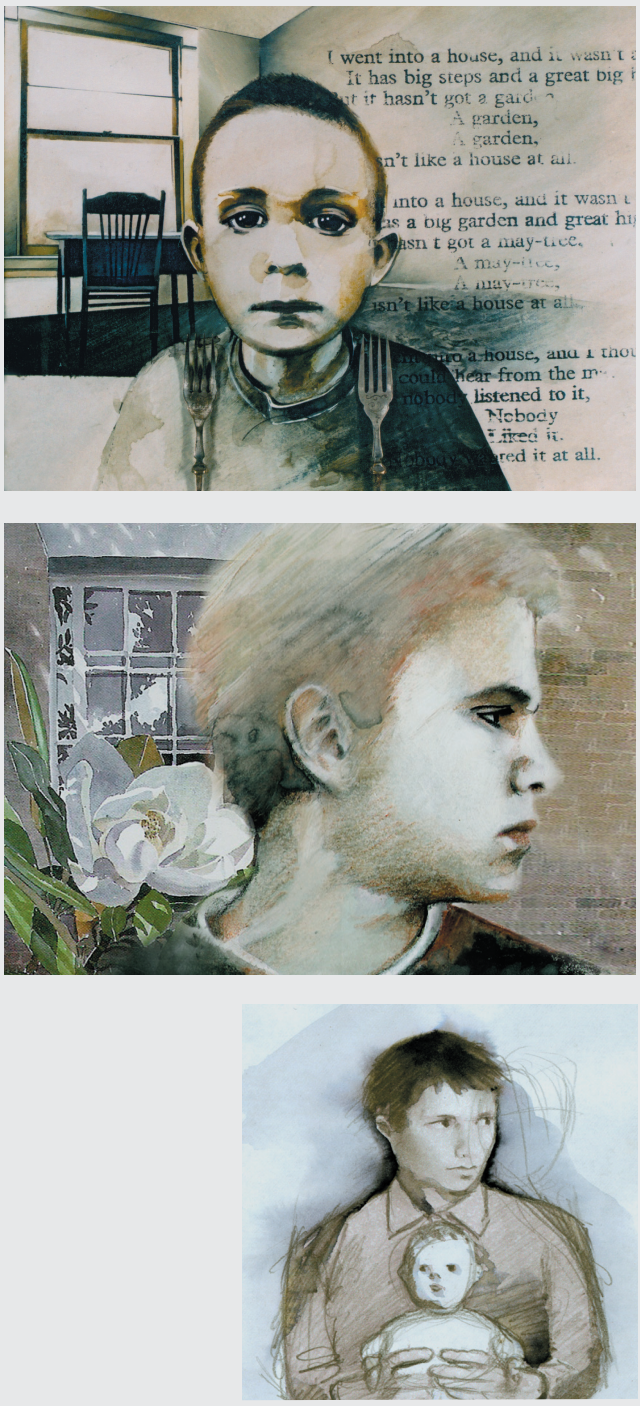


Fig. 1:19 *Contemplative drawings and paintings of Sam (1999-2003). These are generally media discursive works used to trace a fictional childhood. I was seeking to determine the development and "look" of a child who ages before his time, somebody who is watchful but locked inside himself. It is from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

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

process sketching
Scrivener (2000b) suggests that

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

Rogers (2000) argues that the sketch

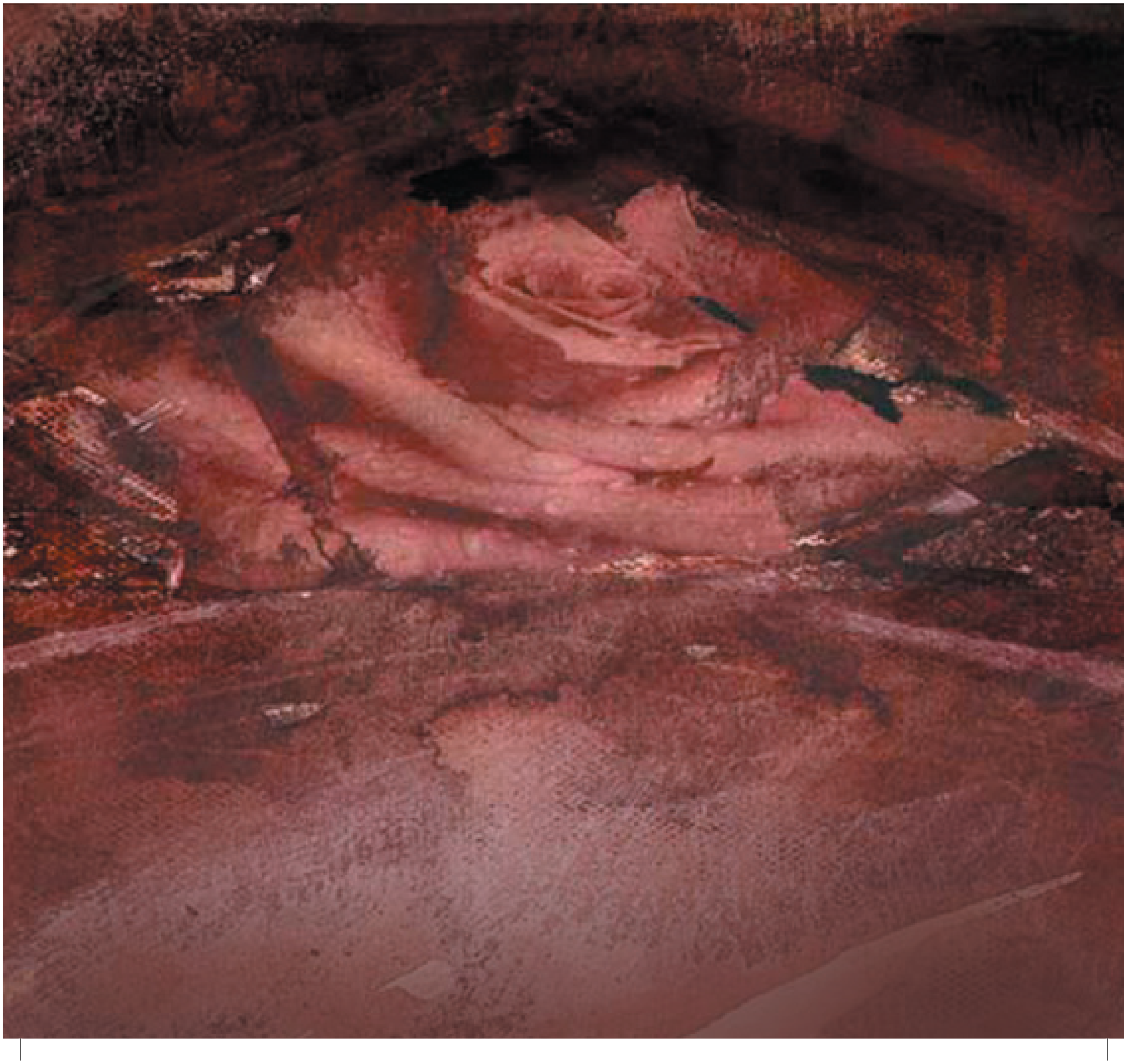
> *possesses the potential to act as both a facilitator and recorder of creative acts, presenting opportunities for improved evaluation and the restating of problems.* (p. 452)

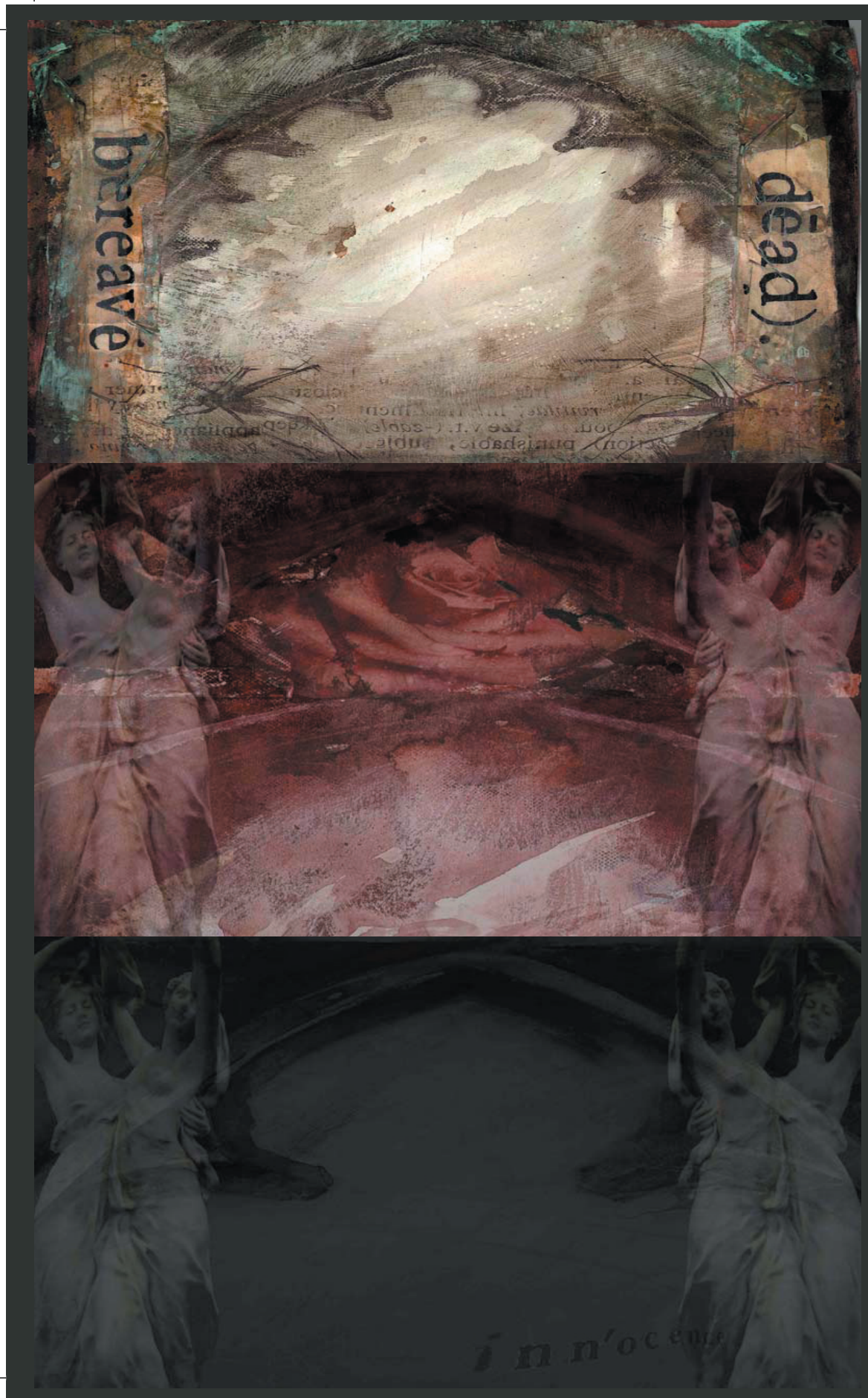
In this project sketching was used to ideate, develop, and test hypotheses in several areas. For the development of the shrines that divided the film into its three sections[11], sketching was used as a method of trialing out and refining generic approaches. See figs 1:20 & 1:21 (over leaf).

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

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

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





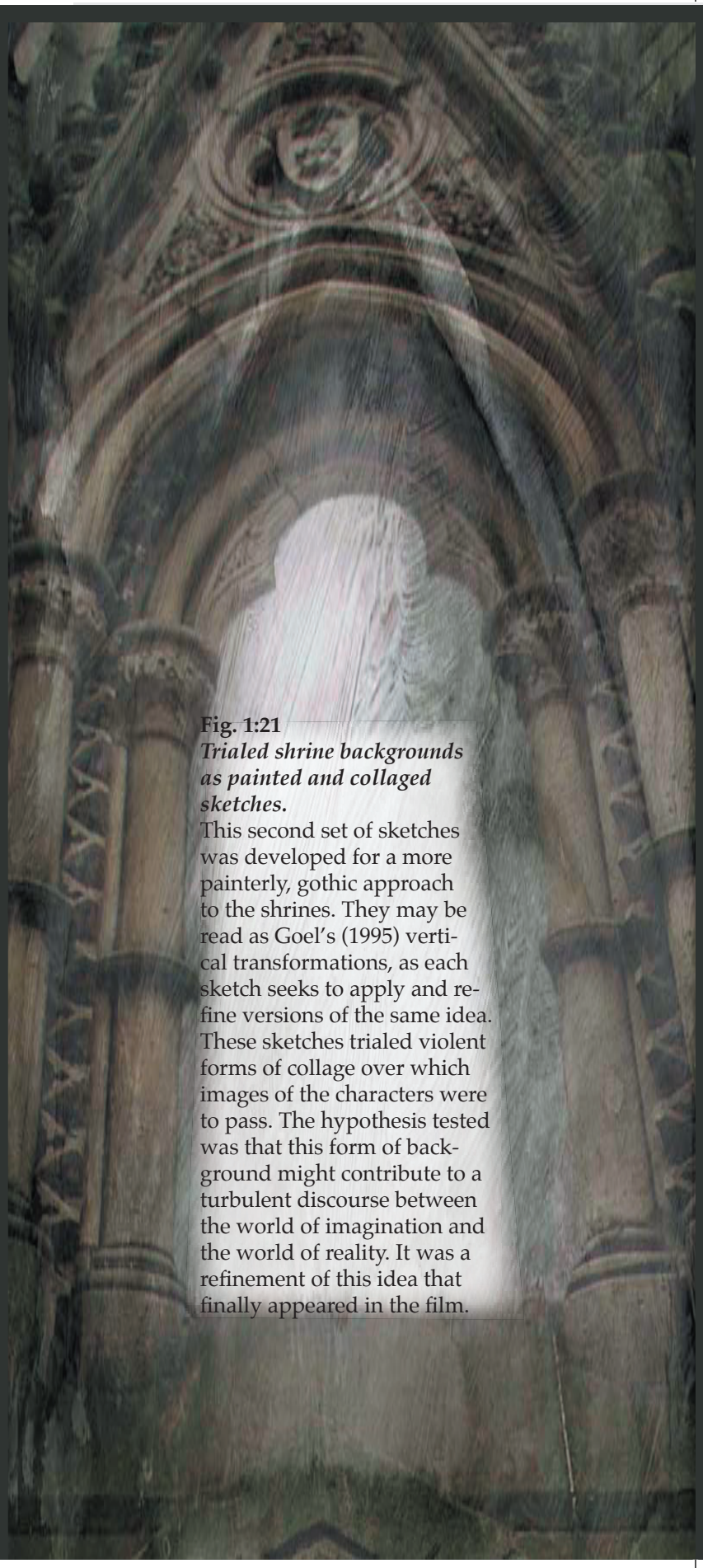


Fig. 1:21
Trialed shrine backgrounds as painted and collaged sketches.
This second set of sketches was developed for a more painterly, gothic approach to the shrines. They may be read as Goel's (1995) vertical transformations, as each sketch seeks to apply and refine versions of the same idea. These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

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

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

Fig. 1:23

indicative sketching

Indicative sketching may be compared to Ferguson's *talking sketch*. On the surface this form of sketching might not be considered integral to the generation of new perspectives, especially when it is used as Ferguson (1992) suggests, *"to clarify complex and possibly confusing parts of a drawing"* (p. 27). However, filmmaking is often a discursive undertaking where as a director and designer, one is working closely with other creative participants. If a sketch simply operates as a system of clarification it can bypass the potential synergy in collaborative visions of a scene. Because indicative sketching in this project sought to suggest parameters as a means of stimulating discourse, its form is generally very different to the other two types of sketching. While contemplative sketching is often quite detailed, and processive sketching comparatively focused, in this project, indicative sketching is often profiled by its vague, incomplete and generic[12] style. (See figs 1:22 & 1:23).

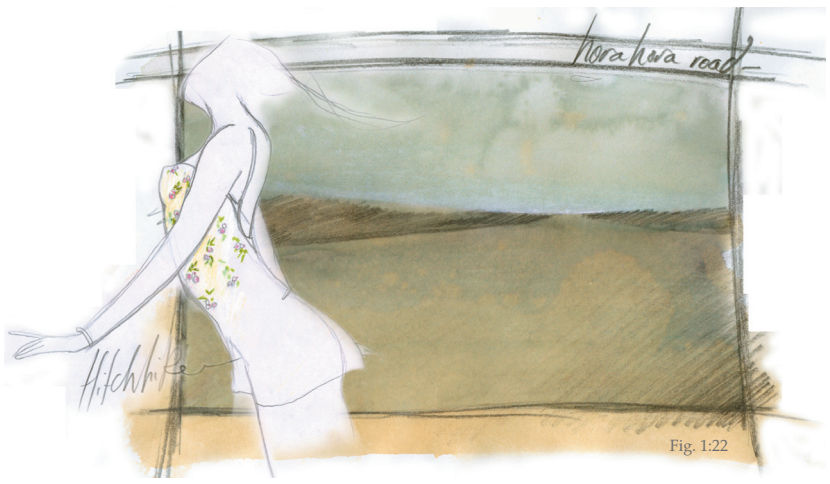


Fig. 1:22

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

narration
Closely related to, but as an extension of indicative sketching, is the use of narration in the development of creative projects.
Schön (1983) says

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

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

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

plot development
The first is the questioning, testing and resolution of the film's plot.
Unlike most film, the script was not written but developed through multiple tellings. This grew out of my professional background as an actor and storyteller. The narrative grew from a series of described pictures that fleshed out and trialed incidents against the central idea of a collision between a young boy's over-ground and underground worlds.
The initial story began one afternoon when homesick, I had returned from England for a week and my partner and I visited a dilapidated set of hot pools in the district where I grew up. In the afternoon light the elderly matriarch who ran the complex, served us tea on the verandah of the hotel. She gave us a plate containing four small, damp, cucumber and tomato sandwiches. We drank the tea on the porch and as we sat there a boy rode past on his bike….
From this small core, I began telling and retelling a fictional story to friends. With each telling they would ask questions and I would fill in details, trialing events against the emerging narrative and refining and editing past tellings. This process of inventing and reinventing

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

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

Showing people these images and weaving the story through them, enabled me to test and design new boundaries of meaning and relationships between composite bodies of information in the narrative[13].
Schön says

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

---

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

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

plot performance

Another method of maximising Kleining and Witt's variation of perspectives, in heuristic research, is the employment of narration as a discursive system in the styling of performance. This profiles clearly in the collaborative approach taken to actors' portrayals and specific technical approaches adopted in the generation of imagery for the film. Most of the actors I cast for *boy* were local people. They knew the over-ground diegesis of the film and brought with them a rich source of experience. By treating film direction as a discursive form of narration I was able to achieve a high level of credibility in the performance from a cast of whom none were professional actors[14]. Because there were no lines to learn, generally a scene was discussed with the actor and details tested through a short series of interpretive performances. Through this process, new details surfaced that could not have been present had I simply been directing a predetermined script. (Fig. 1:25)

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

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

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

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

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

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

narration in imagery design

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

However, significantly as we approached filming, the role of the sketch diminished[16]. By moving to a more discursive, shared narration of the scene, both the director and crew were able to interact with the specifics of the location as it was presented on the day. Because an unpredictable feature (like the soft lighting in a break between showers at the time we were filming the funeral scene), can be advantageously imported into a text, systems for rapid reflection on, and adjustment to, the design of this project needed to be well structured in to the methodology. Schön (1983) points out that, *"the practice situation often changes rapidly and may change out from under the experiment"* (p. 144). To maximise the potential of this instability, discursive modes of narration in the production of the film were embedded into collaborative areas of the project so a more effective and synergetic flexibility was accessible, when needed.
This process also shifted the ground away from reference back to other film texts as a method of solving a problem, because we were trialing move-testing experiments inside a construct of sketches and shared narration.

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

Eckert (2000) suggests that

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

However, it was an aim of this research to create a body of work that did not simply reconstitute structures and re-acknowledge established approaches to cinema into another short film. Realising that film and television are highly intertextual on both deliberate[17] and less conscious levels, this research sought to import a higher degree of signature into the work. It did this via concentration on a rigorously considered diegesis and a discursive form of narration that continually reflected back against the project's own synthesised data.

technical capture and synthesis of data

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

Boy was shot on 35mm film, and used the HD format for all intermediate stages of post-production[18]. This digital format allowed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[19] Detail of *The Last Supper*. Andrea Del Castagno. 1447. Fresco, 15′ 5″x32′. Cenacolo of Saint Apollonia, Florence.

conclusion

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

Within this project, heuristics acts as an effective approach to questioning and discovery. The unique application of this methodology is profiled by a variety of systems used to maximise the structured variation of perspectives[20].

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

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

---

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