Textiles from our place: exploring connective textile making as a phenomenology of locale

By Joanne Donovan

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, (PhD)

2022

Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies

Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude to Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Scholarships, in particular, the Art and Design department, for supporting this research project via scholarship. I am deeply grateful. Further, I would like to thank both of my supervisors, Dr Amanda Smith and Dr Susan Hedges, for the tirelessly applied online supervision along with their thoughtful comments, deep insights and invaluable recommendations. Words cannot quantify my appreciation for the depth of fortitude, commitment and kindness extended to me as a student by Mandy and Sue. I am also thankful to my employer, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology for providing time to research alongside lecturing and for their other support via professional development leave. I want to thank friends and family for the strength, and aroha that was given freely whenever my stamina ran low, and without which, this research journey would not have been possible. I owe a debt of gratitude to my father, Richard Donovan for modelling to me at a young age, his bravely experimental approach to making, fixing and mending anything he turned his hand to. Also, to my mother Pamela Donovan, along with aunties, grandmothers and women friends, who handed on the skills and methods for making textiles, and garments. Thank you for the gift of making and for passing on to me the sense of reward that comes from creatively re-using discarded things. Ngā mihi ki a koutou katoa mo to āwhina me te tautoko. Ngā mihi mo to aroha, ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa.

Abstract

This doctoral research queries the question; what is the process, outcome and experience of crafted textile making, springing from a locally generated self-reliance? The thesis gives focus to a process of making that forms through the maker's locale, which is relied upon for salvaged materials, impressions, memories and experiences to activate the making process. The approach is introspective and localised, with emphasis placed on what the human being can do and achieve, within their singular sphere of experience.

Drawing upon local self-reliant traditions encountered as a child in Aotearoa New Zealand, the practice explores locally available materials using improvisation as a design method. The locale is treated dialogically, from where materials and the environs are responded to as a way to generate an idiosyncratic textile vernacular.

Collaging, juxtaposition, felting and stitch are developed as methods to explore materials and the research question within a materials-led design process. Fibres and fabrics are layered to communicate narratives, memories and experiences drawn from the materials and therefore, from the locale. The textiles appear multi-vocal as layers of context are blended using stitch and felt.

Through making, the textiles are experienced as linked to place while also connecting temporally through stories and traces of previous touch to a journey through time. Textiles in this research shift from temporary and brief to perceived within a material continuum that is always evolving and devolving. The research is situated between craft and design, as maker-led, materials-led practice. Drawing on sources from anthropology, philosophy along with craft and design theory, the creative practice

inquiry, investigates textile as matter in motion, making as journeying within a locale and through the experiences of the maker.

Key words: Practice-led, bricolage design, locale, improvisation, remediation, inter-action, play, self-reliance, temporal materiality, felting, stitching

Contents

Acknowledgements i
Abstract ii
Contents iv
List of Figures vi
1 Introduction 1
1.1 Aim and objective 3
1.2 Research question 5
1.3 Rationale 6
1.4 Background to the research 8
1.4.1 Definitions of craft 8
1.4.2 The politics of the handmade 11
1.4.3 Consumption and alternative directions 12
1.5 Positioning the researcher 15
1.5.1 The locale as nexus point 28
1.6 Research approach 35
1.7 Summary 38
2 Contextual Review 40
2.1 Introduction 40
2.2 Self-reliant traditions in Aotearoa New Zealand 41
2.2.1 Locale textile making 53
2.2.2 Felting in New Zealand 69
2.3 Circular and amateur models for design 74
2.4 Making as a connective human journey 79
2.4.1 Touch and intimate context 86
2.5 Summary 93
3 Research Design 96
3.1 Introduction to methodology and methods 96
3.2 Practice-led methodology 96
3.2.1 The phenomenology of place; the maker, locale and time 101
3.3 Research methods 104
3.3.1 Bricolage as method 104
3.3.2 Bricolage as improvisation 107
3.3.3 Collecting, juxtaposition and remediation. 111

3.3.4 Embodiment through gesture 115
3.3.5 Design development 117
3.4 Summary of methodology and processes 120
4 Research practice 122
4.1 Introduction 122
4.2 Gathering and layering 122
4.3 Past to future: A stitch through time 132
4.4 Remediation, textiles in flow 136
4.5 Improvisation and story telling 149
4.6 Aesthetics; locale, materials and maker 163
4.7 Forged through change; material in motion 176
4.8 Summary 181
5 Synthesis and Conclusions 184
5.1 Introduction 184
5.2 Resolution of bricolage inquiry 185
5.3 Findings within the context of materials and technique 186
5.4 Distilling key discoveries 187
5.5 Proposed new work and directions 189
5.6 Contribution 190
5.7 Conclusion 192
References 193
Glossary of project terms 204
Catalogue of project/exhibition works 206
Appendix A: Using dyestuffs from the locale 211
Appendix B: Preliminary Felt Test 214
Appendix C: Felt making using mixed textiles 218
Appendix D: Exhibition 222
Appendix E: Contact sheets of local images 231
Appendix F: Permissions for use of images 236

List of Figures

Figure 1: Black walnuts gathered from the Ngongotaha stream that flows past the studio. 4

Figure 2: Donovan, P. (1981). Richard Donovan and Liana Donovan creating a vegetable garden and compost bin [Photograph] 17

Figure 3: Donovan, P. (1968), Joanne and Celine Donovan wearing jerseys and trousers made by their mother. [Photograph]. 18

Figure 4: Donovan, J. (2015). Textile collage [Handloom hemp scraps, digitally printed linen, decaying silk handkerchief, darned]. 21

Figure 5: The 1970s silhouette with a soft shoulder and flowing length. Garments by Hullabaloo, Peppertree and Bendon [Image]. In https://nzfashionmuseum.org.nz/the-1970s-fashion-revolution/ 22

Figure 6: Lovedays NZ Ltd. (1964). Pamela and Richard Donovan's wedding, the bride and groom exiting the church [Photograph]. 23

Figure 7: Textiles from the maker's collection..... 28

Figure 8: The maker's worktable 30

Figure 9: Interior spaces within the maker’s studio..... 31

Figure 10: from left; 1. Flowering Kanuka around studio environs. 2. The Ngongotaha stream. 3. Sulphur landscape at Tikitere, Rotorua. 32

Figure 11: Clockwise from upper left 1. A boiled wool textile in progress. 2. Tikitere, Rotorua. 3. Timber stack. 4. Sulphur burned tree branch, Lake Rotorua 33

Figure 12: from left 1. Wear and decay on a neighbour’s shed door. 2. Lake Rotorua 34

Figure 13: Gathered materials. Worn blanket, disused clothing and vintage lace. 35

Figure 14: Collected elements 37

Figure 15: Context map 41

Figure 16: Studio la gonda. (2019). Kerosene crate, remodelled into an armchair [Photograph]. In Chitham, et al, 2019, *Crafting Aotearoa: A cultural history of making in New Zealand and the wider Moana Oceania* (p.224) 42

Figure 17: Adams, A, & Haru, S. (1997). Woollen butterfly rug by Robert Jackson made using 4-ply wool unravelled from discarded jerseys, circa 1945 [Photograph]. In Wolfe, All our own work: New Zealand’s folk art (p.65) 44

Figure 18: Knowles, A. (2005). Unfinished wool hearth rug [Photograph]. In McCleod, Thrift to fantasy (p.233) 46

Figure 19: Ryan, M. (n.d). Needle book. [Wool blanket and crochet]. Private collection 47

Figure 20: Knowles, A. (2005). Patchwork quilt made from menswear fabric samples, probably 1930s [Photograph]. In McLeod, Thrift to fantasy (p.221) 48

Figure 21: Donovan J. (2019). Cashmere, woven in [Needle felt collage, wool blanket, dyed handloom hemp, cashmere knit and wool. Detail] 50

Figure 22: Donovan J. (2019). Cashmere, woven in [Needle felt collage, wool blanket, dyed handloom hemp, cashmere knit and merino wool] 51

Figure 23: Cochran, V. (2020) Seated Odalisque with left knee bent.(after HM), [Cut woollen garments and fabric on cotton backing, 1360 x 730mm] https://annamilesgallery.com/artists/vita-cochran 54

Figure 24: Donovan, J. (2019). N-twined [Felt-loomed vintage needlework, embroidered, detail] 55

Figure 25: Donovan, J. (2019). N-twined [Felt-loomed vintage needlework, embroidered] 56

Figure 26: Cochran, V. (2007) Hand Work Bag. [Twelve pairs of nylon gloves, hand stitched]. https://www.surfacedesign.org/winter-2020-sdj-aotearoa-new-zealand-out-now/ 57

Figure 27: Greenbank, J. (2006). The tea party. [Wool and found objects]. Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/2007-026a-f/jacquelyn-greenbank/tea-party 59

Figure 28: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Merino wool, mixed textiles and sundries, needle felted and stitched. Detail 1250 x 700mm] 60

Figure 29: Morrison, K. (2002). No sugar [Hand stitched quilt] https://www.nationalquiltregister.org.au/quilts/no-sugar/61

Figure 30: Morrison, K. (n.d). Bed of roses. [Embroidered and quilted woollen blanket] Image by Caird, J. in Packer, Stitch. Random House (p.150-151). 62

Figure 31: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Stitch detail] 63

Figure 32: Gough, A. (2002). A bird cannot fly without its feathers. [Wool blanket, hand stitched, printed and applique]. Image by Caird, J. In Packer (2006, p. 77) 65

Figure 33: Donovan J. (2019). Gathering [Detail]..... 66

Figure 34: Caird, J. (2006). Rag Rug by Bronwyn Griffith [Image] in Packer, Stitch. Random House (P.84). 67

Figure 35: White, T. (2006). Nuno felt scarf. [Merino wool, silk and wet felted]. Image by Caird, J. In Packer, Stitch, Random House. (p.237) 70

Figure 36: Donovan, J. (2018). Reflected sky and field-felted [Needle felted Corriedale wool batt, digital print, needlework and silk fibre] 71

Figure 37: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering. [felted vintage blanket, with knitted and stitched elements, detail] 72

Figure 38: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Needle felt loomed silk embroidery, digital prints, vintage needlework, alpaca and lambswool] 73

Figure 39: Twigger Holroyd, (2018). Pocket sampler, reknit revolution [image] 75

Figure 40: Donovan, J. (2019). Mended anew [Lambswool felt loomed with vintage handloom hemp scraps, digital print, stitched-in vintage needlework. Detail] 78

Figure 41: Crochet blanket from the researcher’s textile collection. Wool, 2000mmx 1300mm. Original maker and date unknown. . 80

Figure 42: Donovan, J. (2020). Imbued. [Felt loomed vintage textiles with merino wool, hot water washed and handstitched with vintage embroideries. Detail] 82

Figure 43: Mended patch on handloom linen remnant. From the maker’s textile collection 83

Figure 44: Donovan, J. (2020). Imbued. [Felt loomed vintage textiles with merino wool, hot water washed and handstitched with vintage embroideries] 84

Figure 45: Stitch and applique follow as a meander, in response to the materials and processes. 87

Figure 46: Donovan, J. (2018). Waipara [Vintage silk felt loomed with merino wool and hand stitched. Detail] 88

Figure 47: Ryan, M. (n.d). Undergarment [‘Boiling silk’ garment, hand stitched and tatted] Private collection. 90

Figure 48: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Detail of wear and decay elements]. 91

Figure 49: Reference image of staining effect on stitched cotton using expired molasses 98

Figure 50: Practice, theory and exegesis 100

Figure 51: Multiple activities. From left to right, clockwise. 1. Walnut dyeing. 2. Studio. 3. Juxtaposition of dyed fragments. 4. Deconstruction. 5. Staining. 6. Reflection zone 109

Figure 52: Concept map of bricolage activity. A=dyebath B=deconstruction C=sketching leading to stitch D=Wet felting C=Rinsing E=Needle Felting F=Staining 110

Figure 53: Group of vintage buttons from the maker's collection ... 112

Figure 54: Donovan, J. (2019). Mended anew [Felt loomed and wet felted lamb's wool with vintage textile applique and hand stitch remediation. Detail] 113

Figure 55: Donovan, J. (2021). Salvage [Re-purposed jacket, applique and stitch elements. detail] 115

Figure 56: Donovan, J. (2021). Salvage [Stitched panel detail].... 116

Figure 57: Donovan, J. (2020). Juxtaposition as mind-map holding theoretical ideas in a visual form [Photograph] 117

Figure 58: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Merino wool, various textiles and sundries, needle felted and stitched. 1250 x 700mm] 123

Figure 59: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River—reticulated [Detail].. 124

Figure 60: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River -reticulated [Detail]. 125

Figure 61: Donovan, J. (2020). Cashmere, woven in [Stitch detail]. 126

Figure 62: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River-reticulated [Back face of textile]. 127

Figure 63: collections of scraps and textiles used in felt collages. 128

Figure 64: Donovan, J. (2019). Impression [Felted crochet wool, into sacking] 129

Figure 65: Donovan, J. (2020) Cashmere, woven in [Cashmere knitted garment, lace, digital print, applique and stitch felted] 130

Figure 66: Donovan, J. (2020) Cashmere, woven in [Detail]..... 131

Figure 67: Donovan, J. (2019) Process montage [Digital image]..... 132

Figure 68: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Felt-loomed collage of fibre and stitch]. 133

Figure 69: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Detail of mixed weave and felted fibre] 134

Figure 70: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Detail]..... 135

Figure 71: Donovan, J. (2019). Waipara. [Vintage silk needle felted with merino white merino wool and black lambswool. Hand stitched detail. 800mm x 400mm]. 138

Figure 72: Collected remnant of antique 'wallpaper' painted sacking. From an abandoned, burned-out homestead, southern Bay of Plenty, Aotearoa 139

Figure 73: Donovan, J. (2022). Waipara - transmuted [Montaged needle felts with applique and hand stitch] 140

Figure 74: Donovan, J. (2022). Waipara -transmuted [Detail]..... 141

Figure 75: clockwise from left; 1. Dye work in progress. 2. The wool underside. 3. Stitching a dye resist. 4. Ready for the dyebath. 5. Submerged in the dye. 6. Rinsing. 142

Figure 76: Black walnut 'all in one’ dyebath..... 143

Figure 77: clockwise from left; 1. Donovan, J. (2019). Motunau-reserved [Vintage silk needle felted with merino. Walnut dyed. 800mm x 400mm] 2. Detail. 3. Underside, detail. . 145

Figure 78: from right to left 1. Donovan, J. (2019). Furrows [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool. Hot washed needle felted, top stitched and appliqued] 2. Edge detail. 3. Rear detail showing hot felted texture, splits and stitch .. 146

Figure 79: Donovan, J. (2019). Waimakariri-braided [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool, smocked, appliqued and stitched] 148

Figure 80: Donovan, J. (2019) Eroded boardwalk Tikitere, Rotorua [Photograph] 149

Figure 81: Salvaged possessions from the Tarawera eruption. Museum of Te Wairoa, Rotorua 151

Figure 82: Donovan, J. (2021) Remnants from Te Wairoa [Merino wool felted with textile remnants] 152

Figure 83: Donovan, J. (2012). Remnants from Te Wairoa [Merino wool and lace remnants] 154

Figure 84: Donovan, J. (2021) Remnants from Te Wairoa [Needle felted textile elements with merino wool, alpaca. Hand stitched] 155

Figure 85: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Detail of the textures created in the hot wash phases of making] 156

Figure 86: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Merino wool and remnants, Felt loom and hot wash felted textile 157

Figure 87: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Detail]..... 158

Figure 88: Donovan, J. (2019). Eddies of pumice and ash at Sulphur point, Lake Rotorua [Photograph] 159

Figure 89: Donovan, J. (2020) Eddies retouched [Stitch detail].... 160

Figure 90: Donovan, J. (2020). Eddies retouched [Detail]..... 161

Figure 91: Donovan, J. (2020). Eddies retouched [Needle felted and hot washed silk with merino wool. 400mm x 400mm] 162

Figure 92: Sulphur blackened boardwalk at Sulphur point, Rotorua .. 163

Figure 93: Process image, Sulphur point, showing needle felted effect prior to hot washing 164

Figure 94: Donovan, J. (2020). Sulphur point [Worn blanket, long staple alpaca, needle felted and hot washed 1450 x 1060mm] 165

Figure 95: Donovan, J. (2020) Sulphur point [Detail]..... 166

Figure 96: Donovan, J. (2019) Terrain with stream [Photograph].... 167

Figure 97: Donovan, J. (2020). Trans-terraform felt [Worn linen panel, felted with Corriedale wool 2200 x 1100mm] 168

Figure 98: Montage; sulphur flow at Tikitere compared to felt textile 169

Figure 99: Donovan, J. (2020) Rivulet [Needle felted linen with alpaca fibre and hot wash felted] 170

Figure 100: Weathered plant matter, Hell's gate thermal park. Tikitere, Rotorua 171

Figure 101: Donovan, J. (2020). Elemental [Vintage blanket, needle felted, and hot wash felted with alpaca, lamb’s wool and silk fines 2100 x 1200mm] 172

Figure 102: Damaged silk panel with metallic thread embroidery 173

Figure 103: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Needle felted silk with collaged elements, embroidered] 174

Figure 104: Elemental forces at work, Sulphur point, Rotorua 174

Figure 105: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Detail] 175

Figure 106: The impression of lichen on weather worn timber 177

Figure 107: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [Felted knitted and woven elements, lamb’s wool, alpaca, and appliqued crochet with digital prints] 178

Figure 108: Weather worn wood with lichen, Rotorua [Photograph] ... 179

Figure 109: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [detail] 180

Figure 110: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [Folded, showing alternating views of front and back] 181

Figure 111: Clockwise from left;1. The Ngongotaha stream 2. Black walnuts floating down 3. Black walnut dye bath. 211

Figure 112: from left; 1. Black walnuts from the Ngongotaha stream. 2. Walnut dye bath. 3. Dye test on silk 212

Figure 113: from left. 1. Expired molasses dye test. 2. Expired coffee dye bath. 213

Figure 114: from left; 1. Oak tree detritus. 2. Iron, aluminium and tin dye mordants. 3. Dye tests and boiled wool. 4. Oak tree detritus dye bath. 213

Figure 115: Cleveland, D. (2018). Felt collection [Salvaged fibre, needle felted textile artefacts] 215

Figure 116: Donovan, J. (2018). Felt test [Digitally printed silk, needle work and wool needle felted) 216

Figure 117: Donovan, J. (2018). Felt Test 2 [Detail] 217

Figure 118: showing tacking stitches and pins holding elements onto the backing blanket, during the felting process 218

Figure 119: clockwise from lower left; 1. Wool and white alpaca being applied 2. Felt piece is rolled into a cotton sheet. 3. Partially blended textiles and fibre. 4 & 5. Fully blended fibre 219

Figure 120: from left; 1. Crumbling silk. 2. Digital print and needle work elements used in the piece. 220

Figure 121: Figure 122: preparation for the felt loom; elements are laid out onto an alpaca batt 220

Figure 123: Donovan, J. (2022). Exhibition of textile work invitation [Graphic design] 222

Figure 124: Fraser, A. (2022). Overview of exhibition layout, Part one [Photograph] 223

Figure 125: Fraser, A. (2022). Overview of exhibition layout, Part two [Photograph] 224

Figure 126: Fraser, A. (2022). Guests examine and discuss the textiles [Photograph] 225

Figure 127: Fraser, A. (2022). From left: Aue tiki nei teri, reflected sky with field, salvage, trans-terraform felt, water worn and rivulet. [Photograph] 225

Figure 128: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Aue teri nei tiki, detail, stack of textiles [Photograph]. 226

Figure 129: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Trans-terraform felt, rivulet detail [Photograph] 226

Figure 130: Fraser, A. (2022). From left: Waimakariri-braided. Folded textiles. Remnants from Te Wairoa [Photograph] 227

Figure 131: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Elemental, detail. Remnants of Te Wairoa [Photograph] 227

Figure 132: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Water worn, detail. Collection of textiles handled and jumbled by exhibition visitors. [Photograph] 228

Figure 133: Fraser, A. (2020) Little River -reticulated. Button detail captured on a visitor's smart phone [Photograph] 228

Figure 134: Coward, B. (n.d.). Butterfly [Hand made lace, 60 x 35mm] 229

Figure 135: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 001 [Contact sheet] 231

Figure 136: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 002 [Contact sheet] 232

Figure 137: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 003 [Contact sheet] 233

Figure 138: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 004 [Contact sheet] 234

Figure 139: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 005 [Contact sheet] 235

Chapter One

Introduction

1 Introduction

Growing up in a small rural town in the South Island of Aotearoa, New Zealand, relying on the locale for materials with which to making artefacts or repairing existing ones, was often done out of necessity. Whether it was fixing a car or knitting, people often treated locally available materials as an opportunity to create something unique and individual. 'Crafting' work was considered both necessary to life, and entertainment. It was common among friends and family for the women to meet in the evening or at weekends to do crafted handwork. Sitting among these circles of friends and relatives as a child, I was included and taught knitting, crochet, rug making, embroidery and various stitch methods. It was a source of creativity, social inclusion, warmth and pleasure. Garments and textiles were often the result of a communal way of being. Designer and theorist Ezio Manzini has referred to similar practices as 'making cultures'. These are practices that are autonomous in character, developed through natural creative skill, and generated through processes that arise from meeting needs in daily life (2016, p. 65).

Traditions of home-based textile crafting, 'making do' and a resourceful creative domestic have developed in Aotearoa New Zealand during past periods of scarcity (Griffin, 2003, p. 28). Government import restrictions on luxury or specialised materials fomented traditions of creative recycling and the use of local materials for textile and clothing production through the Depression and post-war periods (McLeod, 2013, p. 111, 2019a). The artefacts created during these times, were often elaborate and invested with artistic touches, expressing creativity and agency through difficult times (Griffin, 2003, p. 6).

As a child in the 1970s in rural New Zealand, textile and clothing-making were still common activities for women in our district. Materials available in the locale were central to the things we made. They often featured local animal fibre, salvaged fabric from worn out family clothing, and a mixed bag of 'left over' remnants and scraps. Salvaged materials were gathered for their aesthetic qualities or imbued connections to a person or event; these qualities became layered and reconfigured into new things.

Grandmothers, aunts, and my mother collected and valued a range of materials for making new articles. Wool items were pulled apart, and the wool was rewound into balls for reknitting. Garments were unpicked for unworn pieces of textile, buttons, zips, and lace. Worn out clothing were sometimes cut into strips and knotted up into rugs or used to create patchworked artefacts. The remnants people collected and stored contributed to a landscape of materiality, which had the capacity to be improvised into creatively generated garments or textiles. The eclectic nature of the materials used, invested a sense of a journey into the new artefact as each element spoke of past ownership, and a prior context of use. 'What could it be used for?' and 'this could 'come in handy' were subscripts that underwrote every piece of textile or raw material that was collected and saved. Material histories and lingering narratives became part of the next textile artefact. This view of materials as carriers of stored potential, is discussed by sustainable design theorist Kate Fletcher who considers this the foundation for a more connected, less superficial, experience of textiles and clothing (2016, p. 272). The potential for textile to emerge as a connective material and as such, to flow through time via a series of users and makers, is used as the basis of this research.

1.1 Aim and objective

This practice-led research aims to rely upon locally gathered materials, to develop a textile practice, working with and adapting to, the potential discovered within the gathered materials. The maker's available skills are adapted to gathered materials, bringing serendipity and improvisation to the fore of a maker-centred, locally centred, textile practice. The textiles produced are interrogated for communicative qualities that are produced when driven by a connective relationship to materials and the locale.

Textiles can imbue personal impressions, locale and signs of a human journey. Collecting fibre, pieces of precious textile, old lace, or handwork, can be a communicative experience. Each element expresses a story, that is seen as a shadowy layer. The layers have to be teased out, imagined and experienced before they are joined with other pieces of narrative into a new textile. Searching and discovering materials to salvage and use for textile making is the process of discovering latent potential. It involves a creative act, where the mind is open to picture what possibilities could happen. It involves reading the material for intriguing signs. The scent of age, the visual signs left behind from the previous life of the artefact, give rise to a meaningful and lasting tactility that is carefully shaped into new textile.

This process is experienced by the maker as a kind of *journey*, where the journey happens in the mind, as well as in the textile. The journey metaphor connects textile to a locale and represents an experience of locale that involves the history, impressions and memories of the maker, as much as the geographical place. The aim

is to re-construe textile from an artefact made as an adjunct to daily life, into something that represents a lived journey.

Figure 1: Black walnuts gathered from the Ngongotaha stream that flows past the studio.

Anthropologist and theorist Tim Ingold provides an analogy of making as a journey, that is physical, involves an intimate dialogue with materials, and is knowledge-making. Wayfaring evolves through making as materials are surrendered to, in the manner of a journey, as he writes here.

> Practitioners, I contend, are wanderers, wayfarers, whose skill lies in their ability to find the grain of the world's becoming and to follow its course while bending it to their evolving (Ingold, 2009, p. 92).

The textiles, materials and fibre that are collected, such as black walnuts, for dyeing (Figure 1), have journeyed their way into the maker's operational sphere where they are used to transform textiles. Textiles are made from chance discoveries, so the methods used, and the outcomes achieved, are not pre-planned. The objective is to

explore a process where textiles are created as the maker experiences locale, through the gathered materials, events and temporality. It is thinking-though-making and experiencing-within-making or making as an experience of locale. This is the aim at the heart of the research. As the interplay between textile, locale and experience are formed into a textile narrative through the making process, new knowledge is generated, in relation to practice-as-research (Mäkelä & Nimkulrat, 2018, p. 1).

1.2 Research question

The question that underpins this research is: *what is the process, outcome and experience of crafted textile making, springing from a locally generated self-reliance?*

Two areas of inquiry are explored through the above research question:

1) A locally referenced materiality is explored through improvising available materials to form new textiles via methods of felting, stitch and layering.

2) An exploration into the narrative of making as a journey, with the maker and locale at the centre, considering materials as 'matter in flow' that are gathered and responded to.

The starting point for this research was activated through Ingold's (2013, pp .21-22) theoretical concept of 'making as a process of growth'. This suggested the concept of maker and materials moving together through time, in a mutually responsive process. The concept suggested connectivity and a way to view textiles that is more interlinked with a lived experience, and more longitudinal over time.

The idiosyncratic and generative aspect of this process arises from the need to adapt the textile making practice to available materials, rather than adapting materials to skills or creative aspirations. Exploring textiles as 'matter in motion' investigates a process where textiles are created as the maker attunes to an experience of locale and to the available materials. This impacts upon the materials selected for use, the way the environs are viewed and interacted with. Signs of wear, or touch, signs of prior handling are seen as the imbued journey that arrives with the materials and are integrated into process. The approach gives rise to a view of textiles as existing in a continuum of intersecting flows of substance and influences.

The histories and impressions of change imbued in collected materials, are drawn together like threads of colour to emphasise a trajectory over time and place. Incorporating change and impressions of place, positions textiles as a material that lives, ages and changes alongside us. As a vehicle for touch, emotion and narrative, the final textiles are presented as if to 'speak' as expressions of an experience of locale and the experience/expression of the maker.

1.3 Rationale

The rationale for this research focuses on the concept of a *living textile* that is seen as intrinsically longitudinal when textile is created alongside us, used and reused in a more circular continuum. Textiles are positioned as both somewhat ephemeral as their substance can quickly fade or decay, and paradoxically, as potentially eternal. Textile can be repeatedly reused even when decayed, as its fragments can be reincorporated and remade into new artefacts through methods such as layering. As fibre disintegrates, the impression of its prior form can remain. When textile is

mended, remediated, deconstructed and reconstructed, its character can become imbued into new artefacts even as its material use, or substance devolves and decays. This research sets out to test the idea that the textiles generated from what is available flowing through the locale, function as textiles made through flux. As matter in motion, textile making can form an individual and dynamic ontology of textile use and reuse.

In her book, *Craft of use* (Fletcher, 2016), discusses the habits and values inherent within reuse practices. Through a series of case studies, she examines examples of garments that were made through improvisation, examples of textiles gift on repeatedly or repaired and reformed to keep them in a cycle of use. Fletcher pays special attention to the satisfaction that arises when used clothing or textiles are recreated or reused in generative ways. Fletcher writes:

> The craft of use recognises that satisfaction flows from what we succeed in being and doing with what we have available to us. The craft of use works as a device to help us commit to others and the future in order to foster our own well-being (Fletcher, 2016, p. 272)

Emotional or narrative connections between people and textiles are often the reason why a textile or piece of clothing becomes part of a lived experience. Links are drawn to people or the past, or to intriguing experiences. Fletcher describes the potency that can arise between people and textile.

> The link between a person and a garment can never be planned for but has lasting impact when a garment becomes a life-long companion. It reveals the potential for change in each individual and often marks that in the associations with a piece, for single, small actions can have big effects (Fletcher, 2019).

Exploring the interrelation link between people, place and textile through this research, positions textiles as the creative outcome of lived experience and place. The inter-dialogic character of textiles, as expression of place and a place marker for a series of points/experiences through time.

1.4 Background to the research

Although the majority of textile and garment production, in general, remain tightly integrated with the needs of a growth-oriented industry, Fletcher draws attention to patterns of use and activity that exist outside of industry through her *Local wisdom* and *Craft of use* projects (2010, 2016, 2021). Her perspective helps us to reframe our view of textiles toward an interactive ecology of materials, with people at the centre. Current trends within the maker and artisan movements, align to similar intentions which will be reviewed in the following section. The trends and approaches examined through this research, point to the potential held within communities and individuals, to generate vernacular making experiences, which are communicative, and rewarding.

1.4.1 Definitions of craft

According to craft historian Peter Greenhalgh (1997), the term vernacular craft can be assigned to those artefacts created within the metaphorical crucible of lived necessity[1]. As such, works produced within vernacular necessity, are not generally

[1] Greenhalgh organises his definition of craft into three discrete (but intersecting) threads of meaning: decorative art, the vernacular, and the politics of work (1997, p. 25). His definition of the latent power within vernacular making is singled out as especially relevant to this research.

intended to be revered in a gallery nor do they necessarily aspire to technical mastery but instead are objects made for use, or also out of an autonomous desire to create, as part of a lived experience. Greenhalgh attributes vernacular artefacts, with a concealed power, voicing a lingering impression of action and response. Artefacts made alongside daily life have the power to articulate simple truths, granting access to an 'authentic, natural, voice of a community, communicated through everyday things' (1997, p. 25).

In a similar vein, theorist Richard Sennett describes craftsmanship as a kind of citizenship dependant on connection to involvement with materials and place, summarised as a purposeful engagement connecting substance, skill, intention, and the body (2008, p. 21).

> Craftsmanship cuts a far wider swathe than skilled manual labour; it serves the computer programmer, the doctor, and the artist; parenting improves when it is practiced as a skilled craft, as does citizenship (Sennett, 2008, p. 9)

Sennet also suggests that we connect to our world through being intensely involved with it materially and can be read in the artefacts we make and use. These perspectives highlight the trans-mutable nature of materials as textiles and the way in which craft as the making and unmaking of substance, links us inextricably to a temporal fabric of existence, extending beyond our biological rhythms. Textiles we use and make every day can become imbued with temporal histories that follow us through time, weaving in and out of view. Sennett writes;

> Objects do not inevitably decay from within like a human body, the histories of things follow a different course in which metamorphosis and adaption play a stronger role across human generations (Sennett, 2008, p. 15).

This view of craft, as a transmutation of substance, a record and history of human activation of materials, provides a background definition of 'craft' within the context of the textiles created through this research. The textiles are made using tools, bodily movement, tacit knowledge, and an understanding along with a connection to materials and place. They are organised within immediate time but deliberately engage with touch, intention and skill from other time periods and other unknown craftspeople via past workmanship, which is appreciated and salvaged.

Ingold has written extensively about making as a continual process of engagement, not separate from but integral to, life itself. Making is not about the creation of artefacts or objects but an intentional encounter with materials, matter, and energy. Craft is accordingly, a journey through which, materials are brought alive as manifestations of human thoughts and imagination. For Ingold making is a process uniquely tied to the living journey of being human.

> …an inherently mindful activity in which the forms of things are ever-emergent from the correspondence of sensory awareness and material flows in a process of life. Artefacts and thoughts are the more or less ephemeral cast-offs of this process, strewn along the way. Rather than imposing form on matter, the maker—operating within a field of forces that cut across any divisions between body and environment — is caught between the anticipatory reach of the imagination and the frictional drag of materials (Ingold, 2014).

Aligning with Ingold's and Sennett's view of craft as connective—as materials working in a continuum set within place and time—the textiles in this research are

not made with a view to evolving a perfect form or specific use. Instead, they are intended to represent a vernacular journey of making which explores and draws upon local context through gathered materials, and the imbued histories found in fibre, worn clothing and handwork. The locale yields up materials, in the form of dye stuffs, stitching materials, aging fabrics, and fibre influences, which converge to form new textiles, they in turn become a living document of maker engagement with materials, and place.

1.4.2 The politics of the handmade

Craft within the context of this research is positioned within the wider, conceptual discussion, exploring a space in the dialogue, where values, intentions and processes are a place holder for alternatives to the status quo. As such, this research practice is deliberately informed by the researcher's direct experiences of self-reliant attitudes and ways of being, which are re-enacted to explore process, new experiences and conditioned outcomes, rather than to create specific artefacts per se.

Researchers Chantal Carr and Chris Gibson predict an evolving new relevance for craft, and self-reliant skill as a rising awareness of the limits of primary resources gains traction (2016; 2018). The Covid pandemic of 2019-2021 compelled new methods of workplace engagement, shopping, and socialising. Lockdowns changed perspectives from outward to local, casting the resources and experiences available locally into a new light (Kaur & Kaur, 2020). Self-sufficiency, independence from the wider matrix flow and counter-flow of activity, and an awareness that dramatic changes may continue is shaping individual and policy decisions (Lima de Miranda & Snower, 2021; Veltheim et al., 2020). A future increasingly affected by carbon

impacts and minimal resource use is generating the trend towards a more mindful engagement with materials, using resources carefully, and making rather than consuming (Carr & Gibson, 2016). Through this lens, making within the limits of locale, using resourceful approaches and allowing serendipity to drive creative outcomes, this research tests the concept of self-reliance as an alternative to consumerism as well as a potential source of well-being and fulfilment. The position of consumption as a background to the research is discussed further in the next section.

1.4.3 Consumption and alternative directions

Sociologist, philosopher and cultural theorist, Jean Baudrillard draws a distinction between objects made to be consumed, which become mirage-like 'value-signs' and those that are created in connection to the body and a place, which he defines as 'traditional objects' (2005, p. 189). Conceived as mediators between people and their environment, traditional objects are framed as living objects (2005, p. 193). Living objects exist within a flow of human experience and thus are not 'consumed'. Such objects are instead, alive and connected to human being-ness.

Positioned against Baudrillard's analysis, the textiles created through this research, are consciously connected to a community through locale, fibre, proximity, personal skill-set and physical engagement. They are categorised as 'traditionally' made and therefore exist within the realm of the human being, in this case specifically to the researcher. Political economic theorist Tim Jackson links the motive to consume to a contrived perception of prosperity, affluence and success (2017, pp. 12–52). He suggests a way out of excessive materialism and the consequential harm to the

environment, is through a realignment of values, a purposeful redefining of what 'prosperity' means (2017, pp. 212–214).

Living more mindfully has become recontextualised further, since the Covid19 pandemic as people reacted to the shock of the crisis, public opinion of the role of the globalised economy, government, and even what it means to be a member of society, has shifted dramatically. (Lima de Miranda & Snower, 2021). A growing desire to be self-sufficient, to live more locally begins to emerge. The textiles created within this research are categorised as 'traditionally' made and therefore exist within the realm of the human being, in this case specifically to the researcher.

In a recent interview with Marcus Fairs, founder and editor-in-chief of *Dezeen Magazine*, trend forecaster Li Edelkoort discusses the rise of new material cultures in reaction to Covid19, where self-sufficient, autonomous, 'cottage industries', could evolve naturally into a more 'circular' economic form (Edelkoort, 2020). Across the world, individual and micro-producers increasingly become more central to the way society and economies are now evolving, this is across many industries but includes textiles. *Fibershed*, for example, is an international movement founded in the United States by Rebecca Burgess in 2010 (Burgess& White, 2019). *Fibershed* forms alternative systems through which to manufacture textiles but also in doing so, the movement fosters new paradigms for prosperity, well-being, and connection (Burgess & White, 2019, p. 211). Through a network of small producers connected to *Fibershed*, the full lifecycle of a garment from seed to textile, to distribution, is managed.

Research and designer Amy Twigger Holroyd proposes the idea of a collective direction, justifying the value of individual and localised approaches, as establishing a 'commons' within the landscape of industrial textile production. The ideas within making a 'commons', are that authentic practices and actions can contribute as 'fenced off' territory, leaving spaces for alternatives to material consumption, to burgeon and thrive (2015).

Alice Payne borrows George Monbiot's (2014) concept of ecological 'rewilding' as a metaphor to describe practices or approaches, that have the potential to collectively reclaim space and support a change of direction, against the dominant system governing production and consumption (Payne, 2020). 'Rewilding' can generate new narratives of use, where garments and textiles lose their commodified state, to become expressions of culture or materials in flux (Payne, 2020, p. 257). This research its outputs and findings sit alongside these conversations regarding the role design can play in re-contextualising the textile object as a process that is vibrant and somewhat alive (Bennett, 2010).

This practice-led research explores a process of self-reliance to interrogate the quality of practice and the nature of creative work when a maker is dependent on locale to produce work. This research fits among the growing matrix of individual localised alternative paradigms being discussed and forming globally interlinking ideas and ideologies, to form a network of common purpose. Reliance on the locale to provide influences, materials, and relationships, sees this research set within an Aotearoa New Zealand context, with the work generated through the place it is made. The textiles' relationship to human factors from this place, community and the

material environment are key elements, contributing to a relevant and idiosyncratic context and connectivity of place, person and product.

1.5 Positioning the researcher

In 2015, I completed a Master of Art and Design with Auckland University of Technology (AUT), the study looked at the way a designer could imbue digital print textiles with more artisanal elements through designed handcrafted approaches. The practice explored ways to digitally print textiles to evolve prints that were bespoke and craft-like, rather than something that appeared to be mass-generated. Through incorporating drawn images, photographs, and digital crafting, I attempted to infuse associated narratives and a sense of indexical touch into digitally printed textiles suggesting proximity of place and humanity, to contribute to a greater appreciation of the textile. The goal was to create connectivity, which in turn could result in an extended life cycle of use (Donovan, 2015).

Through the reflective process during the research, I began to question some of the Master of Design rationales and realised there were some deficits in the underpinning thought. As a lecturer in Art and Design in a regional polytechnic in Rotorua, Bay of Plenty, I live and work in a semi-rural community where resources are often scarce. The community among whom I teach art and design, often rely on what they can obtain freely locally, and people will often adapt materials creatively to fulfil their needs. This has also brought to focus, a resourceful way of thinking, remembered from my own past, which has influenced this research.

During the Master of Design research, I became acutely aware of the high resource use that went into the digital prints I created. The prints relied upon imported silks

and linens along with chemically composed printing inks and dyes. The rolls of pristine white textile went through extensive high carbon production processes before arriving by plane here in New Zealand. The printable textile arrived pre-prepared, paper-backed and made specifically to receive the inks via digital printers. I questioned the reasons I was seeking to make textiles with new materials when so much renewable, locally produced fibre, or disused clothing and textiles, were readily available.

To gain insights for this research, I reflected on my own early experiences of self-reliance, and resourceful ingenuity with respect to materials, frequently observed in the rural community where I grew up. Self-reliance and an attitude of 'making do' was a social attitude coined in the common New Zealand vernacular as 'a number eight wire' mentality.[2] Many people in the area where we lived in New Zealand, were self-reliant, growing a significant proportion of their own food, gathering seafood, fishing, and hunting as a regular part of life. Pictured below, are my father and sister making our family vegetable garden and compost bin, both of which are still productive today (Figure 2). Along with food, families also produced their own textiles and clothing. During prior periods of post-war scarcity, a considerable amount of family clothing had been produced domestically across the country (Hamon, 2007; McLeod, 2005; Nicholson, 1998).

[2]The idiom references the ubiquitous use of a thick gauge wire that people often used to solve all kinds of fixes on farms or in factories and homes across rural Aotearoa New Zealand (Derby, 2015). The phrase supplied a metaphor, which described commonly expressed pride in creative problem-solving using action, found materials, and hands-on skill.

Figure 2: Donovan, P. (1981). Richard Donovan and Liana Donovan creating a vegetable garden and compost bin [Photograph]

From the 1940s onwards, most New Zealand women could sew to a high standard, and skills were passed along within families, including embroidery and beading (Regnault et al., 2010, p. 23). Through the 1970s and up until the 1980s many New Zealand women continued to make garments and textiles at home, rather than buying in shops (Hamon, 2007; Wolfe, 2001, p. 76). In the photograph below, my younger sister and I are pictured wearing handknitted jerseys, made by our mother (Figure 3).

Like many other young mothers in our district, my mother also made our trousers, some of our 'good' dresses, our pyjamas and a significant proportion of her own clothing too. My mother was taught to sew and knit by her mother and grandmother and through basic sewing skills taught at school. It was her grandmother, 'Nana Kennedy' who taught her some of the more complex skills in knitting, the more

difficult ‘blackberry stitch’ and how to read a knitting pattern. Her first knitted garment was a baby’s bonnet.

Figure 3: Donovan, P. (1968), Joanne and Celine Donovan wearing jerseys and trousers made by their mother. [Photograph]

Once she learned to read a knitting pattern, my mother was able to teach herself how to read a sewing pattern and she was given her first sewing machine at age fourteen (P.W. Donovan. personal communication, 13th December 2021). During this period and up until the 1980s, New Zealand girls were also taught sewing and dressmaking skills at school (Davies & Hatherton, 1977; Hamon, 2007; Wolfe, 2001, p. 75), while knitting, mending and other handcraft, continued to be taught within the family (McLeod, 2005; Nicholson, 1998; Vincent, 2018).

Although it was not the social norm for a man to knit, in the area where we lived, there was a period when our father produced wool garments for our family. This came about because my mother worked at the local wool mill, in nearby Kaiapoi.[3] To make use of the low-cost knitting yarn my mother brought home, Dad bought himself a knitting machine, which he repaired and taught himself to use.

During the evenings, he worked making garments for the family in the end of line wool (dyed in colours that were not selling well), made available to the wool workers at the mill. He created twin sets, cardigans, or pullovers for every member of the family in colours such as lime green or flesh pink. We received the garments from our father's knitting machine with pride and excitement. Reflecting on this period, in the context of this research, it becomes apparent that there was an entire narrative attached to the knitting he made. The garments were imbued with the story of my mother's work at the mill, the built-up expectation of new garments while our father problem-solved the knitting machine, and the garments being created one by one, in different colours. Even the colours, which we knew were less popular, became a source of interest. It is a memory aligned to being in a family, felt through an experience of crafting, arrived at through an unexpected supply of material and the necessities of every-day life. The way in which these garments were formed, through a network of experiences and material flows, recalls Fletcher's *Craft of use*.

[3] The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company was an important industrial entity within the New Zealand. The site was originally home to a flax mill that opened in 1866, built beside the Cam River, Kaiapoi. The initial intention of the company was to use the mill to manufacture packs, sacks and bales, which expanded later to woollen blanket production. The Kaiapoi Wool Mill finally shut down in 1978 because of rising production costs (*History of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills*, 2021; Wolfe, 2001, p. 77).

> The craft of use approaches garments as *matter in motion*, as pieces powerfully influenced by the vectors of time and elan vital that enriches our understanding of the material world. It starts from the realisation that garments are sold as a product, we live them as a process (Fletcher, 2016, p. 272).

Fletcher's view of clothing as a lived process resonates with the experience, I felt witnessing the use of the home knitting machine. There was something very magical in the experience of seeing the knitted textiles emerging one by one, to become garments for each of us. The making process from which the knitted garments emerged was an entire journey involving people, place, and a narrative that extended beyond the fibre and the knitting machine. The making process was as Fletcher describes 'matter in motion', (2016, p. 272), springing from and fully integrated into, our pathway of 'being' in the world. This distinct quality is the essence of 'self-reliance' and is what I attempt to remember through practice, explore and extend through this research.

Living in rural New Zealand in the 1970s offered other attitudes and values from the way in which materials and objects were more integrated into daily life. Children often shared coats, bicycles, shoes, and clothing. 'Hand-me-downs' rarely caused resentment, but often conferred a sense of 'growing up' and pride. Toys were more often things we made, things we did, things we built rather than things that were bought. Owning things that were made rather than bought was unlikely to be described as poverty. Instead, ingenuity and the ability to make things with limited resources were admired skills.

I remember some of the frugal values governing the way we treated clothing and textiles, which were cared for and preserved. Our grandmother ironed, and

sometimes used starch for her aprons and table linen. My mother and aunts mended clothing of all kinds, to preserve them for handing 'down'. It was when I was about ten years old when my mother first taught me how to darn socks. Darning-like stitch and overt patching continue to be methods I use when making textile pieces (Figure 4). The overt stitches speak of repair, as a language of engagement, investment and care.

Figure 4: Donovan, J. (2015). Textile collage [Handloom hemp scraps, digitally printed linen, decaying silk handkerchief, darned].

Returning to the past, I recall when the imminent birth of a baby was announced, friends and family members joined together to hand-craft baby clothing. People collaborated to ensure that the new baby's needs were met and there were not too many of one kind of garment or blanket. When I first learned to knit, it was through

making booties for baby cousins and sisters, as children were expected to contribute items of craft at their basic but improving skill levels.

During the 1970s, imports of foreign-made clothing and textiles were highly regulated (Hunter, 2010; Singleton, 2012). Tariffs, sometimes as high as sixty-five per cent, were imposed on imported goods to protect local manufacturing in New Zealand (Larson, 2001, p. 53). Accordingly, the cost of locally made clothing remained high, proportional to income, due to local wage rates for textile and clothing workers. At

Figure 5: The 1970s silhouette with a soft shoulder and flowing length. Garments by Hullabaloo, Peppertree and Bendon [Image]. In https://nzfashionmuseum.org.nz/the-1970s-fashion-revolution/

the time, a local 'fashion scene' had developed in Auckland, where twelve fashion houses operated, all of which, created women's wear (Wolfe, 2001, p. 39). These garments from the 1970s, pictured above (Figure 5), are examples from fashion houses Peppertree, Hullabaloo and Bendon, and feature the silhouette popular at the time, soft and slim with a flared or floaty lower hem (de Pont, 2021).

Despite the burgeoning fashion movement, well-styled clothing was either unavailable or prohibitively expensive in many places across New Zealand. This led to families continuing to rely on home production for a significant proportion of clothing (Hamon, 2007). As dressmaking and sewing skills were taught at both

Figure 6: Lovedays NZ Ltd. (1964). Pamela and Richard Donovan's wedding, the bride and groom exiting the church [Photograph].

primary and secondary school, many women possessed the skills to become professional or semi-professional dressmakers (Davies & Hatherton, 1977; Hamon, 2007; Vincent, 2018).

Clothing for important occasions, weddings, christenings or horse races, was often assigned to specialists within the family, or community. My mother's wedding dress, (Figure 6), was made by an experienced family friend. My mother found an image of the dress in an American fashion magazine. The family friend replicated it exactly, using heavy pearlescent white satin, which was tailored to fit, lined and detailed with drop pearls, and a full scalloped skirt with sculpted satin roses (P.W Donovan, personal communication. 9/10/2021).

Some of the better home dressmakers became professional or part-time professionals (Hamon, 2007, p. 251). By 1976, over twenty thousand women were recorded under the category of 'tailors, dressmakers, sewers, upholsterers and related workers' in the annual (1976 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 1980, p. 11). These women were usually officially employed in commercial workrooms, and it is estimated that a similar number of women worked as dressmakers from home, undeclared. (Hamon, 2007, p. 251). Researcher Jan Hamon discusses how this practice linked community and engendered a source of autonomous empowerment.

> Dressmaking practice empowered women in other ways. They used it to maintain family ties, through making clothing and sharing garments with extended family. This created an alternate economy that allowed an initial investment of time and resource to be shared beyond the originating household. Girls and women involved in these economies saw themselves connected to a wider familial network and understood that dressmaking could be valued in multiple ways. (Hamon, 2007, p. 236)

Prior to the late 1980s and the advent of cheap imports[4], the clothing available in my rural hometown was limited to plainly styled day wear or utility clothing such as brushed cotton, plaid, and collared shirts worn for work outdoors. This led me to begin to take a resourceful approach to make my own wardrobe, by foraging for textile or garments and accessories in charity shops, which I could modify using our family Singer sewing machine.

Collecting and collected textiles have formed a core material basis for this research, and this has stemmed from a foraging/collecting practice that began when I was a child. The church fetes held in our small town, often featured a 'white elephant stall' which offered up an intriguing array of handcraft, ornaments and bric-a-brac that didn't belong anywhere but carried narratives from previous use. While other children spent their pocket money on toffee apples, I bought chipped crockery and embroidery, for the stories they inspired and the crafted materiality experienced when I handled them but did not know about or recognise at the time.

Foraging for used/imbued things at church fetes turned into 'op shopping' a few years later. I started buying clothing in 'op' shops[5] as a teenager, beginning from the necessity of needing clothing, not being able to afford them and also a lack of available choices. Foraging for interesting garments and accessories soon became

[4] In 1986 a change of government and new policies, caused the environment to shift. Competition rather than protection became the objective, and the Tarriff Act of 1988 was legislated to systematically lift the barriers to foreign goods (*The Statutes of New Zealand,* 1988, p. 1359). Between 1988 and 1995, textiles and textile production decreased rapidly in the face of tariff reduction and cheap imported goods (Burleigh Evatt and NZIER, 2001).

[5] Opportunity (op) shops or charity shops were run in every town and city by churches and other charities, to sell donated goods, mostly textiles (Pollock & Labrum, 2010).

an addiction. This was circa 1980 before the days when 'vintage'[6] style was a widely recognised option as an alternative source for clothing.

At sixteen, I acquired a woven wool, double-breasted, black coat. It was a New Zealand Railways worker's standard issue coat, from a few years prior. The coat was much too big for me and flowed to the floor when I wore it. I liked the smell of the wool and coarse texture of the weave, the double-stitched pockets and epaulettes, and the large buttons with four holes. The cuffs had to be turned up, the shoulders slouched ridiculously low, it had a belt that could be worn various ways. My father considered it an atrocity, and requested that I be banned from wearing it, but to me it engendered a unique style of my own, that could not be emulated.

The used clothing on offer in the tiny charity shop at one end of our hometown, during my later teenage years, circa 1980-84, were garments from the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. The garments were often much more detailed, sometimes hand-made, when compared to the narrow range of styles available in the township. The textiles used for garments were often high-quality fabric and the clothing were well-tailored. There could be top stitching, top layers of fine chiffon over a quality lining, or feature details such as beading and delicate mother of pearl or hand covered buttons. I found garments made from sculpted satin, silk crepe or printed chiffon, and hand-beaded cashmere wool. There were tailor-made coats and jackets, wool and tweed suits,

[6] To clarify the term 'vintage', this research, uses the definition supplied by De Long, et al, where the term is ascribed to textiles or clothing that come from previous era (2005).

linen shirts and kid leather shoes or gloves. There began my love of textiles and the stories suffused in them, which has formed the basis for this research.

Collecting old clothing and textiles, was collecting memories, and experiencing views and lives from an outside world, beyond my small rural town; each garment came with a narrative, the shadows of an existence that could be read or felt. It was as if a story was present but only being told in glimpses. A blue floral chiffon may be worn to a summer event. A man's white pressed linen shirt, no doubt, worn dancing. A carefully stitched textile, perhaps done by the fire during a period of daily calm. The used clothing represented textile artefacts produced within the scale of human time, and within human landscapes of action.

Social anthropologist and fashion historian, Maureen Molloy, discusses the style influences visible in New Zealand's 'most successful' period of fashion design 1997-2001, reflecting an eclectic pastiche 'marked by irony and nostalgia for a European past' (2004, p. 428). I speculate, that the self-referential edginess Molloy alludes to, gives voice to an earlier creative vernacular many New Zealand women experienced growing up. The development of autonomous local style that evolved through a mix of homemade clothing, op shop finds featuring tailoring from past eras and sports uniforms.

Within this research practice, the layering of felted or stitched textile is seen as layering snippets of time and past stories. A catalogue of gestures through time. As a printmaker, in the 1990s, I recorded marks and gestures in etchings and woodcuts. The textile designs I now create emerge from a similar process of collecting and recording mark-making of another kind. Through the felted works, I record the signs

made by the people who previously engaged with the material I am using. The indelible gesture is found in a row of stitches or a torn patch, or the handle of a textile worn down through daily touch.

Figure 7: Textiles from the maker's collection

Textiles collected for use in this research (Figure 7), feature signs of history present in the handwork, knots and creases. The textile is imprinted with signs of action and reaction, along with signs of time. These qualities of touch, and signs of time, are viewed as a language of humanity and are seen as connective threads to be rewoven. The signs and language held within materials link to a material journey that is drawn out and resituated into the present.

1.5.1 The locale as nexus point

To explore a local vernacular, a locally generative way of making textiles, I invoke the metaphor of the family sewing cupboard. Aunts, grandmother, mother and family

friends, each kept a sewing cupboard, which usually contained a collection of materials, tools, a sewing machine, wool and sundries. Garments that were worn out or too small were put into our 'sewing cupboard' to be repaired to gift on or to be unpicked for reuse. The textile/sewing cupboard operated as a nexus point for materials that anyone who could sew or knit could use. There was always a knitting or crochet project underway, these were often done in the evenings. Knitted, or crochet garments were usually produced intermittently over several weeks. Sewing and dressmaking, however, was often completed over a weekend. I recall meeting a friend with some fabric at age thirteen or fourteen and we spent an enjoyable weekend making skirts.

The sewing cupboard functioned as a creative nexus where divergent elements and tools were gathered for their potential. The space held gathered materials from which new forms were initiated. The studio worktable, like the sewing cupboard (as I remember it) connects to the locale, drawing a flow of materials inwards and back out again (Figure 8). The maker as the initiator changes the materials into textiles but also the quality and character of the materials change the maker, influencing the practice and the character of the textiles created. In this sense, the locale becomes a co-creator alongside the maker. Manzini draws attention to this definition of locale, suggesting that locale is not defined by its physical limits, but is instead something an individual or group creates through networks and operational boundaries (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 78). What we think and do, can only happen from where we find ourselves. The studio is the creative nexus at the heart of the locale. It is the position from where to gather materials but also respond to knowledge, tools and influences both past and present.

Figure 8: The maker's worktable

This research takes place in my home studio, near the mouth of the Ngongotaha stream, on the north-western side of Lake Rotorua (Figure 9 & Figure 10). A distinct volcanic landscape (Figure 10), native bush and rural landscape provides inspiration, plants for dyeing, and animal fibre, from which to make textiles. As an 'action point' the locale is determined by geographical limits but is also interconnected to community and beyond. Manzini and Coad frames this concept as 'hyper-localism'. He writes.

> Starting from us, and from where we are, is not therefore an expression of irreducible anthropocentrism. On the contrary, it is an acknowledgement of a limit: humbly recognizing that whatever we think and do, we cannot but think it and do it from the point where we find ourselves. This point of view and action on the world, for me is *hyperlocal* (2019, p. 9) .

Centred within a locale, and through Manzini's analysis of the concept of *hyperlocale*, the research is part of a place that is both near and inter-connected to the greater

Figure 9: Interior spaces within the maker’s studio.

environment. Beyond the physical boundaries of the locale are the extended limits; the place from which we experience the world into the distance through materials that flow into the research sphere, media and our imaginations (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 78). This situates the research within the complexity of the wider world while remaining determined by subjective responses. Taken from this interconnected perspective ‘community’ are the people who intersect with the research, both past and present, but in a variegated sense, as a network of relationships. It is a community layered with current character, past histories, new and old experiences and indeterminate flows of materials, meeting within the nexus of the practice-led research.

Figure 10: from left; 1. Flowering Kanuka around studio environs. 2. The Ngongotaha stream. 3. Sulphur landscape at Tikitere, Rotorua.

The locale is situated within Te Arawa, Ngāti Whakaue, and Tūhoe (tribal) districts in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. A community of knowledge and a Māori, world view is experienced as a thread of influence, contributing a mindset and an attitude to the environs. Local indigenous (Māori) knowledge holds to a holistic world view of the material realm where we, along with nature and its resources, are essentially interconnected (Harmsworth et al., 2016; Pohatu, 2011). Māori see a 'multi-dimensional, woven universe' where 'mauri' or life essence, is a force 'immanent in all things, knitting and bonding them together' (Hēnare, 2015; Royal, 2018; Tumoana Williams & Henare, 2009). All things both animate and inanimate are imbued with a 'mauri' and humans are called on to be 'kaitiaki' or caretakers of the mauri within the environment, the things we make and use, and each other (Hēnare, 2015).

Figure 11: Clockwise from upper left 1. A boiled wool textile in progress. 2. Tikitere, Rotorua. 3. Timber stack. 4. Sulphur burned tree branch, Lake Rotorua

The locale is immersed in these values, inspiring perspectives, which nourish and influence the practice. Although I am not of Māori descent, Te Ao Māori (the Māori worldview) permeates the environs and underpins the signifying attitudes and values experienced as part of growing up in Aotearoa, New Zealand and particularly within the community of Rotorua. Textures, colour, a sense of changing time, (Figure 11 & Figure 12) observed in the surrounding landscape and environs, influence the work and link the practice back to the relationship with the land.

Locally available materials include animal fibre most commonly from sheep usually in the early spring after the animals are shorn. Charity stores and ‘op’ shops provide textiles, and garments, these are a source of materials along with my own collection of textiles and worn-out garments. Throughout the district, individual amateur

Figure 12: from left 1. Wear and decay on a neighbour’s shed door. 2. Lake Rotorua

crafters engage in spinning, weaving, knitting, and dyeing. These are family or community taught practitioners, who are working in isolation or networking within a small group of people—from home-based practices. Through these crafting networks, fibre and tools are available. This background environment shapes the direction of this research practice.

Wool and animal fibre become important due to the amount of left over wool, or raw animal fibre available locally, either gifted or at low cost, in the area. Other materials readily available are used woollen blankets, discarded woollen garments, used clothing and domestic handcrafts that are no longer considered useful (Figure 13). The varied combination of materials led to an exploration of layering and textile collaging leading to exploring ways to fusing and joining various types of fibre and textiles being collected for improvisation.

Figure 13: Gathered materials. Worn blanket, disused clothing and vintage lace.

At an early phase of the research, a second-hand needle felt loom, appeared for sale in the local area, which was purchased and used for the research. This led to further experiments with felting as a way to reconstruct textiles through joining and fusing. Stitch played an important role as a method. It is used to join materials but also to link and convey narratives as will be discussed in chapter four.

1.6 Research approach

The methodological approach used for this research investigates a process, to observe the experience and outcomes. Manzini alludes to design methods that are less concerned with the objects produced and more focussed on methods and processes, to seek solutions (2016, p. 52). 'Ways of thinking' and 'ways of doing' are emphasised as the function of an exploratory environment for design, where the

process expresses the solution, rather than the object. Manzini and Coad uses the term ‘bricolage’ to further distinguish this process-oriented approach (2019, p. 55).

In referring to the ‘bricoleur’ Manzini co-opts a term first defined by anthropologist Claude Lévi- Strauss. By comparing the explorative indeterminate approach of the ‘bricoleur’ with the linear, determinate approach of the engineer, Lévi-Strauss cemented the meaning of the concept. The bricolage approach used for this research, relies on serendipity and indeterminate pathways, to generate improvisation, and adaptation. The research posits the highly experimental process of the bricoleur as a way to diverse and unexpected solutions (Lévi- Strauss, 1962, p. 11).

Manzini and Coad suggests that an open-ended nature of a bricolage method is useful for investigating complex problems (2019, p. 57). Through bricolage, the complexity of the world is acknowledged, accepted and seen as an opportunity to create dialogic or diverse outcomes. It encourages us to see existent things as material substances waiting to be transformed. We are enabled, through a bricolage enquiry, to look at problems in a different way, and to be opened to expanded definitions of ‘solutions’ (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 57).

Applied to this research approach, a bricolage method allows scope for a material ‘conversation’ to be set up between material and maker. Each element is treated as a living thread of engagement that is invited to connect with other living threads to be reassembled into newly activated textile forms. Each of the elements pictured (Figure 14), is investigated and explored for potential, which is adapted to a new form.

This research seeks to investigate textile making as a lived process. Through the approach used, the textiles shift from being an externalised artefact to becoming a

Figure 14: Collected elements

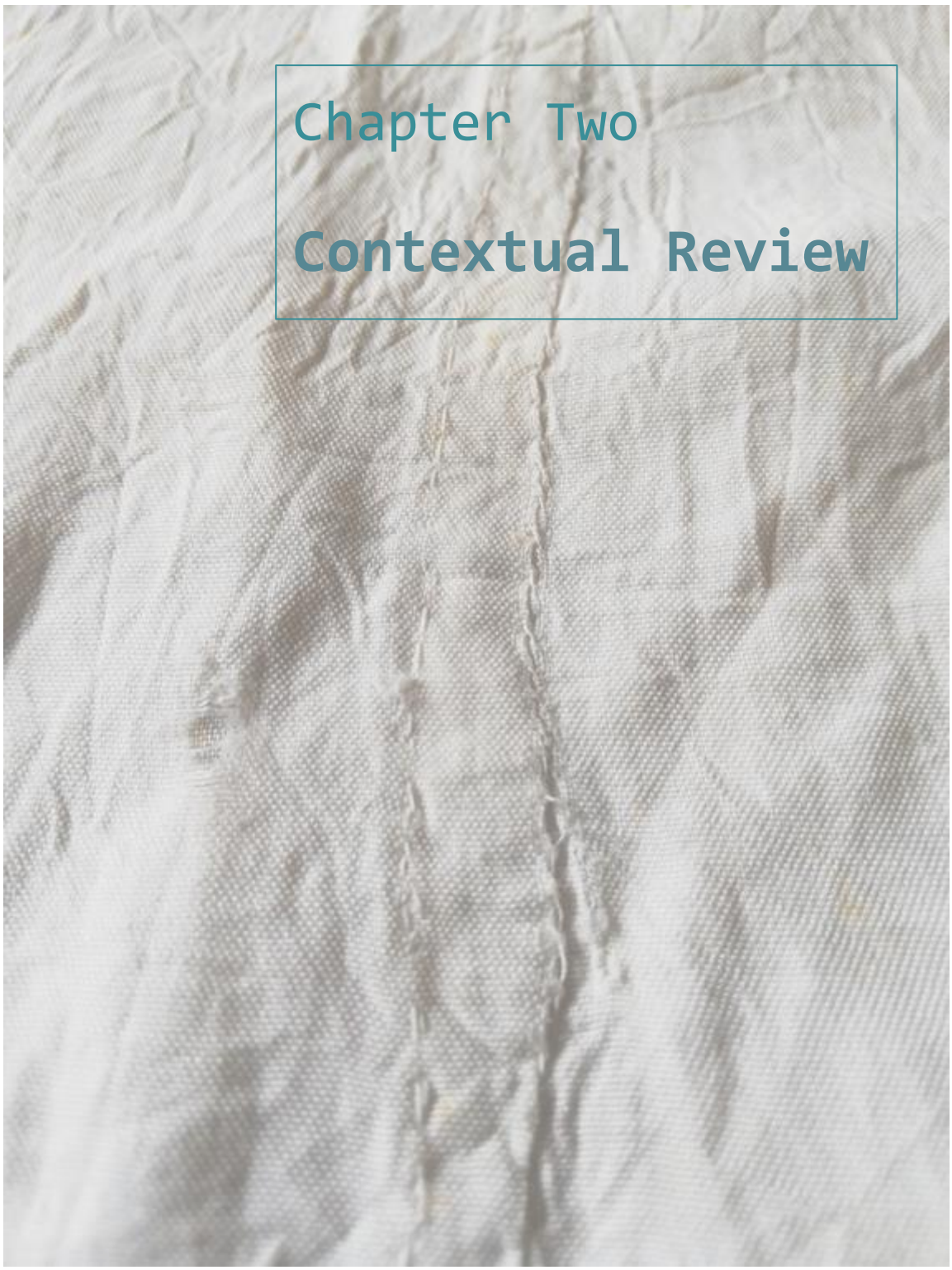
material nexus, a synergetic interaction within this locale. The design of the research considers the open-ended nature of the query, whereby the practice-led process arrives at unplanned but relevant outcomes. As a lived process, 'living' implies adapting, making resourceful use of unforeseen opportunities in the form of tools and materials and remaining flexible to the forms the outcomes could take.

The bricolage method accommodates a research design practice where the process is the main explorative tool and is concurrently also the outcome. This further allows textiles to be treated as substances, thought of as though they exist within a life-like continuum of transformation that may continue as the textile leaves the operational sphere of the maker. As changing and mutable 'partners' in the research, the acquired textile materials can be 'listened to' for ways to re-orientate them. This

could involve a range of methods, felting techniques, stitch, fabric manipulation, dyeing and/or deconstruction. The approach follows a process wherein the making is a sustained and ongoing interaction between the materials, designer and the locale (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 56).

1.7 Summary

Rather than creating 'textile artefacts', the outcomes are considered a working material hypothesis of the aim, question and methodology. The practice sits alongside an accompanying exegesis which defines the research design, theoretical drivers and supports, and synthesises the outcomes (Buchanan, 1992, p. 17). This way of working is both the research approach and to some extent, the subject of the research when applied to the research intention.



Chapter Two

Contextual Review

2 Contextual Review

2.1 Introduction

This research sits within three areas of context, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Firstly, I will describe how a pre-existing context of (non-Māori) self-reliant textile/clothing making, within Aotearoa New Zealand, fits into a national experiential model of reuse and recycling from past to present. Following this, a current research context is explored, through a review of contemporary New Zealand textile practitioners who work from similar or relating influences, to demonstrate the relevance of the research within the local field of practice.

Secondly, contextual research into circular and amateur models for design approaches are explored and discussed. The section introduces a view of textiles as a socially connected and connecting artefact, created within a community and a locale and highlights the research relevance within a wider context.

Thirdly, making as a function of a human journey is presented to draw attention to textiles as holders and signifiers of human experience. The connectivity of textile and the communicative potential of textile is explored through signs of the body, context and the social nature of making extending over time, to justify the research design and to establish a basis for a research contribution. The following diagram illustrates the three contextual relationships within the research (Figure 15).

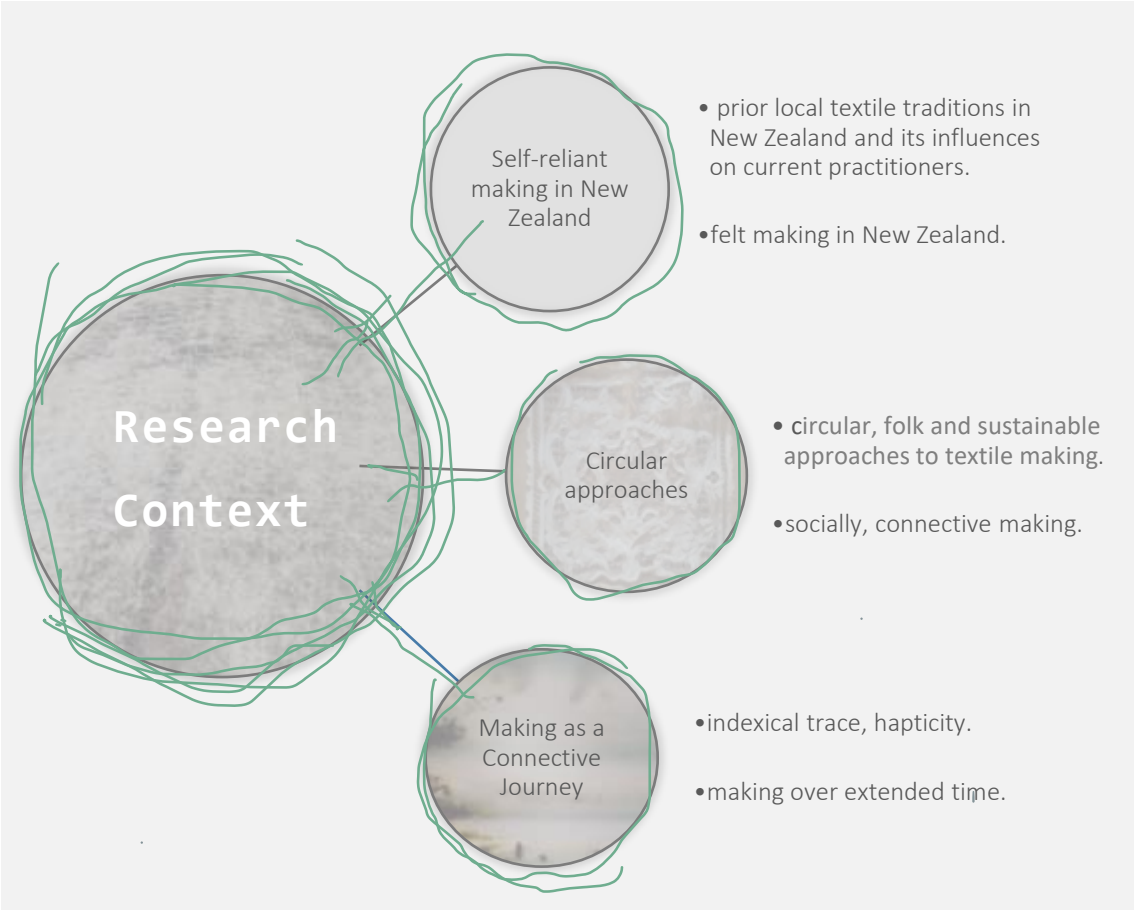


Figure 15: Context map

2.2 Self-reliant traditions in Aotearoa New Zealand

To contextualise this research within current local textile practice, I have chosen to review textile artists and crafters who link into remembered or perhaps loosely acknowledged traditions of 'making do', in Aotearoa New Zealand. To support this, an exploration of earlier local self-reliant customs is firstly presented. This draws attention to prior customs and attitudes where textile artefacts were made through co-opting discarded materials into new forms or through improvised skills adapted to make use of readily available local materials. The creative quality of this process

and the connective characteristics of these works, in terms of material choices, handwork, and imbued qualities of memory or narrative, are also explored as a context for this research.

To briefly discuss the origins and traditions of self-reliance in Aotearoa New Zealand, I draw upon a selection of examples. The book *Crafting Aotearoa: A cultural history of making in New Zealand and the wider Moana Oceania*, (Chitham, et al., 2019) offers exemplars of the

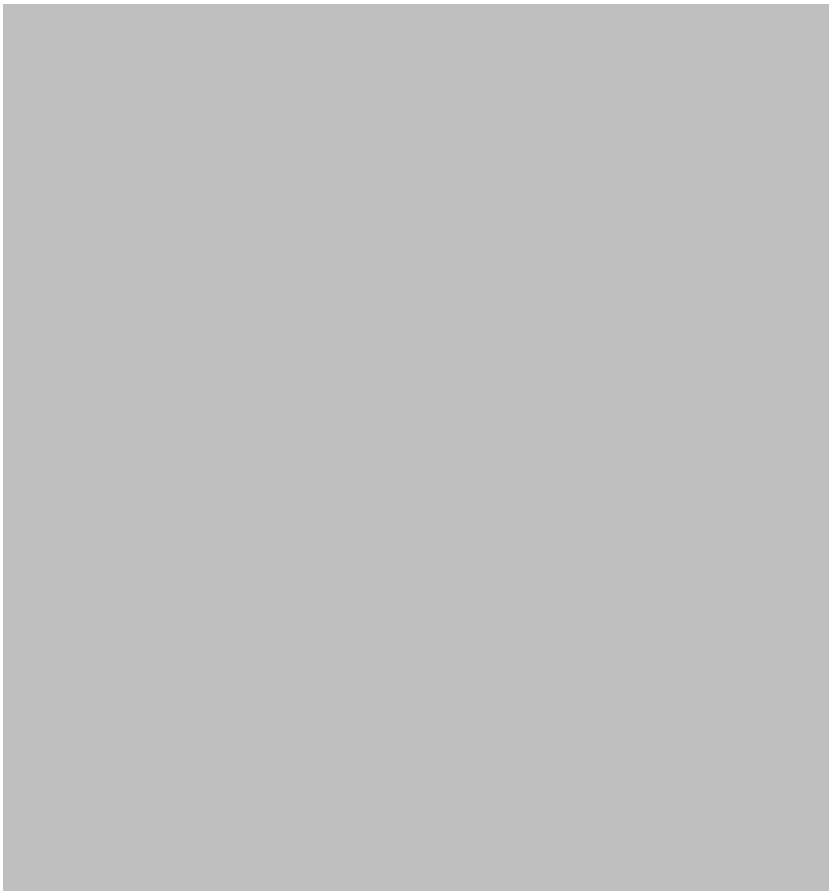


Figure 16: Studio la gonda. (2019). Kerosene crate, remodelled into an armchair [Photograph]. In Chitham, et al, 2019, *Crafting Aotearoa: A cultural history of making in New Zealand and the wider Moana Oceania* (p.224)

of craft wherein discarded materials were adapted, often in times of necessity of post-war or early (colonial) settler necessity (Chitham et al., 2019, pp. 224–225). A wooden crate, (Figure 16), remodelled during the 1920s into an armchair, is shown padded with kapok and upholstered in glorious chintz. The chair, which is currently housed at Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science and History, Palmerston North, New Zealand, demonstrates a prior local tradition of resourcefulness, showing how materials that were available are creatively 'upcycled' into useful objects. The wooden packing crate, originally used to transport kerosene tins, was adapted into the armchair during a period of material hardship, just after the first world war (Chitham et al., 2019, p. 224).

There are other similar examples throughout the book, illustrating a record of creative self-reliance within colonial New Zealand material culture. Other such representations include a whalebone chair, (p. 72), a pair of double-sided, hand quilted hall curtains, (2019, p. 227) and a series of collectively crocheted 'Afghan' blankets (2019, p. 372) , all of which demonstrate a tradition where 'waste' material found readily at hand, is utilised for domestic purpose.

The practice of salvaging and improvising discarded materials is further documented by writer, curator and cultural historian Richard Wolfe in his (1997) book entitled; *All our own work: New Zealand's folk art.* The book features a collection of hand-made objects Wolfe describes as; 'the work of untrained individuals and made for personal enjoyment and use' (1997, p. 98).

Knitted artefacts, embroidery, rag rugs and patchwork textile objects, are among these examples. Ranging from the nineteenth century to the 1990s, the diverse range

of objects suggests that resourcefulness, originally motivated by necessity, evolved into a creative domestic culture. Through the collection, there is a tangible sense of reward in the process of ‘giving a second life’ to mundane materials. From Wolfe’s summary:

Figure 17: Adams, A, & Haru, S. (1997). Woollen butterfly rug by Robert Jackson made using 4-ply wool unravelled from discarded jerseys, circa 1945 [Photograph]. In Wolfe, All our own work: New Zealand’s folk art (p.65)

it seems as if the act of recycling ‘cast-off’ materials into something else, was often at least as satisfying as the final artefact itself (1997, p. 69). Many of the works depicted, demonstrate that people often made objects purely out of sense of creative autonomy and enjoyment in the process, as Robert Jackson’s highly decorative and playful woollen butterfly rug, seems to suggest (Figure 17).

I experienced this phenomenon within my own family narrative wherein our father knitted garments on his home-repaired knitting machine, turned out wooden toys for

us (as children) on a lathe in his back shed and experimented with building various watercraft using makeshift pieces of plywood and re-cycled motorbike parts. Likewise, the 'sewing cupboard' inside many family homes including ours, was a storage space for gathered materials that would be adapted and turned into textiles and clothing. The attitude towards adventurous experimentation, eclectic use of materials found at hand, and the experimental bravery of this 'crafting vernacular' were passed on to me, and are remembered, revived and explored through this doctoral research.

Author and journalist Rosemary McLeod draws attention to a distinct quality of creativity springing out of the everyday in her detailed study of textiles produced domestically from 1930s to 1950s. Through a life-long enjoyment of collecting 'Kiwiana'[7] textile artefacts, McLeod has assembled a significant collection from her own family treasures and through over 20 years of searching in New Zealand's charity shops. In her book, *Thrift to fantasy*, which features a curated portion of her collection, McLeod highlights the ingenuity that developed as women used fabric, fibre and stitch to make what they needed, embellish their surroundings and express creativity (2005). She describes her collection of handwork as a 'picturesque vernacular', often springing from skills ordained through the needs of daily life rather than formal training. Each generation adapts these skills and attunes them to the

[7] New Zealand's online encyclopaedia Te Ara supplies a definition of 'Kiwiana'. These are iconic things New Zealanders recognise as part of their national identity. Some examples include black gumboots, the *Buzzy Bee* wooden toy, pavlova cakes, plastic tikis, pāua shell ashtrays, marching girls and NZ railways issue crockery (Wilson, 2005). I would also consider Kaiapoi Wool Mill blankets, with their distinctive tartans, checks and colours, to fall into this category, although Wilson has not mentioned them specifically.

fashions, colours and styles of the decade, forming a visual narrative through adaption and use.

> [The skills are] … arts not taught in schools, they are passed on from one woman to another and from one generation to the next, through demonstration and example. They are the means of expression of ordinary people. …they are not designed to impress art dealers and patrons, but to please the makers in the privacy of their own lives (McLeod, 2005, p. 40)

The collection presents examples of homemade craft and textile objects that are often made up using 'bits and pieces', or 'scraps' during a period where textile and

Figure 18: Knowles, A. (2005). Unfinished wool hearth rug [Photograph]. In McCleod, Thrift to fantasy (p.233)

fibre was hoarded and treasured as a resource for reuse. She describes how this took place with reference to her own observances and family experience:

> In my grandmother's home, as in many others, knitted garments that had worn out had long been carefully unpicked, and their now rippled wool was made into skeins for new garments. Clothing nobody could afford to replace were unpicked, sometimes turned inside out and remade. (McLeod, 2005, p. 33).

Improvising recovered materials to create something useful, is exemplified in the woollen hook rug pictured (Figure 18). The unfinished rug was made using a grain sack redeployed as a backing textile. The wool used was most likely retrieved from unpicked woollen garments as described by McLeod earlier (2005, p.33). This adaptive approach to materials also extended to tools, which were sometimes fashioned from simple materials. A rug hook, for example, was sometimes produced using a bent nail mounted into wood (McLeod, 2019b, p. 225).

I am fortunate that a small collection of similar textile artefacts from made within my own family, have survived. They provide a record of family skills and provide insights

Figure 19: Ryan, M. (n.d). Needle book. [Wool blanket and crochet]. Private collection

into the creative and inventive way textiles and textile artefacts were made in my family tradition. Illustrated above (Figure 20), is a playfully made needle holder from my great-grandmother's sewing cupboard. My great-grandmother, May Ryan, has fashioned her needle holder using scraps of wool blanket, hemmed with blanket stitch. The crochet hat she has made for the top layer, contains her thimble.

In addition to the inventive way, materials were often deployed as in the example provided by my great-grandmother's needle holder, social historian Richard Wolfe also discusses the community relationships that were sometimes visible, when cast-off materials were used. The materials chosen for rag-rugs for example could convey

Figure 20: Knowles, A. (2005). Patchwork quilt made from menswear fabric samples, probably 1930s [Photograph]. In McLeod, Thrift to fantasy (p.221)

a ‘social barometer’, as the textiles acquired became a snapshot of the maker’s place and environment at the time (Wolfe, 1997, p. 51). Rugs were often made using pieces of family garments, discarded knitted jerseys, worn-out shirts or woollen singlets, and pieces of handwork, that continued to evoke the presence of the wearers in the new textile. The quilt pictured above (Figure 20), is made up from men’s suiting, the materials used links the quilt to specific people and a specific time. The quilt reflects the colours, tastes and view of dress, from the time, linking to aesthetic and material qualities that are temporal and transitory. In a similar way, the textiles made within this research, reflect the time and the locale, through the range of materials available to the researcher. In this respect, textiles made in connection to a place, read as a map, linking to the geography of the time.

These examples of improvisation and self-reliant making, provide a template for a textile making process that is the basis of this research through practice. The textiles created in this research are made through setting up process whereby adapting discarded, ‘free’ or easily obtained material forms the basis for experimentation and discovery. The aim is to explore the experience of making in this way, and to discover insights. Locale is an extended view of place, and available materials provide a route to meaningful engagement, resulting in the artefact (Ingold, 2013, p. 115).

The textile, *Cashmere, woven in*, (Figure 21 and Figure 22) uses remnants of lace, pieces from a knitted garment, and scraps textiles, felted into a blanket remnant. The pieces were obtained from a variety of sources; cut from second-hand items from charity shops, worn out/damaged clothing, or taken from my own collection of textile

remnants. The pieces are assembled and juxtaposed using the felting action of the needle felt loom and are combined further through meandering stitch patterns.

Figure 21: Donovan J. (2019). Cashmere, woven in [Needle felt collage, wool blanket, dyed handloom hemp, cashmere knit and wool. Detail]

The fusing, weaving action of the felt loom, and the way the stitch is applied, draws the imbued elements together, working them into a layered narrative that is paradoxically singular and multi-dimensional.

Collaging the remnants through the felt process, fuses fragile, fragmenting elements. The lace, for example, is falling apart and is about to be lost to time. Layered into the collage, the laborious time taken to create the lace, is fused into and carried over into

Figure 22: Donovan J. (2019). Cashmere, woven in [Needle felt collage, wool blanket, dyed handloom hemp, cashmere knit and merino wool]

the new textile, reinstating and preserving its value (Figure 21 and Figure 22). The knitted cashmere wool remnant used, already felted through wear and washing, but

the intricately stitched orange rosebuds remain distinct and became rows of texture and pattern when enmeshed in felt (Figure 22).

Re-igniting remembered making habits from the past recalls the way the family sewing cupboard functioned as a focal point for creative possibility. For this research, collected remnants are gathered in a similar way as was done in the past, creating a body of textile remnants and fibre that carry stored potential. Agency is provoked through the potency held within gathered materials. Generating new discoveries through adapting to the idiosyncrasies of what can be found and gathered, is its own creative driver within this research.

As mentioned previously, the textiles collected for this research are gathered for their perceived characteristics of value. Aesthetically pleasing handle, colour or fabric quality. Useful or highly prized fibres such as lamb's wool, alpaca, merino or cashmere wool, either as raw fibre or knitted into garments. Handwork, knitting, lace, crochet and embroidery is kept and saved, because of admired skills or time investment from the original maker, being appreciated as apparent and embodied in the textile. A textile or garment saved because it was worn or made by someone who is valued, loved or cared for. Each textile remnant saved and collected holds a context, which is seen as a thread of a journey, that can become embedded and manifest into the new felted or stitched textile. The making processes described and used in this research act as a means to collect and retain a narrative, and situates the textile artefact into a continuum, of past, present and on-going.

2.2.1 Locale textile making

New Zealand textile artist and designer/maker, Vita Cochran makes textile works that demonstrate her interest in the idioms of a past era. She creates rug-rags (Figure 23), stocking rugs, felted handbags, embroidery and textile art, that are reminiscent of a domestic craft of the past, particularly from the 1930s and 1940s. Cochran describes her early experiences growing up with a grandmother who was a 'creative whirlwind', and of being strongly influenced by the domestic making skills and approaches she learned from her grandmother, mother and aunts (Packer, 2006, p. 45).

Felt flowers, zips, and buttons feature on the felt bags she makes, which are often repeatedly embellished with top stitch and her own embroidery. Collecting is part of the way she creates, and much of her material, handbags, haberdashery, and textiles are searched out from a network of 'op' shops she frequents. Collecting and curating artefacts features a significant part of her creative practice. Her collections inspire her own original work in felt, handbags, rag-rugs and embroidery. In 2002, a selection of 100 of her depression-era tea cosies were curated for the Dowse Museum as part of McLeod's *Thrift to Fantasy* exhibition, which drew together examples of creative domestic handwork spanning from 1930-1950 (McLeod, 2005; Packer, 2006, p. 47; The Dowse Museum, 2002).

When collecting, and through making, Cochran is engaged in gathering and relating stories, as evident in this quote where she describes her process when making a series of embroideries. She remarks. 'The metaphor to embroider should mean, I

think, something more like, tell or extend, or pursue, or discover…a story in stitch, colour and geometry' (Cochran, 2020, p. 128).

Figure 23: Cochran, V. (2020) Seated Odalisque with left knee bent.(after HM), [Cut woollen garments and fabric on cotton backing, 1360 x 730mm] https://annamilesgallery.com/artists/vita-cochran

The concept of 'telling, extending, pursuing' a story through handwork, material choices and visual references resonates throughout Cochran's work. It is a characteristic of used textiles, to invoke a story, that is drawn out and used within this research. Cochran's pieces appear to reach across time and community to link stitch and materiality of the past into the present. The work and the maker are drawn from a place, an ethos and to an extended community of makers reaching back across generational time.

Figure 24: Donovan, J. (2019). N-twined [Felt-loomed vintage needlework, embroidered, detail]

A similar approach to story-telling through making is used in this research. The raw materials are juxtaposed and layered in a process that draws upon connective and narrative characteristics held within collected textiles to form a story that links material events. An example of this can be seen in the way the detailed handwork, cut from a vintage embroidered and crochet dresser piece, is layered into fibre and embroidered applique in *N-twined*, (Figure 24). The skilful work evident in the vintage textiles meets up with later stitch and drawn images through the wool fibre, (Figure 25). The intricate work in the table pieces contrasts against the random rows of perforations created by the felt loom, which are worked back into with darker thread, highlighting and connecting to the previous handwork. This purposefully draws

attention to layers of work, made at different times, suggesting a longitudinal frame of making from the past and beyond the present.

Figure 25: Donovan, J. (2019). N-twined [Felt-loomed vintage needlework, embroidered]

The felted artefact is thus presented as an embodied, temporal process. Materials and stitch made at different times, by different people, are joined together to highlight a continuum of making and material interchange, as a textile 'story'.

In a like manner, the eclectic range of materials Cochran often uses, lends the pieces she makes the sense of a gathered narrative, and creates a sense of looking through a window into a different time or place, connected through her work.

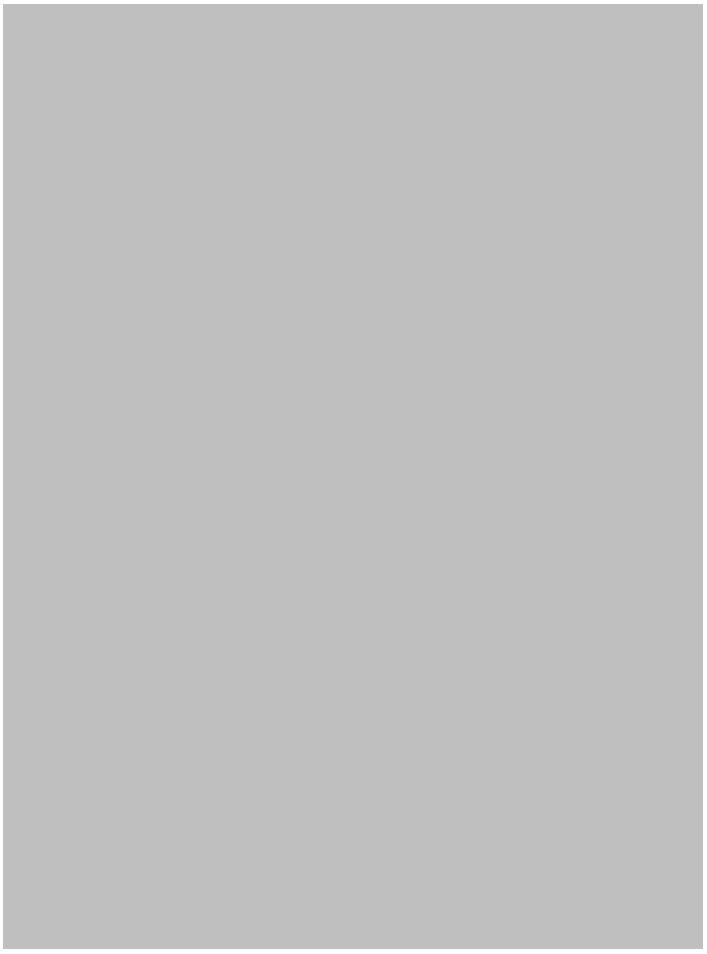


Figure 26: Cochran, V. (2007) Hand Work Bag. [Twelve pairs of nylon gloves, hand stitched]. https://www.surfacedesign.org/winter-2020-sdj-aotearoa-new-zealand-out-now/

Hand Work Bag, created in 2007 demonstrates this, using twelve pairs of nylon gloves, hand stitched to form a textural element (Figure 26). The gloved hands, the stitch, the elegantly dressed woman comporting the bag, are all conjured up in our minds through the final shape and material choices in the final piece. This layering through time can be observed in the work, linking and connecting through the assembled elements. There is a similar approach within the explorative method used within this research, springing from a similar perspective to materials as imbued substance.

The approach observed through Cochran's practice, resonates with my own experience of collecting 'op' shop finds previously and using them in this research. Colours, fabric types, techniques and artefacts that evoke prior ways of thinking and ways of doing are collected. As they become part of new work, they bring a link to previous attitudes and actions. The visible signs of temporal experiences, handwork, stains, dye marks, wear and tear, contribute a sense of a life cycle. Stitch, digitally printed elements, suggest an activity, and engagement, which contribute to a sense of a dynamic, rather than a static, textile artefact.

Like Cochran, New Zealand textile artist Jacquelyn Greenbank's stitch and fibre pieces often relate to idioms from the domestic sphere of the past as can be observed in her work from 2006 entitled *The tea party*, (Figure 27). Greenback uses recycled materials, handcrafted and found objects, to invoke a moment, or to manufacture a sense of a past event, which may be fictional or theatrical (Greenbank, 2006). The sculptures are painstakingly done using crotchet, to create quirky representations of imagery associated with domestic social occasions, such as cupcakes, floral arrangements, club sandwiches, decorative cups, trestle tables, and textiles (Figure 27). The works draw upon the artist's memories of the past to recreate her own view of history in a playful, often humorous way (Packer, 2006, p. 81). The work references a period when home-made textiles and handwork pieces had a ritualised arena through which the artistry involved could find voice and an audience. We revisit this era, through Greenback's imagery and her attention to detail in her approach to her work.

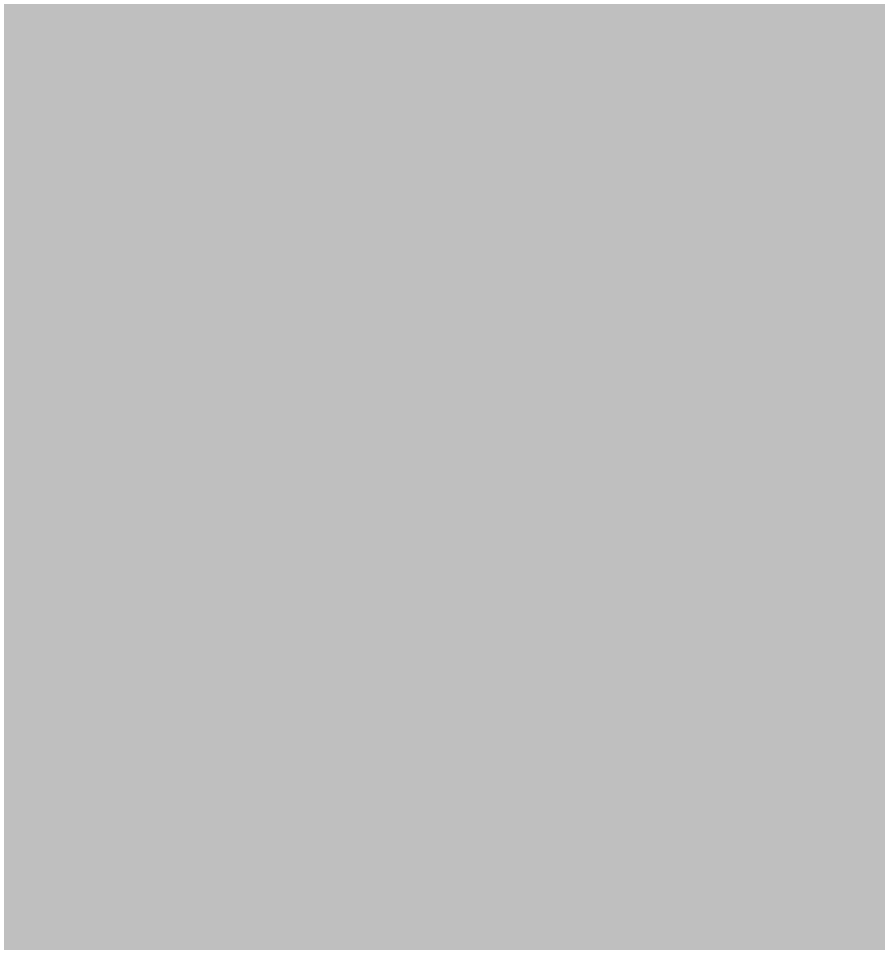


Figure 27: Greenbank, J. (2006). The tea party. [Wool and found objects]. Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/2007-026a-f/jacquelyn-greenbank/tea-party

Textile details and materials from the past are similarly brought into focus throughout this research practice. The vintage buttons, needle worked pieces, handloom textiles, knitting or embroidery are integrated to link the textile to a prior era and prior values of appreciation for textile and stitch. They are intended to draw attention to a different pace, when textiles were made through slow, hand done processes. In

contrast to Greenbank's textile narratives, the past is indicated in the research practice through material choices, introducing a sense of textiles' temporal existence

Figure 28: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Merino wool, mixed textiles and sundries, needle felted and stitched. Detail 1250 x 700mm]

as each element is seen to move in a passage through time. To illustrate this, a detail from a collaged textile created through this research entitled, *Little River - reticulated*, demonstrates interacting layers of old and new (Figure 28). Varying

stages of decay are deliberately placed against new elements, alongside stitch to suggest an intersection point in the present.

Connectivity across time, and between people, are also themes explored by New Zealand quiltmaker Katherine Morrison. She began to stitch textile as a nurse, as a technique to practice when learning to suture wounds for people (Morrison, 2002). Morrison's quilt work grew from a relationship between touch, caring for people and textile. She has interpreted this through the protective qualities she attributes to blankets and quilts, and these emotional connections are recurrent themes in her work. Morrison often uses pre-used textiles, especially preferring woollen blankets

Figure 29: Morrison, K. (2002). No sugar [Hand stitched quilt] https://www.nationalquiltregister.org.au/quilts/no-sugar/

that are worn with use. Morrison draws upon the blankets' association with familiarity and protection, adding a strong iconic narrative to her work. Illustrated

here (Figure 29), is the rear side of *No sugar*, which was the winning entry in *Expressions 2002* The Wool Quilt Prize for the National Wool Museum, Victoria, Australia. The piece uses old, worn blankets which are repurposed, hand-dyed and hand-stitched. This rear view of the work shows the many rows of stitching, and intimate engagement Morrison invested into the quilt. She writes:

> Using blankets with their stains, tears and holes still apparent is a way of acknowledging the story of their human involvement, and the visibly obvious repairing of signs of deterioration is a metaphor for me, of care and preservation (Morrison, 2002).

Figure 30: Morrison, K. (n.d). Bed of roses. [Embroidered and quilted woollen blanket] Image by Caird, J. in Packer, Stitch. Random House (p.150-151).

According to Morrison, *Bed of roses,* (Figure 30), a hand dyed, embroidered quilt, speaks metaphorically about marriage through layers of meaning suggested by the materials and methods used. The quilt is presented as a receptacle of emotion.

Bright red threads of embroidery, refer to imagined experiences of hope, personal expression, fertility and joy (Packer, 2006, p. 153). Morrison conveys family narratives and histories through textiles, her pieces create a sense of cathartic release through carefully chosen materials and techniques, which imbue an association of touch and emotional context.

The way Morrison uses materials to weave threads of context into her textiles, resonates with the method used in this research. Collected textiles used in this research are chosen because they imbue a context of use or a layer of engagement that are read as alternating rhythms of touch or meaning. Worn blankets, for example, are chosen because of a previous life where they were used to keep people warm and have taken on new material qualities through daily use and interaction.

Figure 31: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Stitch detail]

The presence of touch is read through signs of engagement, such as frayed edges, holes or patches of wear or an obvious row of stitch (Figure 31). The focus is on connectivity, revealing a journey and human presence. This is done both through material choices (worn, ripped, stained or hand-worked textiles or textile) and through the method of making.

Stains, tears and signs of wear, draw attention to the lived lives that happen around textiles, and point to details of the life lived in connection to the textile. Through stitch and layering using collage, elements of those sentiments and actions are relived in the work. Morrison's work also focuses on life cycles, of domesticity, birth, death and healing, in addition to the passage of human time accompanied by textiles. She brings to our attention the temporal nature of textile and along with it, the relationship to the somewhat less valorised but often richly lived, world of the domestic.

Andrea Gough, a New Zealand printmaker and textile artist, plays with material (textile) associations in her work. Gough draws upon the tactility of the blankets that she uses to recall a sense of place or a feeling of home where the blankets were once used. As iconic Kiwiana[8], the reclaimed, New Zealand-made blankets invite nostalgic memories for people who recognise them from childhood. She has used one as a ground for her work entitled *A bird cannot fly without feathers*, (Figure 32), in which the blanket's well-worn texture, is exploited to suggest a place, and past

[8] 'Kiwiana' are iconic objects New Zealanders recognise (Wilson, 2005).

events. She draws us into an imaginary geography, by augmenting it with printed imagery, digitally printed applique, and hand stitch details (Packer, 2006, p. 76).

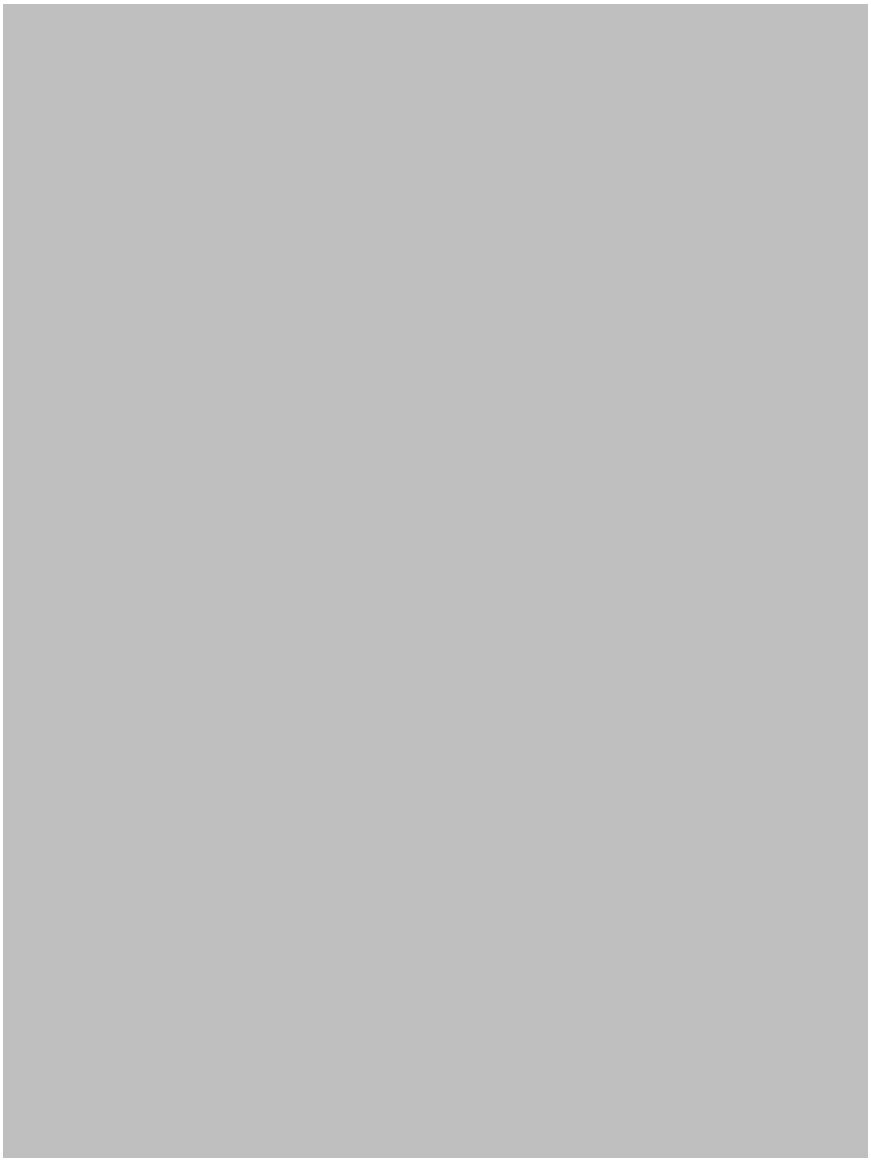


Figure 32: Gough, A. (2002). A bird cannot fly without its feathers. [Wool blanket, hand stitched, printed and applique]. Image by Caird, J. In Packer (2006, p. 77)

Textiles that have been connected to the lives of people are chosen for this research because of the way they speak of a history and are interconnected to community,

even if the people they are linked to, are distant. Damaged textiles, ripped clothing, stains, stitch, and wear patches are the marks of prior episodes of interaction that extend the textile beyond the present, into the past. For example, the tea cosy stitched into the felt piece entitled *Gathering*, is ripped, perforated, and worn through. It conveys a sense of a journey through its ageing thread and through

Figure 33: Donovan J. (2019). Gathering [Detail]

colours and technique used to make it. Some elements bring people closer into the mind's eye than others. Deliberate steps, or accidental errors left behind in a textile element, brings the vague blur of perceived action into closer focus. The resulting textile is made up of episodes of engagement that are montaged and enmeshed into

the textile and are interwoven with other (textile) journeys. Although the revealed story is not linear, the sense of the textile as a connected and connective artefact is drawn into view.

This approach is analogous to the way in which New Zealand textile maker Bronwyn Griffith creates rag rugs, gathering textiles from her locale in the Wellington area where she makes her work (Figure 34). Griffith makes rugs through a textile practice that includes weaving, spinning and textile collecting (Packer, 2006, p. 84) . Her

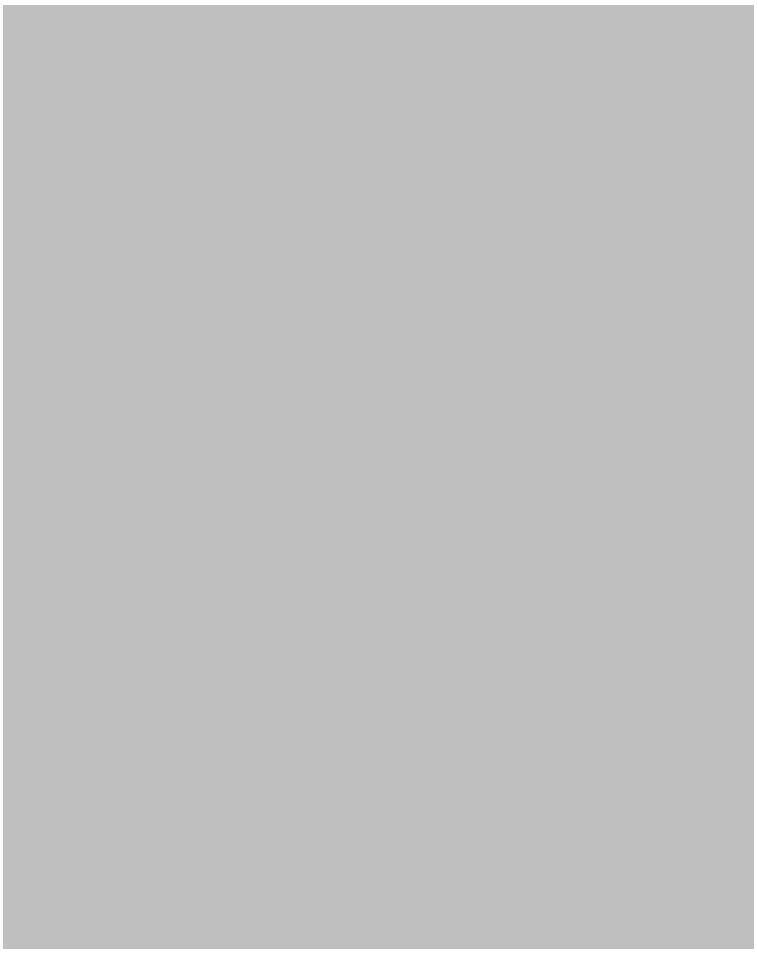


Figure 34: Caird, J. (2006). Rag Rug by Bronwyn Griffith [Image] in Packer, Stitch. Random House (P.84).

textile work is integrated into her way of being in the world, linking to her approach to living minimally and mindfully. Ann Packer describes Griffith's studio and practice.

> Cut-up denims from her current project litter the floor beneath one loom; other clothing are roughly colour-coded in large, open shelves. Coats, jackets and dressing gowns are all thrown in the washing machine before use, to check for colourfastness, and line-dried in the old-fashioned way on wire lines propped up to catch the breeze. It's like stepping back in time here. Just a street away from Wellington Harbour, every inch of ground in her sunny backyard is covered in herbs, vegetables, fruit trees and flowers, a joyful profusion that brings back memories of Grandmother's country garden (Packer, 2006, p. 84).

The image Packer creates of Griffith working in her studio, working in a symbiotic relationship within her space, garden and extend environment, draws attention to a creative process closely linked to the process of daily living. Packer alludes to 'stepping back in time' when stepping into Griffith's studio. This seems to suggest that Griffith's work is generated out of an approach remembered from the past when self-sufficiency was more valued. Drawing upon materials available within her local environment, Griffith's practice evolves out of her locale and is nourished through her connection to it. In this context, the locale becomes an agent capable of generating creative work, when activated by the maker. This view of Griffith's interconnected creative space, is reminiscent of the memory of the family sewing cupboard, remembered from childhood, stuffed full of textiles and materials. A hub into which materials flowed, and from where textiles artefacts and clothing were generated.

2.2.2 Felting in New Zealand

In New Zealand, wool/fibre crafts have significant history. The need for clothing and textiles, especially after World War II, and the prevalence of wool locally, accelerated the rise of home-based production through spinning, weaving and knitting (Renault & Turner, 2018). As discussed previously, knitting and sewing were common domestic work for women, and in many households clothing and textiles were produced using wool at home (Nicholson, 1998). As a result, the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Wool crafts Society Inc. (NZSWWS), was founded in 1969. It has continued to exist until today, operating as Creative Fibre[9], and is made up of over 3000 weavers, knitters, dyers, flax workers, felt makers, crocheters and other craftspeople, 99 percent of whom, are women (Renault & Turner, 2018).

The transformational nature of felt to fuse and to blend, observed in White's work, is emulated and exploited within this research to blend fibres and woven textile together to become a singular textile. As shown in the example of an early trial from the research entitled, *Reflected sky and field-felted* (**Error! Reference source not found.**), merino fibre blends the textile and handwork elements, merging, blurring and revealing each element differently. The fidelity of knitted, or lacework elements can be seen through the layers of felting. Images or textures printed or drawn onto woven cloth, (as seen in the background tree texture in figure 36), are preserved in detail.

[9] Creative fibre's practitioners are often home-based artisans, with some moving onto becoming professional or semi-professional. (*About – Creative Fibre*, 2021). The Creative Fibre Festival is a bi-annual event featuring a felting award for innovation (*A Proud History – NZSWWS – Creative Fibre*, 2021; Renault & Turner, 2018).

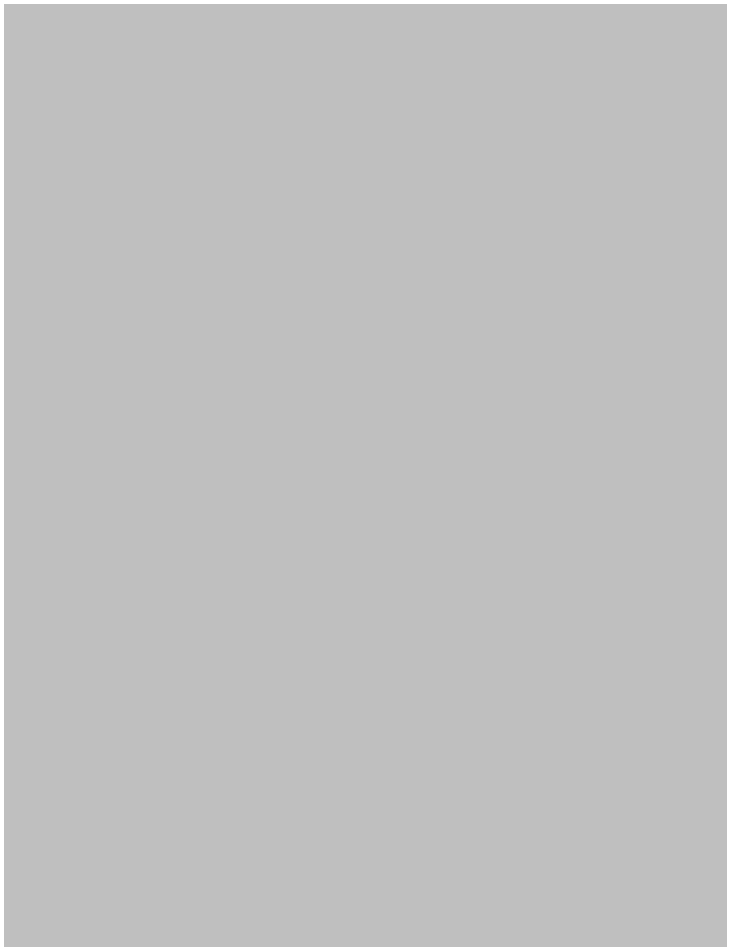


Figure 35: White, T. (2006). Nuno felt scarf. [Merino wool, silk and wet felted]. Image by Caird, J. In Packer, Stitch, Random House. (p.237)

The decision to use felt in this research arrived through the practice, as ways to combine remnants of textile and fibre were sought. This led to felting trials and when a felt loom became available locally, it was purchased for the research, which in turn, shaped the way the research unfolded. The loom enabled a way to generate felted textiles from carded animal fibre, laid out in a shape and processed through the felt loom repeatedly. When textiles elements are layered into the wool in stages, the

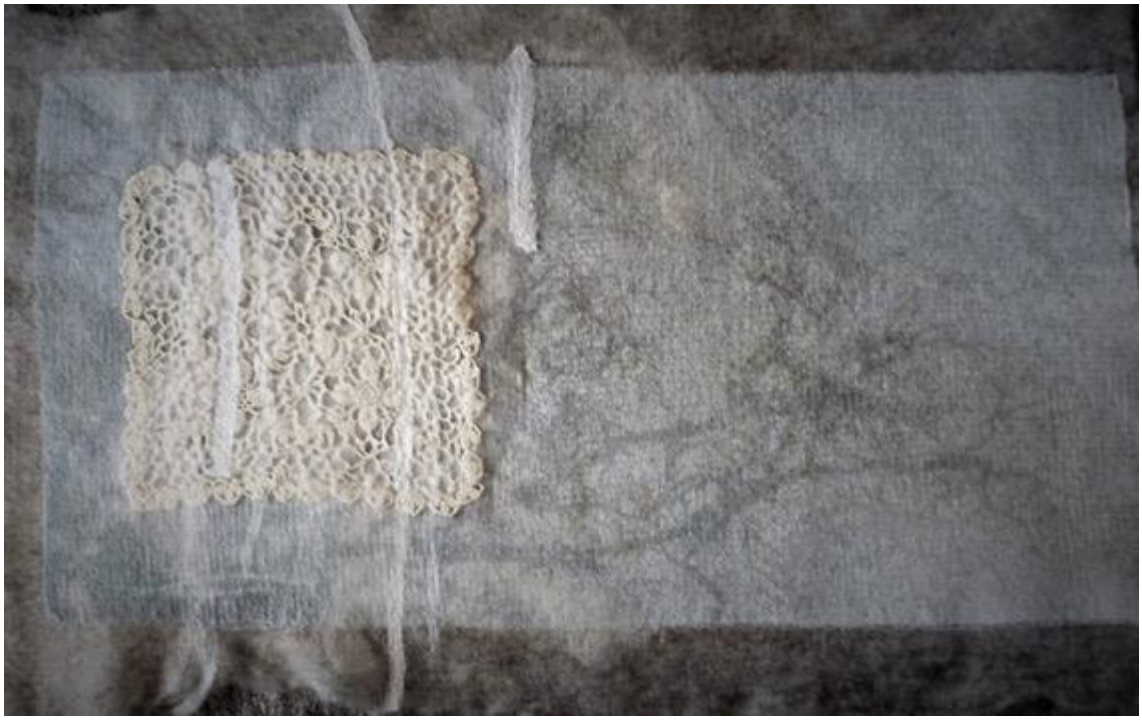


Figure 36: Donovan, J. (2018). Reflected sky and field-felted [Needle felted Corriedale wool batt, digital print, needlework and silk fibre]

fibres and woven elements combine into felt, while remaining preserved as pictured in *Reflected sky and field-felted* above (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Through felting, elements are submerged, within the fibre, but their character is still present.

Felting fibre with woven textiles or hand worked lace, blurs edges, merges combinations of textiles and fibre at the surface, so they emerge and submerge through the fibre. As the textiles and fibre are combined using the needle felt loom, each element is woven into the felt, leaving some pieces to emerge, and others recede, enhancing a sense that the textile is matter in a state of flux. The interplay

between these visual threads is intuitively plied and woven, to create a sense of interlinking textile narratives. The rows of barbed needles along the felt loom head push the fibres together repeatedly, matting them, as the layers of material roll through the loom. After repeated passes through the loom, the needles fuse the wool fibre into the other fibres or textiles, binding them into textile collages.

Within the context of this research, felt is used as a linking and fusing device. As a method, it works similar in principle to rug rag making, where diverse gathered textile elements are blended and combined to form new textiles. Each element carries an imprint from its previous life that is infused into the newly created textile. Felt is chosen for its elemental properties, as it uses friction, or heat and water to blend fibres. The character of change produced by felt processes, is similar to the way

Figure 37: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering. [felted vintage blanket, with knitted and stitched elements, detail]

nature produces change, especially in the local environs of Rotorua. In the local landscape, substance is constantly shifting and mutated through the forces of nature in the thermal environs. Felting synergises random forces, heat friction and water, to create textures in random but orchestrated ways. There is a sense of the organic, and a rawness preserved in the felt. It is reminiscent of a natural process such as the way detritus is washed up at random on a shoreline.

Rows of tacking stitch are used along with felting to link elements visually or draw attention to rhythms occurring through the felting processes as can be seen in the way red stitch emphasises and draws elements together in *Gathering* (Figure 37).

Figure 38: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Needle felt loomed silk embroidery, digital prints, vintage needlework, alpaca and lambswool]

Felting and stitch are used as methods of juxtaposition for textile collaging, as way to create layers, which are read as non-linear story with each element contributing a phrase, as in the way elements combine in *Aue teri nei tiki* (Figure 38). Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa provides a discussion on collage, highlighting it as a method of narrative-making through gathering, fragmentation, assembly and juxtaposition. He describes collaged compositions as possessing an 'archaeological density and a non-linear narrative' through fragments that are spliced together from 'irreconcilable origins'. Thus, collage connects the experience of tactility with a sense of time (2000, p. 3). The textiles are assembled from a multiplicity of fragments that through felting and stitch, link texturally, drawing threads of prior context together. Through collage, the textiles are presented as made up from material flows, rather than a static objects with a beginning and an end.

Temporal signs of touch, as seen in knitted or needle worked fragments, stains, dye marks, wear and tear, stitched imagery and digitally printed elements, become blended while simultaneously remaining separate (Figure 37 and Figure 38). Through juxtaposition and collage, textile elements traverse time, and suggest a textility with a past and future, shifting the textile into an ongoing craft continuum.

2.3 Circular and amateur models for design

Remaking textiles from gathered and collected materials for this research mirrors a pattern of use, as observed in my personal early community experience, when women saved scraps and salvaged materials to improvise into garments and textiles. This more circular approach to material use is inherently generative. It naturally fosters idiosyncratic outcomes because they are driven by the singular skills and techniques

of the maker, and the materials available in the locale. This approach provides the starting point for the research, as I co-opt this remembered 'vernacular' way of thinking and doing.

Designer, maker and British academic Amy Twigger-Holroyd's work in the field of fashion, sustainability and 'folk' fashion has examined the social aspect of vernacular creativity. Through her participatory design projects, such as *Reknit revolution* (2018), she keenly observes makers and craftspeople in their own environments to glean an understanding of the participatory and at times contradictory nature of amateur craft (Twigger-Holroyd, 2013, 2017a, 2018). Twigger-Holroyd sees a connective interplay between making, emotion, material values and community where talk, community and invested time are of greater importance than the material quality of hand-crafted knitted textiles, or the object status of the final garment (2013). *Reknit revolution* for example, is a participatory design project where people

Figure 39: Twigger Holroyd, (2018). Pocket sampler, reknit revolution [image]

are given guidance to use one of six reknit treatments to revitalise their own garment (2018). Through reviving a thrifty post-war habit (to reknit worn areas of knitted garments) a past approach is extended to serve in a contemporary, sustainable context (Twigger-Holroyd, 2017b, 2018). She writes.

> In order to focus attention on the domestic sphere, I propose that we should consider the notion of the "domestic circular economy…this encompasses all activities contributing to the circular economy at the domestic level, including all of the unpaid, non-market, reciprocal and gift-based processes involved in day to-day household life (Twigger-Holroyd, 2018, p. 95).

Through revitalising amateur making, looking to the domestic for maker habits and patterns of use, Twigger-Holroyd mines vernacular approaches as a knowledge source, a network for production and as an inspiration.

One of the aims of this research is to explore a personal experience of community practice to salvage and reuse materials to make textile. Within a localised, New Zealand context, the characteristics of past circular and self-reliant domestic practices can offer insights into the way in which a maker, can draw materials and inspiration from the locale to produce artefacts. Textiles produced in this way are conceived as being connectively linked to the experience of a place and locale. This perspective shifts focus onto autonomous production and draws attention to what one person can do, within the scope of their locale, their imagination and using their existing skills.

Writing in *Politics of the everyday; designing in dark times*, Manzini throws a comparative light on the potential of design as change agency when measured against previous periods (2016, p. 53). Wherein the past design has served industrial

production by translating ideas into form, Manzini observes a shift away from the 'object' as a product of design and towards designing processes, where values play a crucial part (2016, p. 53). Attitudes to localism and making autonomy return people to the context of their own local spaces, and 'the village' is a central motif threaded through Manzini's thought process. He writes:

> So, what does 'autonomous project' mean in the current context? In practical terms, it means breaking with dominant ideas and behaviours, moving outside the rules of the game, and deciding to collaborate with others. In other words, it means adopting ways of thinking and doing things that contrast with the prevailing ones in the context we find ourselves in (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 50).

He relates this design methodology to a natural human ability to adapt to solve problems autonomously and creatively, which has the potential to re-orientate individuals and communities. Manzini speculates that through thinking creatively and making our own artefacts within our everyday lives, we can participate in solving issues. As communities generate their own 'design cultures', they can potentially generate insights through which bigger changes can spring (2016, p. 57).

The enduring motif of the village, with the human being at the centre, is central to the aims of this research, where community of origin is seen as a source of experiential knowledge to draw upon. This concept of returning to what exists around us seems central to Fletcher's development of the 'craft of use' (2016) and Manzini's 'politic of the everyday' (2019). The personal experience of community I draw upon for this research study, aligns to this concept of a creatively, self-reliant village, where the opportunities for making, exist within the eddies and flows of material substance, that fosters a sense of abundance over scarcity. The values driving the

work evolve into the ability to improvise, innovate and rely on what is available. Agency comes from realising the dynamic potential of community values, community knowledge and the potential held within locally available material.

The research practice acknowledges materials connectivity, linked a place and interlinking to a wider connected community. An example of this can be seen in the mended patch in *Mended anew* (Figure 42). Signs of wear in textiles used, are signs of past events that are woven together, culminating in a mended patchwork of histories. The layers are communicative, revealing impressions and sending cues.

Figure 40: Donovan, J. (2019). Mended anew [Lambswool felt loomed with vintage handloom hemp scraps, digital print, stitched-in vintage needlework. Detail]

In *Mended anew*, (Figure 40), aged linen and handloom hemp, are collaged together with elements of lace. Signs of damaged, age and decay are valued in this research

and are highlighted as they challenge the notion of a static textile and emphasise that textiles continue to change and deteriorate. Decay, and signs of age are used deliberately to invoke a time scale. Using signs of ageing, and the fibrous fragility that comes with aged textiles, situates them in a state of change. The collages negate a value of 'newness', and through the inclusion of elements in varying states of age there is a suggestion that textiles continue to evolve. As evidence of matter in motion, the collages are positioned as a counter ploy to the concept of new, and are set within an evolving context, which in theory can continue without end.

2.4 Making as a connective human journey

Creativity theorist and academic David Gauntlett discusses craft's connective attributes in his book *Making is connecting* (Gauntlett, 2013). Gauntlett sees making as a form of communication that is subjectively experienced rather than objectively defined; 'Creativity is something that is *felt,* not something that needs external expert verification' (2013, p.ii). Gauntlett extends his definition of making beyond 'traditional' modes of craft to include any activity that is generative and connective. Gauntlett refers to the joy of making 'stuff', to include YouTube clips, eccentric blogs, or home-made websites. Craft can be anything that is self-generated characterful, personality-imprinted and idiosyncratic; making is a form of communication (2013, p. 26).

> Through creative activity—where making really is connecting—we can increase our pleasure in everyday life, unlock innovative capacity, and build resilience in our communities. The potency that comes from doing and making things yourself is irresistible, and means that we can face future challenges with originality, daring and joy (Gauntlett, 2013, p. 310)

The remembered experience of connective making to the locale, is experienced, as Gauntlett suggests, as a potency arrived at through singular, and independent solution finding.

My studio, is a collection of spaces that includes the felt loom lab in my home/studio, a room where the textile collections and design equipment are kept, a backyard shed where slabs of timber and tools inhabit, beyond which lies a riverbank and lakeside where elements for dyeing, printing, drawing or photographs can be found (Figure 9). The studio is an initiating space, from where agency is drawn from tools, materials and the environs, to generate textiles. When time is added into this equation, the

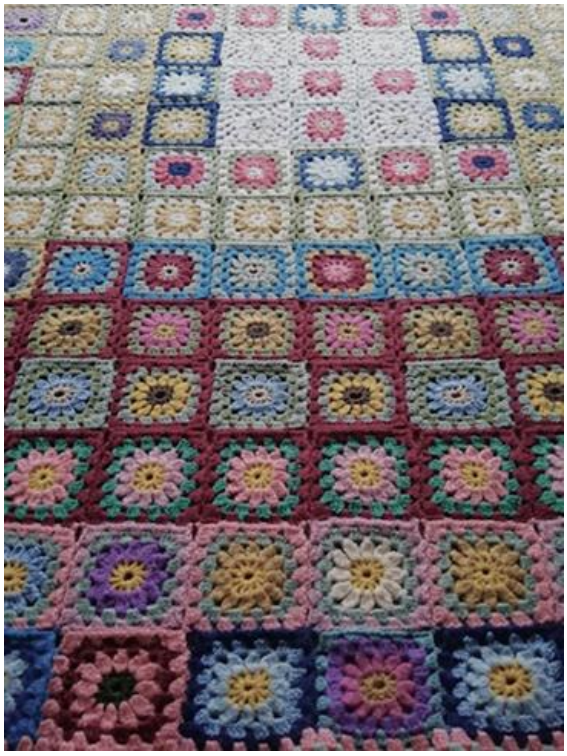


Figure 41: Crochet blanket from the researcher's textile collection. Wool, 2000mmx 1300mm. Original maker and date unknown.

making process can be viewed as an interactive, connective journey, traversing the geographical locale and across time. Philosopher Henri Bergson offers an image of

time working within activated space and describes our perception of time as two spools winding a tape. One spool winds up the future, and the other winds out the past which increases as the future lessens with the perceiver at the centre. My studio is a nexus points, which changes through every action and new moment of perception (Bergson et al., 2004, pp. 187–189). This perspective of locale as a generative creative space is viewed as an extended field (geographically and over time), of potential from which artefacts are created.

Individual textiles possess a similar quality, as nexus points and receptacles of experience. Connectivity to people can be observed in the artefacts produced from generative spaces. The crocheted blanket pictured above (Figure 43), for example, was purchased because of its imbued connections. The maker's presence came through the blanket. It could be experienced through the craftwork, in the colour changes and colour choices she made as she worked. The maker's patterns of work seemed to suggest she adapted her design to colours that became available, while still preserving the design she had set out to do. The blanket was a family piece, being sold by the blanket maker's son. He expressed the hope of it going to someone who would cherish the quality of his mother's work, and along with it, her qualities of duty, charity and care for others. Her character and her approach to work are imbued in her blanket and sometimes perceived, in some way by those who handled it.

The connective potency of signs of touch in textiles, is discussed throughout artist and theorist Claire Pajaczkowska's body of writing. Signs of touch, handling and holding embody materials with meaning that are a subliminally recognised presence

of bodily absence (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 1). According to textile historian Alice Dolan and material culture theorist, Sally Holloway, nearly every act of making is mediated by emotions, and this is particularly true of textiles. The relationship

Figure 42: Donovan, J. (2020). Imbued. [Felt loomed vintage textiles with merino wool, hot water washed and handstitched with vintage embroideries. Detail]

textiles have to the body and through their use in social exchanges, mean that textiles can imbue a physical presence or an emotional reaction (Dolan & Holloway, 2016). Dolan and Holloway draw this distinction here:

> Textiles remain emotionally charged for a myriad of reasons, including their association with women's history, admiration of skill, and the sensation of physical comfort created by the touch of soft textiles on the skin. (Dolan & Holloway, 2016, p. 156).

Dolan has published on the temporal nature of historical domestic textile work and how this was tied to the life cycles of people. Through economic necessity, domestic linen production influenced the work that people did, when they did it, and how much time they allocated to a particular task (Dolan, 2014, 2019). Today, in the age of industrial production, we do not tend to see textiles intimately linked to daily life,

Figure 43: Mended patch on handloom linen remnant. From the maker's textile collection

however, aspects of textiles can provide a reverberation of past attitudes. The mended area in this vintage handloom linen towel, provides a glimpse of the value placed on textile when the towel was made and the attitude of proprietary care with which textile was often treated, (Figure 43). This characteristic of innate value is explored in a felted montage of damaged silks and needlework, entitled *Imbued* (Figure 42 and 45). Using the felting process to blend, the fragile threads of lace are assembled, woven and re-engaged into a textile outcome. Decaying silks, embroideries and lace are fused using the felt loom and wet felting methods, to blend the layers into one textile. Needlework is added and the individual pieces are no longer fragile, although delicacy is preserved. The textile imbues a sense of textile

Figure 44: Donovan, J. (2020). Imbued. [Felt loomed vintage textiles with merino wool, hot water washed and handstitched with vintage embroideries]

preservation and care, as the damaged fibres are collected and mended together. There is a tenderness present as the layers of historic and current stitch and needlework link makers, past and present. Rust marks are deliberately left on the vintage lace, to remind the viewer that parts of the felt have moved through time (Figure 42). A thick gauge, mercerised cotton thread is chosen for the stitch, to ensure it remains on top of the fibre, overtly visible, where it works to draw attention to the textile's story.

The connectedness perceived in these textiles recalls a sense of lost intimacy previously experienced through textiles and recalled through this research. Textiles created as part of this research are made with a sense of intimacy in mind, that connects to touch, memories and impressions. It is the sense of a caress, that comes when textiles are handled, that is fostered through tactile combinations, intimate touches of stitch and attention paid to detail in the textiles created. This intimacy is drawn from the studio, which functions and radiates outwards into the locale, and through the materials that traverse across the locale and find their way into the making sphere.

Ingold illustrates this phenomenology as the maker/initiator feeling his/her way through the world, jostling against materials, synergising, deconstructing, honing and composing. As a result, artefacts emerge (2000, p. 155). Ingold writes:

> To read making longitudinally, as a confluence of forces and materials, rather than a laterally, as a transposition from image to object, is to regard it as such a form-generating organism - or *morphogenetic* - process. This is to soften any distinction we might draw between organism and artefact. For if the organisms grow, so too do artefacts. And if artefacts are made, so too are organisms (Ingold, 2013, p. 22).

Ingold draws us to an image of materials and the environment, exerting equal forces as the maker/initiator in the process of making. Making as a dynamic human *process* is emphasised, an engagement with materials/locale through time. This context when applied to this research, establishes the textiles within a phenomenology of place, the creative outputs are material 'cast offs' from a process initiated at the concentric centre of my environment, where converging forces align, through tools, materials, influences and intentions, to produce the final textile outcomes.

2.4.1 Touch and intimate context

Textiles' touch and the sensory caress experienced, can imbue them with an intimate known context. A textile can recall a family member who has made, used or gifted it, allowing the opportunity for textiles to become signifiers of emotion, connection and tenderness. Anthropologist Jane Schneider has studied textiles' capacity to absorb symbolism, often becoming a tacitly acknowledged 'glue' binding people in social congress, even after death. She writes:

> The capacity of textile to enhance who we are and deepen our social relationships is especially evident in ethnographies of mortuary rituals, in which the living wrap their dead for burial, reburial or cremation in textiles believed to ensure their continuance as social beings (Schneider, 2006, p. 204)

The view of textile, extending into the past and the future, aligns with Ingold perspective on making that is *longitudinal* rather than *lateral* (Ingold, 2013, p. 20). Laterally made textiles exist within a perceived space or time, longitudinal textiles are a substance journeyed through time, subject to interaction and alternating periods of engagement. This is experienced as the journeying, or as Ingold contends,

the ‘wayfaring’ where materials lead and the maker bends and follows, exploratively working and subject to materials (Ingold, 2009, p. 92).

Figure 45: Stitch and applique follow as a meander, in response to the materials and processes.

The textiles created in this research are treated as ‘wayfaring’ materials, and the maker creates through adapting to the route suggested by the materials. This is at the core of a vernacular approach to materials and the creative process used in this research. In the examples shown above and below, (Figure 45 and Figure 46) the chosen materials ae in varying states of wear. The silk is damaged, stained and fragile, the fibres used for felting are mixed from unknown sources. Through the fusion process, the individual filaments are blended, forming a new textile, while the

marks of the previous character remain. New elements of applique and stitch augment and draw upon the qualities of change, time and engagement, emphasising the layered-through-time or *longitudinal* state of the material.

Figure 46: Donovan, J. (2018). Waipara [Vintage silk felt loomed with merino wool and hand stitched. Detail]

Textiles can become affected by time, evolving with age alongside the human user. As fabric becomes worn, colours, textures and surfaces change, shapes become altered, textiles gradually take on a history, which exude identity and a lived context. Through the physical proximity to the body, textiles can take on personal qualities and become articulate of one person to another (Schneider, 2006, p. 205). Schneider and Weiner discuss the way in which the transmutable nature of textile transports through time alongside us, in *Textile and human experience.*

> The ritual and discourse that surround its manufacture establish textile as a convincing analogue for the regenerative and degenerative processes of life, and as a great connector, binding humans not only to each other but to the ancestors of their past and the progeny who constitute their future (Schneider & Weiner, 1989, p. 3).

The properties of textiles recognised as aligning with lifecycles of change are deliberately enhanced through the felted artefacts made in this research. The old is stitched into the new, fragility, and elements of decay are repositioned from decline into a new-ness within the present. Evolution and devolution are accepted parts of the textile making process within this research, in order to establish a longitudinal view of textiles and making along a continuum.

Marks of touch, such as a patch of wear or a dye mark, are treated as signposts to points across time and to previous engagements with people. Pajaczkowska theorises about the way we connect, subliminally and spiritually via haptic signs and our psychological responses. Referring to signs of 'holding' and containment' (within our earliest experiences), Pajaczkowska connects textiles to 'an indexical relationship with unconscious memory and pre-symbolic rationality' (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 3):

> The semiotics of 'the textile' is needed in order to show how the specifically material meaning in textiles is founded on embodied knowledge and affect, and that these exist as indexical traces of the touch, handling and holding that are the presence of an absence of the body (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 1)

Through meaningful unconscious connections, we are drawn to recognize traces of touch within textiles and identify the tacit, tactile quality of an absent body. She points to the linguistic connection between 'textile' and words such as 'tenderness',

‘tending to’, and ‘tension’, as evidence of the often deeply felt subliminal bodily/emotional experience of textile. She clarifies the way memory and bodily response work together to conjure an experience of past interactions through signs of touch in textile.

> The iconic serves to retain visual similarity, whereas the indexical serves to commemorate haptic presence, and it is the interplay between the absence of the contact and the presence of the sign which sets in motion the memory of a time in which tactile contact was present. This play of memory serves to form a connection in consciousness, to the unconscious bodily memory of the past body (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 9).

Figure 47: Ryan, M. (n.d). Undergarment [‘Boiling silk’ garment, hand stitched and tatted] Private collection.

The homemade garment pictured (Figure 47), was made by my great-grandmother, May Ryan from an early form of synthetic rayon textile my aunts refer to as 'boiling silk'. She has stitched the seams of her undergarment by hand, created a tatted border at the hem, and neckline and embellished the garment with a group of tatted motifs. When I view the seams and many mended patches all over the garment, I experience a sense of a hand and a needle creating the travelling threads. I have the sense of a person at work, engaging with the material, planning an outfit, wearing the garment, and mending it dozens of times to ensure it remained useful. The textile is laden with indexical marks that are signposts I experience connectively. Although

Figure 48: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Detail of wear and decay elements].

I have never met my great-grandmother; I strongly sense her physical presence through this garment imbued within the textile. The visual signs of action, as I follow the direction of the thread worked in the uneven way of a hand, paused at knots or patches of mending, and observe the intricate tatting, restore a sense of her presence, despite the paradox of absence.

Disused garments and textile homewares provided opportunities to explore for signs of an 'embodied' textile. Doilies, lace, embroidery, hand-tailored clothing, knit, weaving and tapestry provide the indexical traces, and the creative choices of unknown craftspeople. These remnants can be interpreted as a reader for earlier actions and values; marking respect for precious materials, handwork and time, which can be redeployed into new works. Exploring collected textiles, often involves unpicking seams, opening linings and collars to reveal the undisturbed signs of previous makers in action. The marks people have left behind, are enticing and exciting. Tacking stitches, or pieces of fabric carefully layered inside a garment to bolster thickness, or the rear side of embroidery and tapestry work are a catalogue of micro decisions as someone distant has engaged in a making task. Inside tailored garments or on the rear of needlework pieces, the hidden actions of previous craftspeople are more present. These pieces of textile, are of special interest within this research as they indicate time and engagement.

Through the indexical signs of making, there is a greater experience of interactions and the journey through which the textile has travelled. The detail of *Little River – reticulated* (Figure 48), shows this aspect of salvaged and used textiles. The textiles used, carry signs of a material life. Time-affected signs; degraded patches or

softened textures supply a lexicon of marks describing a history of use. Engagement and prior touch then become layered through felting, illustrating a textile outcome that is 'longitudinal', its changing nature drawn into view.

2.5 Summary

This chapter positions this research within three areas of context. The first considers the evolution of self-reliant cultures of use in New Zealand from early domestic enterprise, which later intersects with practices from contemporary textile artists, crafters and artisans. The second explores circular and amateur models, looking at potentially empowering characteristics within the process. The metaphor of the sewing cupboard, laden with materials tools and potential, is drawn upon to exemplify a creative nexus point from where a maker can connect to community and the locale. Manzini's view of locale contextualises this research view of locale as interactive, within fields of operation, both physical and imagined. This understanding of craft as a dialogue, is picked up in Manzini's theory of craft revealing that as such, textiles in this research are intended as a material conversation, a dialogic response to place, people, events and action.

Finally, a view of textiles from Ingold's perspective of 'longitudinal' rather than 'lateral' objects contextualise textiles as matter in motion over time. A material journey is emphasised, where textiles are considered as substance living alongside us, affected by change. Pajaczkowska, Schneider, and Dolan draw attention to the tacit link between the haptic, emotion and time. This supports a view of textiles as animate matter, which can connect to the past, present and future. Signs of the maker, a sense of time invested, and a history or narrative conveyed, can restore a

sense of engagement with the material world and the lived experience of the maker as they worked, even though they are removed from us.

Chapter Three

Research Design

3 Research Design

3.1 Introduction to methodology and methods

The practice-led methodological framework for this research is constructed using two interrelated paradigms. Firstly, a bricolage design method facilitates an experimental and open-ended way of engaging with textile making leading to new forms, new methods and new knowledge. Secondly, a phenomenology of place supports a view of locale that links the textiles to the studio place in Rotorua, Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition, phenomenology extends the textiles through histories imbued in used or discarded materials, a revival of the maker's memories of earlier approaches to community crafting and through flows of materials coming into the research sphere. Through analytical reflection, the textiles outcomes are positioned as new knowledge as they form through an idiosyncratic synergy between maker, materials, place and experience.

3.2 Practice-led methodology

Social scientist Donald Schön examines implicit knowledge and thinking-through-action in *The reflective practitioner,* (1983), elucidating the way in which creative practice in art/design derives new knowledge. Successive writers, including Biggs, Malins, Cross, and Bolt have analysed, defined and evaluated the limits and extent of academic rigour for arriving at new knowledge through practice-led methodology for creative research.

Influential design theorist Nigel Cross has critically determined the iterative, nature of art and design practice through a significant body of work (1982, 1999a, 1999b,

2001, 2004, 2011), establishing the perspective that knowledge is derived through *the process*, and becomes embodied in the product. Carole Gray and Julian Malins offer a methodical account of the mechanics of design research, providing a systemic tool for academic use in their co-authored book, *Visualising research, a guide to the research process in art and design* (2016).

My own process involves a synergy between a reflective, documented process, tacit knowledge and intuitive insights. Artist and art educator Graeme Sullivan discusses this reflective approach as a dynamic synthesis between 'method' and 'reflection' and highlights the often intuitive and serendipitous nature of creative knowledge, revealed through practice and documentation (2009, p. pp.47-48). Whilst Cross (1982, p. p.223-335) argues that knowledge is inherent in practices characterised by a process-in-action. The textile processes used in this research involve a physically and mentally engaged thinking-through-making, designed to produce knowledge embodied in the textiles produced. Artefacts that are imbued with phases of development and discovery are produced as a result of this reflective, forward moving process (2001, p. 54). Producing idiosyncratic change at each iterative step, the concept of 'finished' textile work is contingent on the understandings taken from the investigative making process, rather than the attributes of the textile produced.

Academic, textile designer Nithikul Nimkulrat and ceramicist Maarit Mäkelä explore the role of serendipity in creative discovery and discuss the way in which implicit knowledge emerges through practice. Their combined body of work establishes a triangulation between the artefact, maker and reflexive document as components of new knowledge through practice-led discovery (Mäkelä, 2007, 2016; Mäkelä &

Nimkulrat, 2011, 2018). Writing extensively on the iterative process Nimkulrat draws attention to the role of a varied range of documentation, photographs, notes, and journaling as a vehicle where findings and insights, are discovered through practice (2007, pp. 6–7). Photography plays an increasing role as a documentation method

Figure 49: Reference image of staining effect on stitched cotton using expired molasses

for this research. It is used to record process but also provides an important tool for reflection providing juxtapositions and immediate visual connections between iterations which helps facilitate deeper understanding. Photographs used in this research, such as this process image (Figure 49), are not intended to record a process but instead provide a visual reference to something learned within process. Digital images provide the opportunity for many thousands of such images that

record micro decisions and events taking place in and outside of the studio. The images act as a cross-referencing tool, stimulating change within the practice.

Documentation, images and notes take place in a multiplicity of ways, to collect evidence and to facilitate idea generation and synthesis. Inquiry is deliberate and self-aware, a conscious dynamic is engaged between the research question, practice, theoretical research and through periodic reflection (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p. 10). The parameters of this knowledge-seeking approach as applied to this research, is summarised here:

- A practice-led research that is process driven: agency is derived from the research practice itself from where insights/knowledge are formed.
- The practitioner is the researcher: a direct relationship between research and practice as a process for interpretive knowledge-making is relied upon.
- Use of phenomenology: a framework directly grounded in subjective practitioner experiences of locale is applied.
- Within the practitioner's subjective perspective, observation and reflexive documentation are the primary source of analysis
- Focus on the researcher's agency as a practitioner, recognition of tacit 'bodily' making knowledge as a mode of advancement is relied upon.

There is a spectrum of views held on the specific role documentation plays, however. Sadokierski for example, maintains that rigour can only be achieved through an authentic and detailed record of the research that is maintained throughout the duration of the project (2020). While Nimkulrut acknowledges the critical importance of documentation, she also recognises that to some extent, knowledge is represented

through the artefact as she writes that ‘knowledge contribution of academic research should be explicit enough in the artefact produced’ (2013, p. 3).

In this research, documentation plays two distinct but interrelated roles in the framework, firstly to push forward the iterative processes through imagery, drawing, mind maps, or notes to progress ideas. Secondly, documentation is used as a road map to the framework and to the developing research thesis. Notes taken from readings as the research is forming, migrate to mind maps, notes or sketches to be reflected on. This maintains the criticality and relevance of the practical work next to the research aims.

Academic Barbara Bolt distinguishes between the distinct ways of knowing with

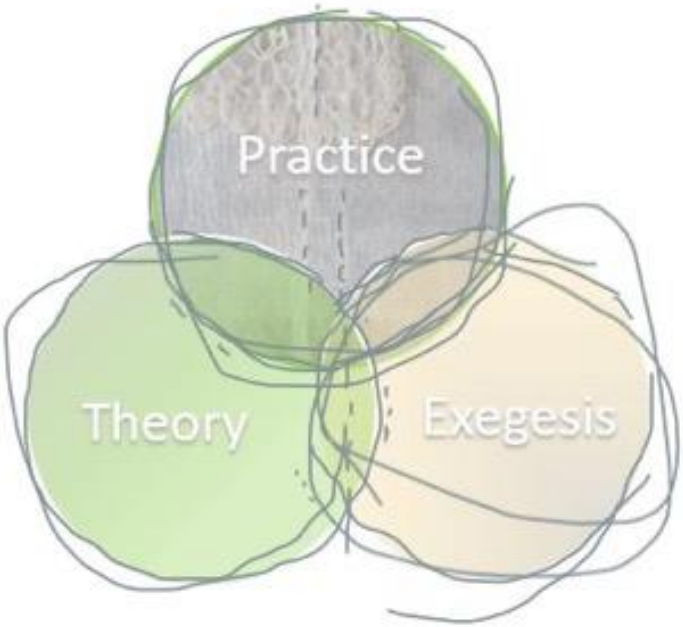


Figure 50: Practice, theory and exegesis

reference to documentation and practice. There is 'practice' and 'praxical' knowledge to differentiate knowledge resting on abstract thought versus the 'praxical' knowledge gained through the making process (2007, p. 30). She argues that 'a very specific sort of knowing, a knowing that arises through handling materials in practice' comes through handling substance, through a consciousness felt in the body (2007, p. 29). She concludes that 'theorising out of practice is . . . a very different way of thinking than applying theory to practice' (2007, p. 33).

Aligning to Bolt's view of research, the textile making process is where knowledge is sought, and these insights are made visible through the documentation that evolves alongside theoretical research, and the practice. Knowledge in this research is derived through experimental making and allowing the materials to 'speak' to their emergent characteristics. The conceptual diagram, (Figure 50) illustrates the triangulation of these three aspects of the process. Practice, theoretical research and documentation, are integrated to ensure the rigour of the knowledge acquired in line with the research aims and objectives.

3.2.1 The phenomenology of place; the maker, locale and time

To answer the research aim, to discover the characteristics of a maker-centred, localised and self-reliant textile making practice, an experiential relationship to locale must be first defined. The phenomenology of locale as applied to this research is to consider the difference between a geographical locale when compared to an *experience* of locale. Academic and author Dan Zahavi conceptualises the phenomenon of locale as consisting of what is to be found 'ready-to-hand' (2019, p. 75). A 'nearby' locale is not geographical, but closeness is experienced through a

field of operation, and through what is 'accessible and usable' within a context of belonging, functionality and significance (2019, p. 75). Locale within this methodological framework is a networked encounter rather than a physical space, experienced as folds of access, defined by what is useable and accessible to the maker (2019, p. 77).

The textiles made in this research draw together materials, influences and tools from the author's locale traversed and collected over time (Zahavi, 2019, p. 57). The author becomes both conduit and mediator, where the body becomes central to its own perception, within the locale (Merleau-Ponty 2005, p. 146). Like my own locale, the sewing/making circle within the family, was a generative hub where eddies of materials gathered, garments and textile artefacts were imagined, and actualised. The hub of this research is a connective phenomenology wherein locale is centred on the researcher and includes memories, experiences, networks and personal influences. The textiles produced are embodied, temporal, and socially intertwined.

The phenomenological consideration of locale is to think of locale beyond its geographical limits, and to consider locale instead as an interconnected, temporal habitat experienced from within. Through this research, the locale is experienced in an analogous way to the body where the centre of this research is not a singular point, or a range of points, but is a nexus through which materials, influences, human relationships and memories meet. Phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty suggests that the embodied self, acts as an activator; an implicit conduit and a mediator of the perceived world (2005, p. 146). Through communion with the world, the locale exists in a seamless engagement with it, and in a comparable way, the

researcher engages with the world through the locale via the textiles and this research.

The locale is contextualised as a network of experiences, memories and connections, additionally the textiles produced are imbued as networked entities. Signs of embodiment, stains, rips, and patches of wear are interwoven and accentuated using juxtaposition and narrative-like arrangements. Felting is used to layer primary connective elements from the locale and to link narratives that may extend beyond the present. Stitch is seen as a signpost of touch, either from the past or made in the present as Pajawosczka writes:

> The stitch has a reparative level of indexical meaning that also relates to this level of bodily presence implicit in fabric, particularly in relation to the hand (Pajawosczka, 2009, p.10).

Textiles as material cast-offs reach outward and behind into the past. Memory holds onto a perception of the past, which is not fixed, but is constantly changing as it is added to in every new moment of perception. Perception within time, is therefore a continuum of lived experiences (Bergson et al., 2004, p. 188). The textiles produced in this research are not representative of an object but instead considered a temporal 'place', as animated material. The gathering occurs within phenomenological space where relational events and experiences conglomerate and manifest.

The temporal phenomenon of place is described as 'an open and interconnected region within which other persons, things, spaces, and abstract locations, and even oneself, can appear, be recognized, identified, and interacted with' (Seamon, 2018,

p. 36). As Seamon notes in *Life takes place: phenomenology, life-worlds and place making.:*

> Phenomenologically, place can be defined as any environmental locus that gathers human experiences, meanings, and actions spatially and temporally…In this sense, places are spatial-temporal fields that integrate, activate, and interconnect things, people, experiences, meanings and events (Seamon, 2018, p. 2).

The textiles produced through this research practice, become embodied and hold to a phenomenology of place. The textiles embody moments of events, rituals, rhythms and signs from the past and present. A temporal zone, where experiences, marks, journeying and history meet. They become receptacles of experience, carrying indexical signs that are recognised through the body.

Merleau-Ponty elucidates this concept of perception through the image of the body as a conduit, forging the present from the future and the past. As the maker activates materials from within two horizons; the past (stored in the materials used) and the future (the imagined textile) into the present, through a communicative dialogue that is an authentic but imperfect experience of the (material) world (2005, p. 24). Using this phenomenological perspective, textiles are viewed as animate and '*longitudinal*', as they are made *through time,* not only within the present (Ingold, 2013, p.22).

3.3 Research methods

3.3.1 Bricolage as method

The bricoleur is described as someone who makes do with what is at hand, sorting and playing with existing material, in an indeterminate way. Materials are transposed

through a bricolage process providing a non-linear method of discovery. A bricoleur works adaptively, through an elastic approach, and can turn any tool or available resource to achieve the task at hand. Levi-Strauss writes:

> The bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, in contrast to the engineer, (s)he does not subordinate each one of them to the acquisition of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the project (Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 11).

Bricolage as method, offers an adaptive, elastic process where the research design offers a heterogenous path to discovery through process. Theoretical examples are explored where the outcome itself raises opportunities through remaining incomplete, and open-ended (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 6). Joe Kincheloe acknowledges a bricolage approach as a way to synergise responses to an inquiry that links to intuitive human conditions (Kincheloe, 2011). According to Kincheloe, bricolage processes may be more attuned to revealing knowledge from within the complexity of human experience than attempts to quantify static conditions. A bricolage method acknowledges that research derives knowledge from a living process, is temporal and is situated in a 'zone of complexity'. Bricolage derives understanding through the changing nature of a process-oriented context, considering a past and a future (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 328).

Researchers Joyce Yee and Craig Bremner, consider a bricolage method appropriate for design research as the open-endedness of enquiry through process, draws attention to the usefulness of indeterminacy within design research. For example, indeterminacy allows a projection of outcomes, tacit within the process, based on

past and present conditions that can lead to new knowledge/outcomes. (Yee & Bremner, 2011, p. 10).

As discussed in the previous section, the phenomenon of the studio/locale functions as a nexus point, within this research, where materials and tools are gathered and await activation. Through a bricolage analysis of method, the focus shifts to the maker, to the process through which the locale is activated. Engaged in a bricolage method, the maker stores materials that could 'come in handy,' for the research, collected textiles, disused clothing, handwork, decaying objects (Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 11). Founded on active improvisation of tools and materials, bricolage invites chance discoveries. Experimental processes, such as dyeing, felt making, or stitching (Figure 51), are brought into play alongside each other generating a wide number of iterative possibilities. Denzin and Lincoln describe the way in which a bricolage juxtaposition works as a quilt-like montage of 'blurred genres' to form a novel outcome (2011, p. 5).

> The qualitative researcher who used montage is like a quilt maker or a jazz improviser. The quilter stitches, edits, and puts slices of reality together. This process creates and brings psychological and emotional unity to an interpretive experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5).

As a qualitative, practice-led research method, bricolage is applied to this textile design research practice through a method of montaging both materials and processes. Synergistic methods are juxtaposed to create feedback loops of discovery. Ideas through practice emerge, and through reflection, are cross-referenced against each other. Each new phase informs the next phase, evolving a

method that is inherently characteristic of resolution as outcomes result from the process.

Through my own creative career, I have adapted art and design skills to craft, spatial design, textile design and privately commissioned works in a range of media. I attribute the adaptive nature of my practice, to a prior rationale, learned while growing up, when people in my environs subsisted through relying on their locale to supply materials, skills and collaboration. Adaptation, improvisation, trial and error, seeking potential from within current problems, and a view of the local environs as a sea of material potentiality, are all familiar approaches stemming from early experiences.

These early experiences observed in my family and within my rural locale in Aotearoa New Zealand, informs this research and translates into processes that develop findings, insights and textile outcomes. These processes include adapting to available tools and materials, such as wool, fibre and the felt loom. Relying on experimentation with available materials, such as combining fibre felting with a range of disused textiles and known stitch techniques reminiscent of repair work. Improvising clothing and felt without a clearly defined expectation of the outcome, along with a view of locale, and its materials and tools as fields of potential through which textiles can be drawn out.

3.3.2 Bricolage as improvisation

Relying on improvisation to generate artefacts, feels ‘second nature’ due to tacit and experienced knowledge building over time. Through this research, I have uncovered a skill and an approach that existed as tacit knowledge within myself, which I was

not overtly aware of prior to the research. This has been an empowering learning process as it became the method for facilitation of the designed textile outcomes of this research.

According to Ingold and researcher Elizabeth Hallam, using improvisation to create artefacts is generative, relational and temporal (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, pp. 1–7). It is generative as forms arising from contextual phenomena, materials, influences and drivers. Improvisation is relational because the artefacts produced are connective and attuned to the maker and locale. They are temporal because, through improvisation, a past and a future is implied. The textiles are situated in flux and material serendipity, rather than pre-planned, fixed or static. Accordingly, improvised textiles are self-reliant by nature. Ingold and Hallam write:

> Because improvisation is generative, it is not conditional upon judgements of the novelty or otherwise of the forms it yields. Because it is relational, it does not pit the individual against either nature or society. Because it is temporal, it inheres in the onward propulsion of life ... the creativity of our imaginative reflections is inseparable from our performative engagements with the materials that surround us (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 3).

As an investigative method, bricolage as improvisation accompanies a process akin to the unplanned unfolding of daily life, within the phenomenology of locale. Through an improvising bricolage, the vicinity acts with dynamic potential within a temporal context (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 7). Textiles are produced in this research are made through a deliberately designed system of discovery that is set up to produce a series of unpremeditated acts, chance material encounters, and opportune acquisitions of tools. One example of this is the acquisition of the felt loom, which came up for sale in the immediate locale. Seen as a chance opportunity, I purchased the loom, and it

began to shape the nature of the textiles produced. When I bought the felt loom, I had very little prior experience with either felting, or a needle felt loom, but I felt I could adapt to it, learn as I proceeded, and the adaptive untutored nature of my practice would produce idiosyncratic results.

This approach to working adaptively with readily accessible tools and materials, and adaption of new uses for existing tools and materials, is an approach I observed within my family and locale as a child. I emulate this tacitly acquired understanding and early experience of adapting to and within the locale, which manifests as self-reliance, to discover the character and characteristics of the textile outcomes.

To use this tacit knowledge, is to operate using materials and locale in the bricolage sense as a 'tinkerer'. To tinker is to work in a cognitive process involving de-

Figure 51: Multiple activities. From left to right, clockwise. 1. Walnut dyeing. 2. Studio. 3. Juxtaposition of dyed fragments. 4. Deconstruction. 5. Staining. 6. Reflection zone

construction, and re-forming contextual reflection, negotiation, and adaption (Kincheloe, 2005). Re-appropriating, old textile with which to create new forms, making do with remnants, playing and handling indeterminately to explore possibilities are methods of discovery using materials that are available. Textiles are produced through active engagement, a useful indeterminacy is exploited, and not-knowing becomes a 'constructive loop', which is interrogated repeatedly (Yee & Bremner, 2011, p. 8). Figure 53 illustrates the interactive, interplay between collecting, juxtaposition, and synergistic testing that makes up the matrix of 'diverse tasks' Levi-Strauss describes as a bricolage approach (1966, p. 11). Circles of activity in figure 54, illustrates further circles of activity, juxtaposed to produce a holistic evolution of ideas. Through bricolage, the layered activities

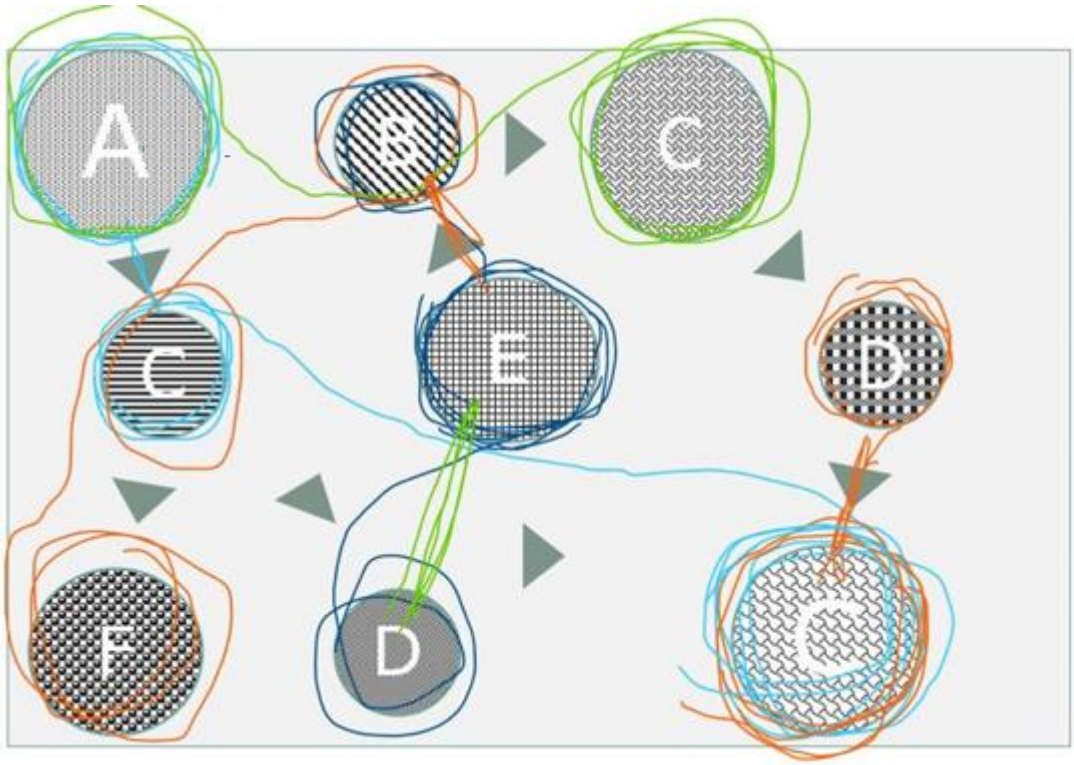


Figure 52: Concept map of bricolage activity. A=dyebath B=deconstruction C=sketching leading to stitch D=Wet felting C=Rinsing E=Needle Felting F=Staining

respond to each other, in a randomly generative action. Each circle represents a 'bricole' or single process, impacting in unplanned directions. The coloured lines represent the maker connecting between processes, showing responses to a matrix of events producing feedback loops and unplanned synergies. Editing, note-taking and organising begin to formulate developmental iterations, which are then refined in cycles of explorative testing and problem solving.

Using a bricolage method in this research establishes a design-based and interpretive context. As the process and practice itself are established as modes of discovery, the research operates through a series of investigative events, (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 325).

3.3.3 Collecting, juxtaposition and remediation.

One of Ingold's central arguments within his body of writing is that making is a process, that living beings engage in as part of life, as they chafe up against a flux of materials surrounding them (Ingold, 2000, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014; Ingold & Hallam, 2021). When considering the way textile artefacts are collected as a method for discovery within this research, Ingold's concept of materials 'in flux', is relevant to the way a collection of textiles is drawn together (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 11). The collected textiles are acted upon as they are chosen and grouped while simultaneously becoming a new form. The collected textiles and garments elicit emotions or values, and the act of collecting is often mediated by feelings of tenderness and empathy as imagined histories are experienced.

Figure 55 depicts a collection of buttons which came to me as a grouping, sold together in a small tin. The saved buttons revealed a prior selection process, a curation. Each button had been chosen for a set of material qualities, perhaps form, colour, age, context or detail. It was an attention to detail that was already imbued in the group of buttons, that attracted me to them. I attempted to draw attention to their character as a group when reusing them.

Each collected textile or artefact holds an aspect of itself up to view, I feel joined to the things I collect, as part of a story that is unfolding within a process of change.

Figure 53: Group of vintage buttons from the maker's collection

Ingold suggests making, storytelling and journeying, are processes intimately connected with our experience of being alive (Ingold, 2010, 2011, 2014). The

narratives imbued in collected elements and textiles are subtle, ephemeral and sometimes poetic. It is impossible to tell each story, or to relay even some of the subtlety felt within these objects, but they carry the shades, and textures of other lives, that are threads woven into new textiles.

Each snip of textile appears clipped out of a previous time, bringing with it shadows of activities, and people. Through traces of touch, ageing patches, threads and knots, the textiles speak about time and of the hands that worked them. Time is conveyed through hapticity, and context is imbued in each textile element.

Figure 54: Donovan, J. (2019). Mended anew [Felt loomed and wet felted lamb's wool with vintage textile applique and hand stitch remediation. Detail]

Collected textiles become an extended concept of locale where materials echo with a prior context. Lace speaks of a maker, imagined sitting at painstaking work evidenced behind stitches. Felt speaks of warm, comforting wool, tended animals, and the land. Worn pieces of clothing are a catalogue of daily life, energy, movement and bodily contact. As items of clothing are spent and discarded, they become a completed story with a potential for continuation. Pallasmaa alludes to the way materials and surfaces can speak pleasurably to us, of time (2000, p. 80). He notes the way past experiences of time are caught in surface and textility and materials as substance in flux are drawn into our acts of making as we improvise through process.

The Covid19 pandemic altered my collecting patterns due to government restrictions and limited travel options which resulted in searching for materials online. Prior to Covid19, as a regular visitor to the local charity stores, I would look for fibre, woollen blankets, textile sundries, handwork and interesting textile or tailored garments. However, charity stores do not tend to on-sell damaged items; therefore, it is difficult to find worn or damaged textiles and garments to explore. Worn artefacts hold a unique narrative, and are often imbued with signs of a body, and are richly imprinted with the touch of previous lives that can be read like many layers of footprints overlapping on a shoreline. As material in a state of decay, worn and damaged textiles offer signs of devolution, as part of the processes of entropy. Not always welcome aspects of clothing to the charity shops sorters. I also relied on my own collection of disused textiles, along with discarded 'rags' acquired through the community. Much of what I have used in this research, come from blankets, clothing and pieces of textile I have collected prior to the start of the research as part of a lifelong habit of collecting.

3.3.4 Embodiment through gesture

Traces of touch experienced collectively are gathered and collected to reuse. Signs of touch link to prior and current intentions, awareness and action. Within Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, the body functions as the primal constituent of awareness, which in turn becomes the agent of intention (2005, p. 206). As the product of perception and intention, the textile is seen as a dimension of lived experience, or phenomenology of time and place.

Figure 55: Donovan, J. (2021). Salvage [Re-purposed jacket, applique and stitch elements. detail]

Gestures of touch, from the past and present form a temporal tension of rhythms akin to meandering, within the making processes that is deliberately applied to the

textiles to draw the textile into a continuum. Figures 57 and 58 show woven woollen textile juxtaposed against printed linen, cut edges and hand-worked lace. The multiplicity of

Figure 56: Donovan, J. (2021). Salvage [Stitched panel detail]

processes work as a layering of embodiment. Haptic signs, suggests researcher Claire Pajaczkowska, commemorate the presence of a body, setting in motion a memory of time where touch and action were present (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 8).

Using stitch provides a contrasting value of time where the hand completes gestures required for its making. The traces of this temporality, convey meaning which is

somewhat specific to textiles. (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 8). Perception of time, awareness of actions, memories or links to places or events are thus layered into the textiles being created. A consciousness of the origin and place of the work is raised and along with that, a sense of the pace, a material/human journey. In this way, the textiles are positioned as materials in flux. As improvised materials, they are not 'begun' but rather they are 'intercepted' and re-formed. Nor is there a visible endpoint as materials can continue to evolve outside my sphere.

3.3.5 Design development

The theoretical framework supporting the research and the theoretical research developing alongside the project is kept present as a notes-on-paper live mind map

Figure 57: Donovan, J. (2020). Juxtaposition as mind-map holding theoretical ideas in a visual form [Photograph]

pinned up in the studio and drawn up within research notebooks. The virtual and paper research 'map' function as living documents where notes are added and subtracted as ideas move in and out of view.

Cross (1982, p.p .223-335) argues that knowledge is inherent in practices characterised by a process-in-action. The engaged discovery that takes place, applied to making textiles in an improvised way, involves making, reflection, analysis in repeated cycles that are characteristically knowledge-making (Cross, 2001, p. 54). This thinking-through-making practice-led enquiry produces change, via each iteration which makes new understanding.

Documentation is used in this research as a road map connecting the methodological framework into the practice. Documentation is also used to progress the practice, through a reflective process engaging theory, methodology and textile making. The triangulation of these three allows for analysis within the context of the research questions and aims. This aligns to what Schön describes as reflection-in-action, alluding to the complex cognitive processes at play during creative knowledge-finding (Schön, 1983). Sullivan refers to the intuitive leaps and tacit understanding, which are revealed through documentation (2009, pp. 47-48). Mäkelä and Nimkulrat observe, through a series of case studies, the ways in which documentation makes reflection-in-action possible via diary writing, photographing and diagram drawing (2011, 2018a).

The analytical phase of the research is ongoing and involves a consistent re-engagement with theory, and methodology with a view to the research aims. The process is not entirely fixed at the outset, as a feedback arrangement is consciously

set up between the findings and the questions being asked. As the discovery unfolds, it has the power to reshape the questions. It is this dynamism, that creates the momentum, and the insights from the research. It is not a linear process but is a reflective engagement with materials and processes that is at the same time, enlightening and revealing.

Bolt's distinction between practice and theory, the knowing that comes from an engagement with materials and the consciousness that aligns to physical responses to making (2007, p. 30). Knowledge is made visible through and via the documentation allowing for further alignments and connections to be drawn from the felted or stitched pieces resulting in the final presented outcomes.

In addition to the thesis and the analytical process during the practice, the exhibition also functions as a method of analytical response. To disseminate the research findings as part of the examination process for the practice-led PhD research, subjecting them to analysis and peer review, is an important method of validating this research. Displaying the textiles in a formal context, such as an exhibition or viewing, enables the final synthesis of the research process and forms a resolution of the methods as visible through the practice pieces. Nimkulrat considers that displaying work during the research process contextualises the artefacts and is a vehicle for the resolution of the research questions within the context of the research (Nimkulrat, 2007, 2013).

As the textiles produced in this research are a communication from and a response to locale, allowing the textiles to be touched and experienced through some form of display is envisaged as part of this research.

3.4 Summary of methodology and processes

The specific practice-led methodology as set out in this chapter facilitates learning throughout this project, over and above the research aim and objectives. As a practitioner, and a lecturer in design for a significant length of time, learning-through-doing and solution-finding are confident and fluent practices. However, the particular design of this research leads to new ways of developing and generating knowledge. The relationship between bricolage inquiry, improvisation, adaptation and the focus on the researcher's agency within self and locale, provided new depths to existing insights into making. Focussed documentation produced a new depth of understanding. The research design elicited personal insights about my background, and a deeper understanding of the range of tacit self-reliant skills, which are brought to the fore, recognised and engaged with, through this research. The way in which links and connections, both physical, ephemeral, remembered and distant are actively interrogated to arrive at textiles is discussed in relation to a phenomenology of locale. Textiles are thus positioned as temporal places, the product of an experiential process and a narrative imaginary based upon perceived connective threads drawn from the environs.

Chapter Four

Research Practice

4 Research practice

4.1 Introduction

This chapter maps the research, through practice, which is critically assessed against a reflective rationale. The research is established through two main threads of enquiry. Firstly, materiality is explored through a bricolage approach (see sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2), to discover and investigate the potential, narratives and signs of a journey held within gathered materials. This leads to interrogating the way the materials, memories, community and/or locale 'speak' in the created textiles.

Secondly, a practice-led, thinking-through-making process explores a phenomenology of locale. Textiles are positioned as longitudinal surfaces, capable of reflecting a presence through time and a connection to past people and places. An exploration into the narrative of making as a journey, where textile is linked to a locale across time and considered as matter in motion.

4.2 Gathering and layering

Drawing materials from the locale, is an approach to making where the making process is activated by the qualities within materials themselves (Ingold, 2011, p. 26, pp. 29–30). Responding to materials to produce a creative process and outcomes, is a way to draw connective links to a community and place through the textiles produced. This is an ongoing dialogic relationship with materials as they are drawn from and returned to, the material-flow to be drawn upon again at a later time (Ingold, 2011, p. 30). In the textile outcome created for this research, *Little River—reticulated*, (Figure 58), scraps of

Figure 58: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River – reticulated [Merino wool, various textiles and sundries, needle felted and stitched. 1250 x 700mm]

textiles were collected and woven together using the needlefelt loom and hand stitch. Signs of touch are visible in a torn edges and pieces of needlework (Figure 59).

Figure 59: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River—reticulated [Detail].

Some fragments are disintegrating and are made more fragile as they are felted or stitched, drawing attention to the temporality of the filaments being captured. The fading fibres of textile place a focus on the devolving nature of textiles, as they are captured and evolve and merge into their new form (Figure 59).

As the layers are felted and stitched into the blanket substrate of *Little River—reticulated*, the back of the textile begins to become increasingly rich with lines of stitch, offering a view of the journeying hand of the maker and part of the making process, imbued in the textile. The reverse faces of the textiles become of increasing

importance through this series of felts, as the reverse provides a view of touch and engagement.

Figure 60: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River -reticulated [Detail]

Figure 62 reveals the back face of *Little River—reticulated*, becomes activated through felting and rows of stitch as layers of textiles are held within both faces of the base textile. The action and human being behind each stitch is drawn into view as the mind traces the pull of the thread and the direction of the hand (Pallasmaa, 2005, p. 11). Through this characteristic of stitch, to link to our perception through a memory of similar haptic responses, we are also capable of linking to another person's experiences of making. This work begins to explore connectivity to the presence of makers, past and present, through the layering of handwork and stitch into the felt.

Figure 61: Donovan, J. (2020). Cashmere, woven in [Stitch detail]

In *Cashmere, woven in*, (Figure 61) layers of stitch and textile are considered to represent events occurring at different places in time. Each one elicits a subtle and distinct bodily response that occurs in the memory that shifts the view of the textile to one that is experiential and communicative.

Worn vintage woollen blankets are used as a substrate for this series of textiles (Figure 62). The woollen blankets are of the kind commonly made in Aotearoa (New Zealand) prior to the 1980's (*History of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills*, 2021) and were a familiar feature in households where I grew up. They were the only bedding available, and I associate the smell, colours and textures of these blankets, as connected to family life. I am able

Figure 62: Donovan, J. (2021). Little River-reticulated [Back face of textile].

to connect to some of the blankets I have acquired through familial knowledge, they hold a familiar scent, and tactility. They invoke memories that trigger feelings of comfort and security. I view these blankets as a living textile that evolves alongside,

connected to family life and valued through lifecycles of change. The aged, lived blankets represent, preservation, care of loved ones, and the highly valued warmth of wool. As imbued artefacts, they carry the impressions with them, into new works.

Layering textiles using saved 'scraps'[10] comes from the familiar act of salvaging materials, which holds with it a sense of renewal. The textile, *Little River—reticulated*

Figure 63: collections of scraps and textiles used in felt collages.

for example, represents a montage of salvaged memories, tactile experience and material potential. The practice of collecting special scraps, is influenced by personal memories of women in my family cutting buttons from shirts, saving bits of lace, or

[10]Merriam-Webster supplies a nuanced meaning of the word 'scrap' when used as a verb, which is relevant to my applied usage. 'Scrap' is to discard, cast, shed, slough or to consign to junk. This implies a forceful 'letting go' or repudiation of something that has become useless or superfluous but not intrinsically valueless. There is an intrinsic or implied suggestion that a consequent renewal of vitality will follow (*Scrap Definition & Meaning*, 2022) .

embroidery and keeping parts of unworn areas of garments for the ‘rag bag’ they would delve into later for materials (Figure 63).

Figure 64: Donovan, J. (2019). Impression [Felted crochet wool, into sacking]

Cashmere, woven in, captures blurred and veiled layers (Figure 65 and Figure 66). A knitted child’s embroidered cardigan is stiff and felted with age. The label shows it was ‘shop-bought’ and made of cashmere wool. The felted wear and tear suggest a life of use, repeated washing, and an appreciation of its qualities that led to it being saved and passed on. The origin of the cashmere springs to mind, way it was knitted and embroidered, along with the people who wore it, are all part of the history of the textile, it has acquired along its material journey. Incorporated alongside these elements

Figure 65: Donovan, J. (2020) Cashmere, woven in [Cashmere knitted garment, lace, digital print, applique and stitch felted]

are my own stitches and embroidery, linking the textiles narratives and further collaborating in a crafted journey.

Figure 66: Donovan, J. (2020) Cashmere, woven in [Detail].

4.3 Past to future: A stitch through time

Textiles are positioned in a temporality in this research practice, and become longitudinal, as decaying substance is renewed by joining and layering.

Figure 67: Donovan, J. (2019) Process montage [Digital image]

Through felt collages, vestiges of textile artefacts, are worked together in a process similar in a sense to weaving, where the substance and process brings out a final form (Figure 67). Materials are gathered, loosely aligned and converge as they are read, and organised. As their stories emerge and interrelate, a textile is drawn out and layered into form. A crafted journey that pulls fibres together across time, encourages a longitudinal perspective of textile (Ingold 2013, p. 22).

In Gathering (Figure 68) the deliberate use of decay, stained and torn textiles suggests the ongoing nature of textile. Fibre becomes worn and is prone to decay. Once decayed it is no longer useful and is classified as waste. The felt loom subsumes decay, enmeshing the fibres into other textiles, such as pieces of domestic knitting, scraps of textile, digital prints and elements of lace. As the textiles are layered, decay is absorbed and repositioned. The use of decay, suggests the potential

hidden within materials to be reused, remoulded and regenerated as layers are fused and new artefacts are formed.

Figure 68: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Felt-loomed collage of fibre and stitch].

This concept of textiles evolving and devolving in a continuum, is explored as part of the research query, looking at the quality of experience of salvage and reuse. The generative of power within used or decaying materials is recovered and repositioned. The making process is one of reshaping and reframing the discarded and valueless.

Figure 69: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Detail of mixed weave and felted fibre]

In *Gathering*, the linking stitch is directional, connecting to the textile's story. Stitches tie layers together, knotting gestures and pulling events together to draw attention to their divergent qualities and therefore, the journey that brought them together.

The complexities of individual textile stories are arranged, given space and connected to the whole using a connective red stitch. *Gathering* represents both process and the experience of a liminal space. Ingold (2009, 2013) describes this organic process of making, as an artefact that grows through 'morphogenesis' rather than a form that takes shape from a pre-planned (imagined) template. He explains morphogenesis as a conflux of materials and processes, which generate form when freed from the transposition of image to object

Figure 70: Donovan, J. (2019). Gathering [Detail]

(Ingold, 2013, p. 22). In the forming of these textiles, I surrender to the textile, following where the materials lead. Materials are seen as geographies that are mined and traversed. This is not to say that the textiles are not planned in some respect, or that tacit knowledge is not applied, but as a function of the process, the materials, are co-creators.

Acts of craft, both past and present, merge during the felting process, attesting to past experiences and a trajectory of material encounters merging in a new, albeit transitory artefact phase. We touch objects, but we 'feel' materials, says Ingold (2013, p. 18, pp. 20–21, 25–26). Stitch and signs of connection link across time and textiles can be thought of as conduits for experiences. In this respect, textiles created in this research are an animate, rather than an inanimate expression of locale.

4.4 Remediation, textiles in flow

Made things, according to Ingold, are thread-like in quality; they are temporal trajectories of materials that flow from past to present. Conversely, when they are fixed into an object state in our minds, material is removed from being alive, excised from its state as a 'strand in the tapestry of nature' and the experiential world of us. He writes.

> …each of these (things) has - or rather *is* - its own record, of the processes and occurrences that went into its formation. Indeed, the very word 'record' suggest a *cord* (strand, string) that is *re*-covered or *re*-wound……to turn these things, these *re*-cords into objects *in* the record, is to cut the very cords that carry on and to let them fall like cuttings to the floor (Ingold, 2013, pp. 81-82)

Within the context of this research, the approach to explore this concept of textiles as embodied substance rewoven through time, is re-use and remediation. The textiles created are not considered frozen into a finished state when complete but are worked upon again as they connect to new materials or the experiences that arise.

Reuse and repeated use of remediation emphasises the concept of textiles as materials-in-flow rather than objects, and as such textiles are returned to what Ingold terms the 'currents of life' (Ingold, 2013, p. 19). This concept of textiles as moving along a living current, leads to the textiles remaining open to becoming 'finished' repeatedly. Materials continue to evolve as they are added to, they are joined into other works, or reworked through stitch, more felting or applique.

As change and remediation became increasingly more integral to the research being produced, it became clear that textiles were being considered, shaped and formed through a view of substance in flux. Salvaged materials are framed as material that is in a state of open potential, and this state of being in open potential, began to extend to the textiles even as they were conceived of as complete. The textiles continued to ambulate, as part of a process and the relationship to materials, the studio, the maker and the environs.

The textility of the felts, is seen as comprised of transitory moments of becoming that link connectively to the surroundings and prior events. The most interesting finding of the work produced through this research is the perspective reached of the ongoing nature of the individual textile pieces. The trajectory of the past woven into the textile has changed, and along with it, the future and what can happen to the

textile next (Figure 73). The textiles suggest their own new forms, as folds, creases and marks, suggest additions of materials or patterns of stitch. This process can be seen in *Waipara* pictured in (Figure 71), for example, as one transmuting process leads into the next.

Figure 71: Donovan, J. (2019). Waipara. [Vintage silk needle felted with merino white merino wool and black lambswool. Hand stitched detail. 800mm x 400mm].

For this piece, lamb's wool was needle-felted with merino wool into the vintage indigo dyed silk. The textures produced through the felting processes, were drawn into using stitch to respond to the landscape of perforations created by the felt loom.

The name *Waipara*, recalls memories of locale landscapes that are traversed by braided rivers, interspersed with limestone or ashen landscape formations, and scattered with places inhabited by people. The name *Waipara,* enacts a metaphor, linked to a landscape within the locale, wherein the textile represents a geography of materials aging and changing, while also being shaped by the elements and human interventions.

Figure 72: Collected remnant of antique 'wallpaper' painted sacking. From an abandoned, burned-out homestead, southern Bay of Plenty, Aotearoa

The materials that are added to the piece, a remnant of painted textile wallpaper, (Figure 72), wool and needlework, arise as the textile continues to absorb, to move and change within the phenomenology of the extended locale. Through the additions and changes, the trajectory of the past that are woven into the textile have changed, and along with it, the trajectory to the future also changes, as it is made anew (Figure 73). From this perspective, the textiles are co-creators evolving their new own forms, as new additions of textile or patterns of stitch come from the shifting nature of the

textile. Some of these remediations in *Waipara -transmuted*, are shown in Figure 73 and Figure 74.

In some respects, the textile is *about* change. For example, As the decayed fragile textiles are stitched into the felt, they often begin to crumble further, and every stitch from the present, erases an element or a moment from the past. This fragile interplay

Figure 73: Donovan, J. (2022). Waipara - transmuted [Montaged needle felts with applique and hand stitch]

between past, present and future is captured in the making process through the use of decayed and decaying materials, stitch and divergent juxtapositions. The process, where the textile becomes a material expression of an experience of time extending

from the past, across space (the locale) and into the future centres on the maker and the maker's perception. As such, it represents temporal phases of perception, linked through memory to the present, and connected via the character of the maker (Bergson et al., 2004, p. 188). This view of perception positions the maker as a conduit, from where the past and future extend, supported by theories from Bergson and Merleau-Ponty. From this viewpoint, the textile does not represent an object but is instead a temporality, a 'place' activated by the maker-as-mediator who connects material events across a temporal spectrum (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. 24). This perspective positions the textile into an iterative phase that is an embodied process functioning alongside lived experiences (Ingold, 2013, p. 22).

Figure 74: Donovan, J. (2022). Waipara -transmuted [Detail]

As this framework is realised through the research, remediation as bricolage became increasingly relied upon as an inter-connective method for textile making. Making and re-making, within a constant flux of substance manifested in a series of works which were developed through this responsive mindset and experimental process.

Figure 75: clockwise from left; 1. Dye work in progress. 2. The wool underside. 3. Stitching a dye resist. 4. Ready for the dyebath. 5. Submerged in the dye. 6. Rinsing.

The three pieces that follow, exemplify the use of bricolage in this context. *Motunau-reserved, Furrows,* and *Waimakariri-braided* (Figure 77, Figure 78, and Figure 79), use hybrid techniques including three felting processes. Eclectic use of tools and materials, invite chance discoveries during the process, which are exploited and developed. Academic Les Roberts, defines bricolage as an eclecticism, centred on the practitioner, based on their resourceful responses to a locale, as he writes:

> If eclecticism informs a deep mapping practice increasingly oriented around the embodied and embedded researcher, then it is one that that correspondingly finds its creative expression in the art and poetics of ' making do' (Roberts, 2018, p. 1).

As such, these textiles are produced through a range of experimental processes using materials that are available, felting dyeing and stitch (Figure 75 and Figure 76). Various methods are brought into play alongside each other generating a wide number of iterative possibilities through overlapping methods and visually cross-referencing the processes while making.

Figure 76: Black walnut 'all in one’ dyebath.

Engaging in bricolage, merges methods together in layers, while simultaneously and paradoxically, treating them as separate. This way of working has been likened to a 'jazz-like' montage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5), as it produces effects and outcomes through useful and unforeseen synergies. This produces individually created, idiosyncratic textiles specifically embodied to and from the maker, within the phenomenology of the locale (Roberts, 2018, p. 1). As a body of work, the textiles develop through an open-ended process where the indeterminate nature of the overall design process creates random opportunities that are exploited, thereby influencing further changes in the works, in a creative bricolage loop (Kincheloe, 2011; Yee & Bremner, 2011). To pinpoint exact moments and specific 'linking of the dots' that occur as work is being produced in this way is not linear. The nature of the knowledge is often created in a crucible of activity producing insights that happen in leaps or concurrently. Sullivan alludes to this, as does Bolt, and Nimkulrat (Bolt, 2007; Nimkulrat, 2012; Sullivan, 2009).

The 'feedback loop', as Kincheloe describes the bricolage process (2011), is set up through a divergent set of activities creating tensions between fast and slow, random and controlled. It is through exploiting these tensions, that the maker produces results. The unknown is considered an activating agent and is exploited to produce results.

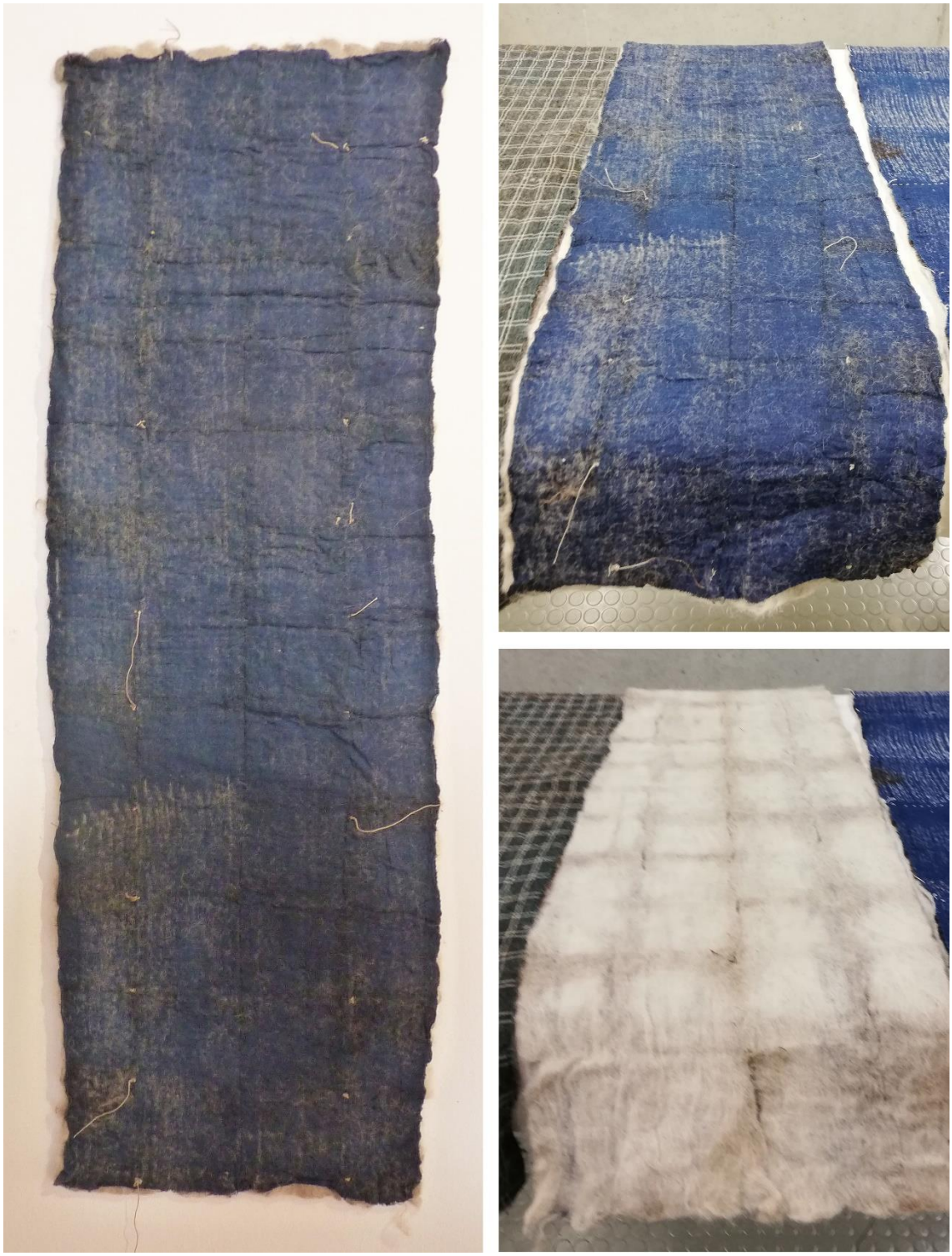


Figure 77: clockwise from left; 1. Donovan, J. (2019). Motunau-reserved [Vintage silk needle felted with merino. Walnut dyed. 800mm x 400mm] 2. Detail. 3. Underside, detail.

This can be observed at work in *Furrows* (Figure 78), as serendipitous effects are produced by the needle felt loom are acted upon. The furrows, gaps and thicker areas are maximised and extended using a hot wash felting method, which matts into a texture from the needle felt loom idiosyncrasies. The hot wash felting process creates gaps in the felt, uneven edges, and a dense texture that follows the imprint of the original textile and felt. The needle felt loom is a managed and controlled process, gently built-upbuilding up fusing layers. Hot washing, done either by hand or using the hot cycle of the washing machine, creates dynamic, unplanned outcomes. The accidental effects are embellished and highlighted further using stitch to draw attention to the elemental

Figure 78: from right to left 1. Donovan, J. (2019). Furrows [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool. Hot washed needle felted, top stitched and appliqued] 2. Edge detail. 3. Rear detail showing hot felted texture, splits and stitch

nature of the process. This draws attention to the organic quality of the making process, where matter is subject to primal forces that create change that shape and mould form. Stitch connects to the maker and to the textile more intimately, as

Pajaczkowska has acknowledged, referring to the connecting link between sight and unconscious memories of tactility (Pajaczkowska, 2010, p. 3).

There are long periods of consideration and contact when the textile is held and handled during stitching. The textile is experienced differently through being intimately held and worked on.

For example, the experience of making a row of stitches by hand, close awareness and appreciation of close-up detail. In contrast, working with the needle felt loom is fast and rhythmic. The textile is worked quickly, the piece of felt is experienced as a whole, and details give way to overall textures and a feeling of flow. This is different again, to the experience of wet felting which can involve more manual power and a bodily connection to heat, water, soap and fibre.

The textile is felt and sensed and responded to differently through each of these processes and each leaves contrasting languages of engagement in the finished textile. There is a heightened sense of value, connected to the emerging textiles, which intensifies with the bodily experiences that are invested. Remediation is an extended response to the language of the textile evolving forward through remediation. The time invested in each textile is not measured, only the quality of the engagement, is reflected upon. against the research aim. The textile should remain open, both to the past and to

future developments and continue to supply opportunities for change and redevelopment. The materials and the maker are in a continuous dialogue that produces

new directions and change as new materials or conditions are encountered. Manzini describes this as ‘attentive listening’ to materials and locale, which allows for a dialogic project, where there is room for a ‘re-orientating of the pathway’ (2019, p. 56). Re-orientation is realised through a sustained and ongoing interaction with the textiles.

Figure 79: Donovan, J. (2019). Waimakariri-braided [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool, smocked, appliqued and stitched]

4.5 Improvisation and story telling

The series of works presented in this section explores the generative qualities of improvisation as a corollary to the process of collecting and montaging textile elements. This includes a discussion on the elements of storytelling that arise when connecting to locale through materiality. As materials are interrogated for the potential that is adapted to form new meanings, narratives of locale are relayed.

Figure 80: Donovan, J. (2019) Eroded boardwalk Tikitere, Rotorua [Photograph]

These textiles are made as if unfolded from the locale. Or metaphorically, as if revealed from where their elements lay, partially submerged in the vicinity, to be

recovered or exhumed to form new substance. This concept of the process relies on the definition of morphogenesis provided by Ingold (2013, p. 22), where the artefact is derived from the materials, action and place, rather than through subverting an idea that is imagined prior to making.

As materials are responded to, each change is improvised from the previous stage, forming an ongoing flow that integrates a conversation between materials, maker and the environment. Improvisation requires being attuned to available materials to make changes and reacting to the consequence of change with more responses.

The Rotorua landscape provides images and influences from an environment where materials are often in flux[11]. Layers of ash, sulphur and pumice emerge around thermal areas. Objects, such as pathways, stone or tree branches, are sometimes subsumed beneath drifts of changing matter to become transmuted over time. The time-worn walkway is an example of this. Photographed at Tikitere in Rotorua and pictured in Figure 80, the worn timber gives the impression of being simultaneously buried and revealed, through devolving and regenerative activity. Steam, ash, water and gases wear materials wear away, twisting them into new forms. Felting layers of textile through different felting processes, and remediations, is reminiscent of the way elemental forces are at work in the locale. Textiles are created through the fusion of discarded and decaying fabrics as they are forged again through friction, heat and

[11] The Rotorua Caldera, a large caldera, is one of several large volcanoes located in the Taupo Volcanic Zone on the North Island of New Zealand. The major regional settlement of Rotorua is located in the caldera. There is geothermal activity in the town of Rotorua (Cody & Keam, 2005).

water. Images from the locale provide inspiration for forms, textures colours and impressions.

Figure 81: Salvaged possessions from the Tarawera eruption. Museum of Te Wairoa, Rotorua

Impressions of upheaval, layers of materials and textures, both subsumed and exhumed are present at the site of the 1886 Tarawera eruption[12] at Te Wairoa, Rotorua. district. The museum at Te Wairoa, now called the *Buried Village* displays a collection of artefacts that were retrieved, twisted and malformed, from the ash at Te Wairoa. Broken, distorted, and decayed materials express the story of the events, that took place, drawing a sense of the place and crossing the terrain of time, like a

[12] Mount Tarawera erupted on 10th of June,1886. Te Wairoa village, about 8 kilometres away from the site of the eruption, was buried under mud and ash. Te Wairoa is known today as the *Buried Village*. Excavation has revealed the extent of the settlement at Te Wairoa. The village had a flour mill, houses, a hotel, schoolhouse, and several other buildings (*The Eruption of Mt Tarawera - Roadside Stories |NZ History*, 2022).

thread that is drawn out and rewoven (Ingold, 2011, p. 161). The twisted remnants are the remains of past events,

Figure 82: Donovan, J. (2021) Remnants from Te Wairoa [Merino wool felted with textile remnants]

that are gathered together conveying an imperfect impression of a past story. The collection of gathered, damaged artefacts inspired felts entitled *Remnants from Te Wairoa* and *Exhumed* (Figure 82, Figure 83 and Figure 85), and explore the relationship between making and storytelling.

The materials that make up *Remnants from Te Wairoa* appear submerged, and they emerge into view in places, as if part of and distorted by, the forces of change (Figure

82). Each textile element used links to its own story, but churned into filaments through felting, to become a new narrative. Ingold describes stories which connective experiences, which have the capacity to map out vast terrain over time. Stories can bring the past to life, through retracing a path into the landscape of prior experience, he writes.

> to connect the events and experiences of their own lives to the lives of predecessors, recursively picking up the strands of these past lives in the process of spinning out their own. But rather as in looping or knitting, the strand being spun now and the strand picked up from the past are both of the same yarn (Ingold, 2011, p. 161).

The fleeting impressions of submerged and decaying artefacts influence the textiles and colours chosen for Remnants of Te Wairoa. Domestic linen, a torn scrap of clothing, emerge from drifts of wool (Figure 83). The textile embeds an imperfect map of impressions of the place and its story.

I am reminded of the way in which artist and designer Vita Cochran gathers and pursues stories through the material choices she makes in her work. As she describes her own process, it is an act of embroidery that extends to a narrative of colour and form (Cochran, 2020, p. 128). Cochran's work is often drawn from a context, linking into a past that is drawn into the present, reaching into her terrain of experiences including her memories and impressions.

Figure 83: Donovan, J. (2012). Remnants from Te Wairoa [Merino wool and lace remnants]

Through the phenomenology of locale, the maker becomes a conduit, drawing threads together and generating a geography of experiences. Collected scraps and the way they are assembled or stitched in, act as signposts. Textiles fade in and out, providing glimpses of elements disappear through layered wisps of wool, (Figure 83). White stitch threads through the textile, linking the elements and drawing the connections together (Figure 84).

Figure 84: Donovan, J. (2021) Remnants from Te Wairoa [Needle felted textile elements with merino wool, alpaca. Hand stitched]

For *Exhumed*, (pictured in Figure 86), the textile elements are first needle felted together on the needle felt loom. To further blend the thicker textiles used, the work is washed in hot water to further combine the fibre into new textures. Begun at first by hand, this led to using hot using the hot cycle in an automatic washing machine, to fuse the wool fibre to the woven elements. The wash matts and distorts the

texture, as shown in the detail depicted (Figure 87). Dismantling the prior form through machine washing, allows the new form to emerge. Improvisation and remediation are a temporal series of experiential enactments that require the prior phase to be dismantled in order for change to happen (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 10).

Figure 85: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Detail of the textures created in the hot wash phases of making]

Through dismantling what was already there, new opportunities arise for further improvisation, as stitch and applied pieces of lace are applied to accentuate the randomly felted effects. Ingold and Hallam believe improvisation is connected to the way to our environs (2021, p. 14). Adapting to the unknown, involves risk and accidental effects that become opportunities for advancement (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 13).

Figure 86: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Merino wool and remnants, Felt loom and hot wash felted textile

Paradoxically, the certainty that the process will create a dynamic change, sits alongside the uncertainty of what the random felting effects will produce. After becoming attuned to using the hot washes to create dramatic textural results, the distortions and textures became the forms that suggested patterns of stitch and new remediation, generating idiosyncratic outcomes.

Ingold and Hallam attribute improvisation to attuning to materials responsively, and through this, forms arise (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 3). Through responsiveness, the

Figure 87: Donovan, J. (2021). Exhumed [Detail]

textile is innately tied to the maker. As improvisation moves with us, it functions through a past and into a future. They write:

> Because improvisation is generative, it is not conditional upon judgements of novelty or otherwise of the forms it yields. Because it is relational, it does not pit the individual against either nature or society. Because it is temporal, it inheres in the onward propulsion of life rather being broke off, as a new present, from the past that is already over (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 3).

Exhumed required a surrender to the process and to the unforeseen material changes (Figure 85). The random textures became opportunities to improvise and through improvisation, new directions are created.

Figure 88: Donovan, J. (2019). Eddies of pumice and ash at Sulphur point, Lake Rotorua [Photograph]

Instituting changes through random effects and improvising into them, is exemplified in the creation of *Eddies retouched* (Figure 91). A worn and decayed silk panel is needle felted with merino wool in the first phase. The textile is hot washed to produce random furrows and organic textures. The effect is like random eddies of ashes and rubble that are drawn from the fragile, changing and temporary nature of the materials used.

Figure 89: Donovan, J. (2020) Eddies retouched [Stitch detail]

Like applied pebbles, flowing into the grooves and crevices, stitch and lace are applied, into the eddies left behind by the felting processes. The delicacy of the hand

work becomes something precious, emerging to the surface (Figure 90 and Figure 91).

The act of improvising salvaged materials and re-forming them using randomised felting processes gives rise to an image of the textile as subject to elements that evolve and devolve. Decay is part of the process and elemental forces that are part

Figure 90: Donovan, J. (2020). Eddies retouched [Detail]

of felting the textiles, spark off rejuvenation through remediation. Impressions of this process in nature, are visible in the environs, seen in worn down wood, sulphur decayed timber, distorted forms emerging from eddies and flows of mud and ash.

It was discovered through this process, that improvisation uncovers a sense of creative and generative power, locked in the materials, waiting to be discovered by the maker. Wolfe summarises this, drawing attention to the act of regenerating 'cast-

off' materials into something else, as producing a pleasure beyond the artefact created (1997, p. 69). Materials are not simply used and combined, but are engaged

Figure 91: Donovan, J. (2020). Eddies retouched [Needle felted and hot washed silk with merino wool. 400mm x 400mm]

with as a continuous material flow. Ingold and Hallam draw the distinction between assembling and realigning an existing flow, here they write.

> It may be understood, on the one hand, as the production of novelty through the recombination of already extant elements, or on the other, as a process of growth, becoming and change. The former posits the world as an

> assemblage of discrete parts; the latter as a continuous movement or flow (Ingold & Hallam, 2021, p. 16).

Improvising materials, felting processes and adapting available tools to make textiles, is an experience akin to finding one's way. The maker becomes intimately involved with making as materials are listened to and responded to. The existing form that materials arrive with is pushed and reordered, brought into a new dialogue with locale, and new contextual narrative.

4.6 Aesthetics; locale, materials and maker

A visual diary of digital images, kept throughout this research, documents local textures and colour. A visual and experiential quality of the locale finds its way into the work produced, through these images. Pictures from the locale provide

Figure 92: Sulphur blackened boardwalk at Sulphur point, Rotorua

inspiration for textiles. The images chosen, emphasise substance that is worn or damaged through the elements and through time drawing attention to processes of change in the environment. The blackened boardwalk at Sulphur Point, Rotorua (Figure 92), is an example of this. Organic marks of change inspire colours and the chosen idiosyncrasies of felting processes to form the felted woollen textile entitled *Sulphur point* (Figure 94).

The damaged surface in the timber in the image, has been etched by the elements. Its textility is created through being immersed in the environment and subject to its random effects. In response to this, a disused and worn blanket are felted with long staple alpaca.

Figure 93: Process image, Sulphur point, showing needle felted effect prior to hot washing

The materials chosen for making, affect each other via the processes used. The stresses of felting combine with the character of the blanket and fibres.

Figure 94: Donovan, J. (2020). Sulphur point [Worn blanket, long staple alpaca, needle felted and hot washed 1450 x 1060mm]

Ragged edges, areas that are worn thin, and holes in the base woollen base blanket are valued as they form random textural qualities through the needle felting and hot wash felting processes used. These draw attention to a textile that has aged and has a history. As ‘matter in motion’ a pathway from the past and into the future is suggested (Fletcher, 2016, p. 272).

As the long staple alpaca fibre and wool are applied through needle felting, the fibres absorb the woven textile. As the textile is hot washed, the qualities of the worn and torn blanket, form the texture and quality of the textile. Loose areas of weave, holes torn edges, become the character of the felt as illustrated here (Figure 95).

Figure 95: Donovan, J. (2020) Sulphur point [Detail]

After testing hot handwashing, and wet felting and using heating at high temperatures in water, it was found that a hot wash in an automatic washing machine churns the fibres, knotting them into eddies and random organic formations. Signs of wear and tear, visible in the textile, become matted areas around the holes and tears, which further emphasises them as textural elements. These effects create an experience of the textile that is similar to the experience of the textures seen in the locale. Random eddies, rivulets, worn areas and shifting textural elements are created in the felt as they are observed in the locale (Figure 96).

Figure 96: Donovan, J. (2019) Terrain with stream [Photograph]

The textural effect is form reanimated through felting and stitch, as if through the natural elements of the locale. This enhances the view of textile in motion, subject to time, change and devolution. A past is visible, a future implied as the textile is placed in a suggested state of flux.

Figure 97: Donovan, J. (2020). Trans-terraform felt [Worn linen panel, felted with Corriedale wool 2200 x 1100mm]

Similarly, *Trans-terraform felt,* re-forms a fragile panel of worn linen into a piece of felt, through the needle felt loom and using hot washes to further fuse the fibres (Figure 97).

Through the combined felting processes, the wool acts on the linen, forcing the textile to form tightly in patches, and becoming un-formed and loose in others. Like a braided river finding a way across the terrain (Figure 96), the wool finds its path through the woven linen.

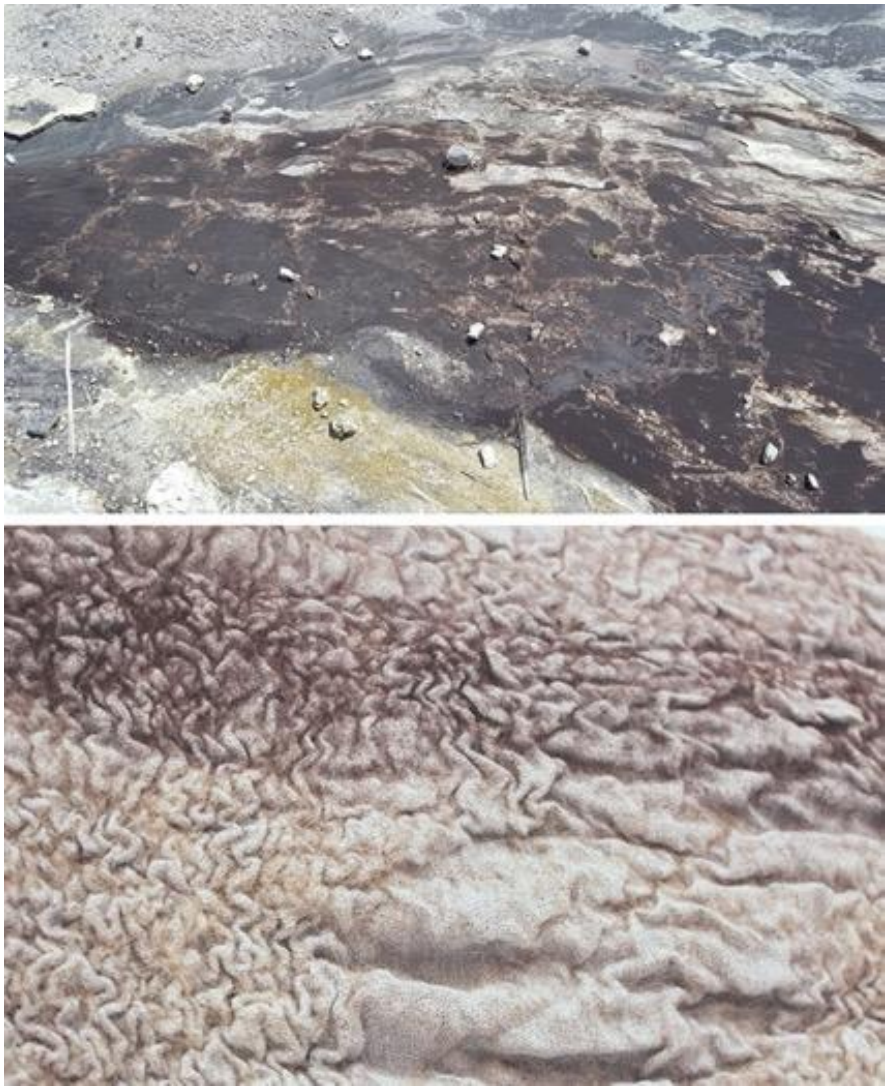


Figure 98: Montage; sulphur flow at Tikitere compared to felt textile

The textile suggests mutation and is inspired by the dramatically changing thermal environment as is illustrated in this montage of a detail from *Trans-terraform felt* and the locale, Figure 98.

A tension is set up, in the making processes, between fast and slow through the processes used. Slow, and rhythmic processes that happen using the needle felt loom

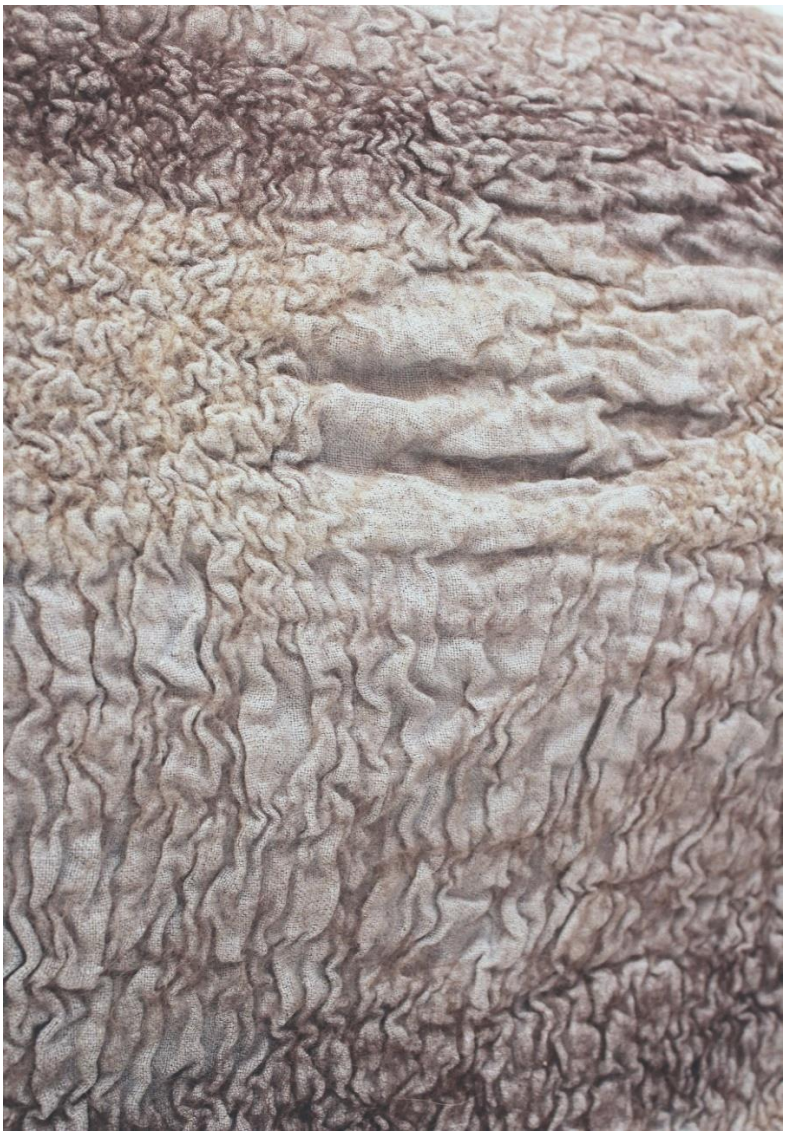


Figure 99: Donovan, J. (2020) Rivulet [Needle felted linen with alpaca fibre and hot wash felted]

or when applying stitch. Wet felting and washing, applies soapy water and intense friction, which matts the wool at random. The serendipity of these combined processes is added to through ironing, pressing, and stitching to finish the textile.

Elemental (Figure 101) fuses fibres, that are matted into the fragile weave of a worn blanket, through the needle felt loom. The fibres are integrated further through hot washing, which creates random, organic effects in the felt. The texture is reminiscent of a changing landscape, eddies of mud, tides of detritus and flows of organic matter like the constantly changing locale as illustrated in this image, taken at Tikitere Rotorua (Figure 100).

Figure 100: Weathered plant matter, Hell's gate thermal park. Tikitere, Rotorua

The random effects, eddies of knots, thickened areas of wool and pinholes left behind by the needle felt loom, are traversed with rows of stitch and elements of lace that are stitched in and overlaid on the reworked substrate. The effect is muted, and organic, as if raw elements combine as the result of natural forces, in a newly formed

landscape. Through this series of works the distinction between evolution and devolution is interposed. Primary environmental destructive elemental forces such as heat, water and friction, are ironically used to re-form and renew.

Figure 101: Donovan, J. (2020). Elemental [Vintage blanket, needle felted, and hot wash felted with alpaca, lamb’s wool and silk fines 2100 x 1200mm]

Decay, and age, such as depicted in the weathered environment pictured ( ), are signs of matter in motion, which is an element consciously explored through material choices. The textile chosen for *Aue teri nei tiki*, (Figure 103), is brittle and fragile with

Figure 102: Damaged silk panel with metallic thread embroidery

age. The silk, which crumbles and tears at the slightest touch, is embroidered with a metallic thread, that bunches and knots when the silk is handled (Figure 102). The textile's fleeting nature is captured and remade at the point of disintegration. Devolution is turned into renewal and something that is decayed is reinvigorated. Nuances of entropy and the states of change, intimate a past history that is captured at the point of its passing. Fragility imparts the idea of impermanence, inspiring respect and gratitude for what is fleeting. Temporal experiences beyond the present are gathered up and reworked into a different textile outcome as a continuum is created. (Figure 104).

Figure 103: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Needle felted silk with collaged elements, embroidered]

The temporary nature and brief existence of the textile is acknowledged in this work. As threads that are devolving are pulled together to be rejuvenated, the textile evolves into something similar but different. This series of works positions wear

Figure 104: Elemental forces at work, Sulphur point, Rotorua

and decay as contributing a dialogue, a thread to the past and a suggestion of the future. The form of the textile is extended, through making processes. The new textile flows from the old one, in a transition initiated by the maker's hand and imagination, which positions creative engagement as central to this renewal process.

Figure 105: Donovan, J. (2020). Aue teri nei tiki [Detail]

Concerning the image and aesthetics in relation to the textiles created; the making process provides a tacit and active vocabulary, which direct the material making events, including collecting, juxtaposition felting, stitching, layering. As the materials are assembled and drawn upon, experienced through handling and juxtaposed against other elements, they suggest their own processes and alignments. Those decisions are dependent on the aesthetical reasoning and links formed in the mind of the maker, positioning the maker as co-creator. The thoughts, experiences and responses of the maker are integral and integrated into the process. This shifts the

textile from an externalised 'object' to one that is made through an experiential process. Using this process, the created textiles are always idiosyncratic as each one is made from materials that come from a distinct trajectory of origin and are then reformed through the distinct trajectory of intuition that has formed in the mind of the maker over time and her personal experiences. Therefore 'image' and 'aesthetics' are presented within this research, as a part of the fabric of the process, including the locale, stories held within the materials and the maker herself.

4.7 Forged through change; material in motion

Used textiles carry impressions that are formed through a process that happens through contact and living alongside people in their environment. In Rotorua processes of change leave impressions on surfaces and on landscapes. Decaying wood, the marks of lichen, weather on paint or timber; influences of colour and form for the textiles (Figure 106). Through focussing on processes of change, handling Engaging with materials, drawing out signs of process of wear, using elemental and engaging with materials, the textiles are placed into further motions of change. A process of constant engagement and flux produces the textile artifacts in this research practice. Methods that involve heat, water and friction, imbue *Water worn* (Figure 93) with signs of human and structural surface engagement. Textures that have become worn through the environment, such as weathered wood, lichen marks and furrows that have formed through water, influence this textile and the processes used.

Figure 106: The impression of lichen on weather worn timber

Figure 106 and Figure 108 are images from the environs where lichen and water have marked the wood through action over time. The worn blankets used for this textile are cut and stitched together and needle felted with alpaca and lamb's wool. The textile is then hot washed, which radically changes the texture and look of the felt. The needle felt process produces controlled, even results. Through hot washing, the textile and fibres act-react differently, producing areas of dense felting and matting. Parts of the textile contort, taking shape according to the original density of the textile. The patches of wear and holes that were part of the original blankets transforming through stresses of movement on the individual elements. These surface differences, shaping and forging the felt, are reminiscent of the elemental forces that shape and form weathered timber as pictured (Figure 108).

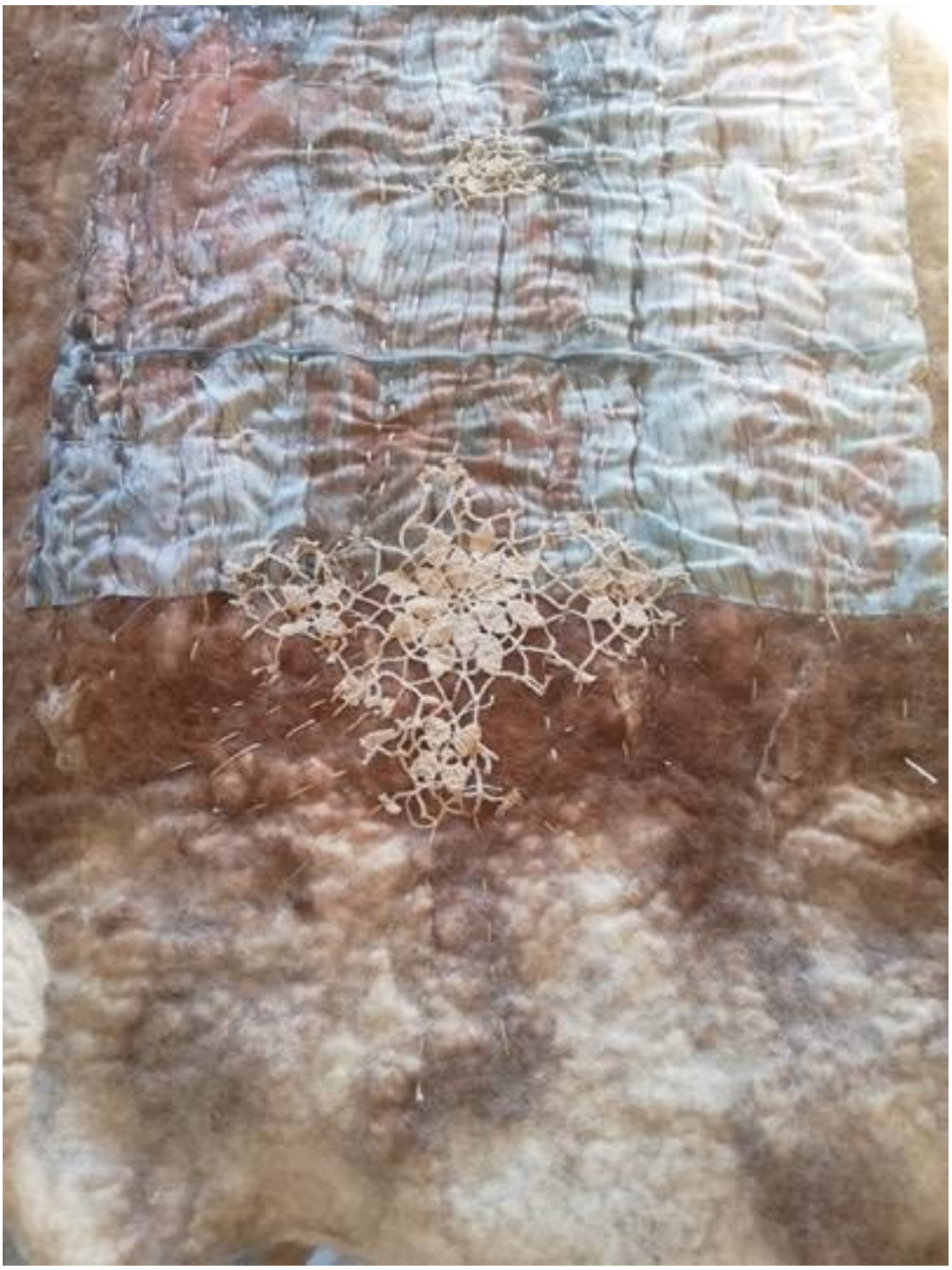


Figure 107: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [Felted knitted and woven elements, lamb’s wool, alpaca, and appliqued crochet with digital prints]

Figure 108: Weather worn wood with lichen, Rotorua [Photograph]

Lace and digitally printed remnants of textile are applied, following the forms and textures that appear through the felting processes (Figure 110). The journey of the hand shows up on the underside, drawing attention to the process. Stitch provides a layer of texture and to emphasise the textures created through the processes, especially on the rear facing side, where the stitch forms a map to the landscape of engagement (Figure 110).

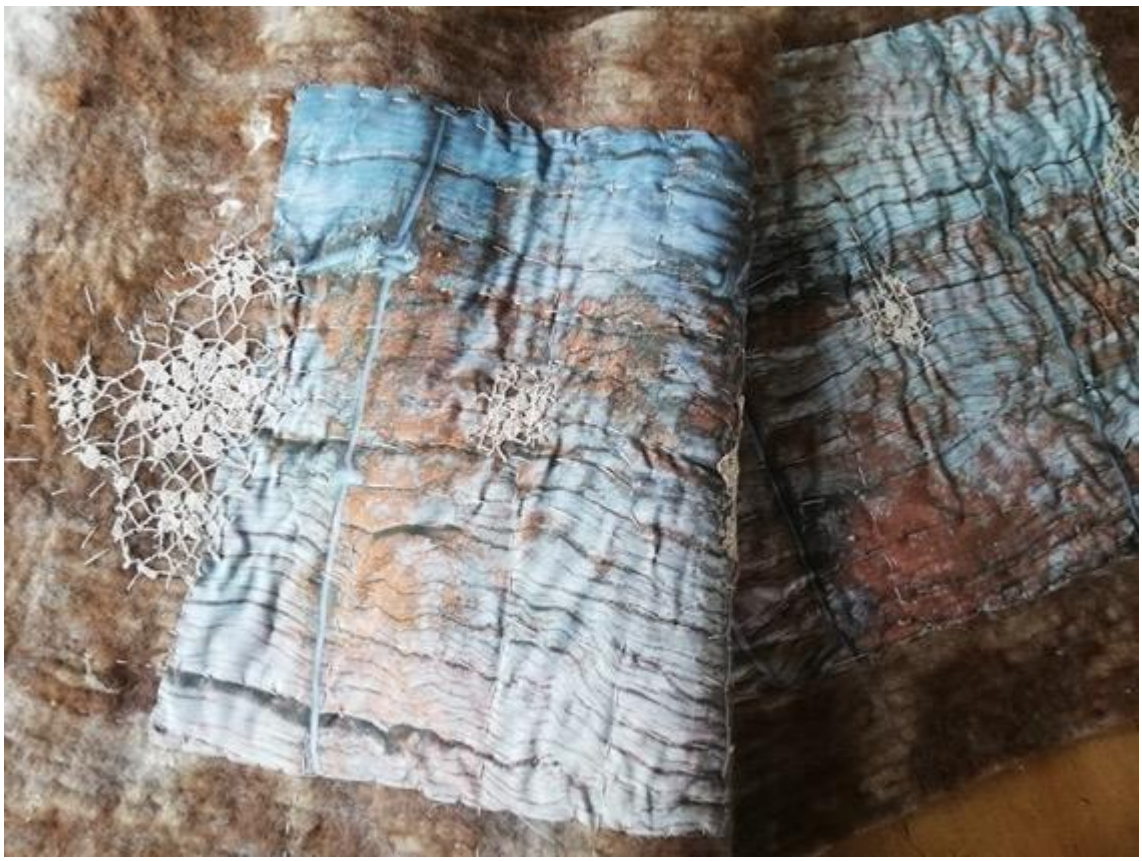


Figure 109: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [detail]

Using stitch, ripples, knots and furrows are further emphasised to draw attention to organic processes over time, that have shaped and continue to shape, the textile. The digital print blends visually into the felt but creates a separate surface texture that is adhered to the felt, like a bark or skin. Water worn speaks of engagement, that suggest time, elements and the physical addition and distortion of touch. (Figure 110).

Figure 110: Donovan, J. (2021) Water worn [Folded, showing alternating views of front and back]

4.8 Summary

This chapter has given an account of how this practice-led research has unfolded and in particular the insights-through-making that have come from the bricolage method used. The work has involved experimentation using felting and combining methods following the folds, lines and furrows suggested by the materials used. Remediation and improvisation began to have greater weight through the making practices, leading to a greater understanding of the generative power of bricolage as a design process. With reference to locale, the process is presented as the mapping of a territory, but in the 'rhizomic' sense of mapping (Deleuze & Guattari, 2020, p. 12), where the map is not traced but followed exploratively through a materials-led

investigation. The locale is represented through the textiles produced, as they are generated from, and in connection to, the field of operation. This research set out to explore a view of textiles, as matter in flow, to further explore a textile design practice based upon self-reliance and localism. A concept of vernacular making, informed by a past experience of creative re-use, formed a process designed to interrogate a locale via materials and making experiences, which through their qualities, offered a sense of dialogue and interaction within the textiles produced.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5 Synthesis and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This research set out to answer the question, what is the process, outcome and experience of crafted textile making, springing from a locally generated self-reliance?

This question is posited against two lines of enquiry. Firstly, textile collecting, saving, and improvisation shaped the process, choices, and methods. The locale is relied upon to provide materials which were then responded to through improvising materials and adapting pre-learned crafting methods. Secondly the concept of textile as matter in motion was explored, developing a process through which textile is re-construed into new forms, involving change devolution and evolution in a way that is integral to a lived journey.

An extended experience of locale was developed as a phenomenology, which placed the experiences of the maker, at the centre. This positioned locale, within the context of the research, beyond its geographical limits to include memories, influences, stories and the flow of material. A phenomenology that relied on the maker's engagement with locale and materials, suggested an autonomous and idiosyncratic model of materialism. The work produced became an extension of place and perception through thoughts and the senses. Textiles manifested as the product of human interaction, extending beyond the maker to an interlinked community.

According to Manzini, the things we make autonomously are in fact, always the product of a community. Craftwork is made within our physicality and simultaneously reach beyond the locale through networks and imaginations. The things we make are

both near and inter-connected to the greater environment, (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 78) and this connectivity is one of the main findings of this research.

5.2 Resolution of bricolage inquiry

Gathering materials and collecting primary resources from the research locale, led to open-ended possibilities for creating textiles. Using a bricolage methodology, enabled the research to embrace chance occurrences, either in the form of material influences, or to work through limitations. Bricolage permitted the maker's idiosyncrasy and the 'placeness' of the locale to 'speak' through the work.

Bricolage opened the research environment to serendipity nurturing an environment where uncertainty became central to agency, leading to discoveries such as the felt loom, hot wash felt techniques and a combination of effects. This enabled a process whereby from divergent practices, such as dyeing, stitch and deconstruction evolved a multiplicity of effects. It allowed the textiles to form from differing sources, including memories of previous craft customs within the researcher's own community, or from responses to the materials themselves.

A material 'conversation' was set up during a process where textiles and materials were collected, explored for context, de-constructed and reassembled in new forms. Materials are positioned in a continuum of transformation and 'listened to' for ways to re-orientate them. Narratives, histories and material qualities were held up simultaneously, for investigation, teased out, remixed and re-assembled. The approach, follows a 'dialogic' process wherein making is a sustained through a continual dialogue between the designer and the materials used (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 56).

5.3 Findings within the context of materials and technique

Contextualising visual signs of change and age as aesthetic values aligns the textiles to real life, natural processes and human time scales. Genuine and authentic signs of age, indicated a changing textile, ageing alongside us. This created an 'embodied' aesthetic, assigning qualities we associate with living beings, such as age, decay and imperfection.

The research revealed that textiles could become imbued with narratives, context, and history that could be layered to reflect a community, past and present. Textile as a connective nexus began to reoccur in unplanned and unforeseen ways through the research, showing the connectivity and response are generative through making.

The needle felt loom and hot wash felting processes were found to be transformative. The hot wash method, which developed through attempts to convey more serendipity and environmental action on the felts, created new directions, organic blends of textures and usefully indeterminate forms. I was able to expand these through remediation as they added a layer of engagement that opened up new directions. Holes and rips in the foundation textile became more intensely textured and prominent through wet felting. Signs of wear or embroidery were made to merge or emerge using the more controllable needle felt method.

Layering, using needle felting, hot wash felting and stitching to merge fibres and combine layers became a technique for renewal. Textiles can continue to be joined and imbued with other textiles using this method, leading to an extended the life of the textile.

The felting methods used opened up possibilities for serendipity that assisted in setting an environment where constructive variables could give way to indeterminate 'vernacular' outcomes. As the felt can be cut without fraying, it formed homogenous textiles, that could be further enhanced by boiling or heating with water. The quality of felt created in this way indicated links to nature, and a dynamic organic process that communicated influences and imagery taken from the locale. In this way, locale speaks through the textiles in a variety of ways. Both through the gathered materials that flow into the project sphere, and through the visual influences, stories and lived experience of the locale.

5.4 Distilling key discoveries

The most interesting finding of the work produced through this research is the perspective reached of the ongoing nature of the individual textile pieces, when they are framed as part of an ongoing experience. This results in an adaptive and generative experience of making and locale, where gathering, making and passing materials onwards, are part of an embodied lived experience.

The connective journey that involves collecting, connecting to materials, and to locale, reveals emotive and communicative dialogues that result in a deeper relationship with materials. Searching for and discovering the potential within salvaged materials, opens up a sense of limitless possibility. This involves the senses and experience of making as a journey, where locale, enriched through histories and change, is the terrain. As such, the experience of making becomes akin to a lived journey, without end.

The principle of everyday things made by hand commune a deeper quality, which we intuitively connect to. The body of felted textile work demonstrated a self-reliant mode of practice to interrogate the interconnective qualities inherent in embodied textiles. As the process was also the outcome, the textiles continue as matter in motion, or as Barbara Bolt describes 'agency of matter' (Bolt, 2007, pp. 1-4).

With locale placed at the centre, the felted textiles were a subjective response to the maker's own individual way of seeing. Fragility, the temporary nature of worn or ruined textiles, presents a temporal context and a framework, through the ephemeral nature of the material, for new pieces to emerge. Devolution, as a phase in a continuum, representing an opportunity for change Entropy is a devolving motion which can be intercepted and used to regenerate in new and unforeseeable ways.

Linking signs of wear, acts of craft, diligence or skills, place the textile into a flow, a community narrative, which stretches beyond the physical reaches and into temporal spaces. Marks of humanity and the movement of people or nature through time. The work engages with human dialogue over time, and is thus 'embodied' versus 'disembodied'.

Within the series of work presented, the embodied quality is differentiated within each generation of work, recognisable according to characteristics of 'place'. Linking unknown craftspeople, carrying snippets of work and effort, or visible and invisible geographies are some of the characteristics of 'placeness' that evolved out of the bricolage process.

Using the bricolage method invoked unforeseeable questions, limitations and opportunities. Each series of chance encounters constructed a new world from which

a series of textiles sprang, and some, by their very nature, altered the framework of the research. The textiles are presented as interwoven into a linking web of (unconsciously) collaborative action, as part of a social ecosystem of which craftwork is a critical part.

The sense of value taken from these textiles is symbolic and experiential. It invites behaviour in relation to textiles; the noticing of 'placeness' and conversations going on within the textile itself which may translate to other textile or even other material things. We are drawn into a dialogue through rework and through idiosyncrasy. Through touch, visual signs and stories, we become engaged in a material conversation with material history and context. A textile that weaves past and present and spatial/temporal narratives is a literal and metaphorical connective agent.

A key finding was the discovery through practice of the generative power of improvisation. Disused, discarded or decaying materials can be repositioned as holders of potential and this potential can be drawn upon, teased out and threaded into new artefacts. The sense of creative autonomy this aspect of practice generates, I revived for myself as a maker, and I was able to link this to earlier remembered experiences of self-reliance, material improvisation and the habit of collecting, that began in early life.

5.5 Proposed new work and directions

The concept of 'placeness', where materials are perceived as holders of stories, origins, communities of touch and influence, provides further opportunities for exploration. The question arises; how can we become further attuned to the dialogic

character of textiles? How can textiles be brought further into the social discourse as embodied artefacts, that draw upon and house cultural experiences? When we view textiles within this embodied context, how will our approach to material use and engagement change? These are questions and areas of discover that could lead to further through practice-led research and/or through design methodologies intended to affect intentional textile design.

5.6 Contribution

This research contributes to the discussion of textiles as the product of social and community context. It is part of the conversation that places textiles within our relational understanding of place and communicative materiality. Positioning textiles as more central to us, they can be seen a creative nexus point where human touch, and physical interactions, meet.

One of the aims of this research was to explore the values and experiences of making when connected to locale, as a way to re-frame textiles and design as consciously evolved from a way of daily life. In this respect, the research contributes a view of textiles as a co-design, between material narratives, community and place. Manzini (2014). Relying on this logic of the local economy, the body of felted textile work demonstrates a way of making that explores textiles as communicative media, where remnants of experience and thought processes reside.

Delving into a personal experience of my own resourceful community early in life, informed values and ways of thinking that supported this research. As a result, this research offers a view of what one person can develop in terms of creative production

and it revealed that self-determination is intrinsically generative, cyclic, and nature-oriented (Ingold & Hallam, 2021).

This discovery was personally fulfilling and enriching. Through this research, my approach to making has shifted. The experience of becoming experimental in order to adapt to locally available materials and to develop self-reliance, is empowering. The view of the locale as a field of generative potential, has shifted my mindset as to how I find materials, what I do with them, and how I would make creatively or for practical purposes in the future. A desire for self-reliance and autonomy over the objects I use in daily life has grown and this is one of the personal findings of this research. This research adds to the growing narrative of how textiles are created in a social context, the thought processes connecting textile making to an embodied, human experience.

The concept of aesthetics in the project, is presented as a quality of the making experience. It is defined as an appreciation of the materials and processes used, and described as an 'embodied' aesthetic. This resonates from Pallasma's concept of the way in which materials and surfaces speak pleasurably of time through signs of entropy, changing tactility, and signs of work or touch (Pallasmaa, 2005, p. 11). The textile works invoke the aesthetic pleasure represented in time, entropy, and processes of touch, imbued in the textiles for both the maker and the viewer. As the viewer is invited to touch and experience the textiles, they are encouraged to take part in the process, to experience the textiles in the same sense through which they were made. Through handling the textile, the stories and connections held within the materials and drawn upon via the maker's perceptions, are intended to replay in the mind of the viewer. In this way the viewer is enticed to engage in an 'aesthetic-seeing'

of the making process and the textile and is invited to become attuned to the aesthetic appreciation presented.

5.7 Conclusion

The body of textile work produced interrogates the experience of locale and the interconnective qualities inherent in a lived textile. A way of making that draws upon time, a phenomenology of locale as an expression of place was pursued. Textiles that include influences, memories and stories, express an embodied relationship between textile making and being alive. The making process developed within this research evolved into a self-initiating, communicative and idiosyncratic model of making, that is generative, adaptive, deeply satisfying and personally transformative.

Perhaps round this out e.g. limitation, strength and future directions for the research

References

A Proud History – NZSWWS – Creative Fibre. (2021). https://www.creativefibre.org.nz/about/a-proud-history-nzsws/

Baudrillard, J. (2005). The system of objects. Verso, London

Bennett, J. (2010). Political Ecologies. In *Vibrant matter: the political ecology of things*. (pp.94-109)Duke University Press, Durham and London.

Bergson, H., Paul, M. N., & Scott Palmer, W. (2004). *Matter and memory*. Dover Publications.

Bolt, B. (2007). The magic is in handling. In B. Bolt & E. Barret(Eds.), *Practice as research: approaches to creative arts enquiry* (pp. 27–34). I.B. Tauris.

Bolt, B., & Barrett, E. (Eds.). (2007). *Practice as research: approaches to creative arts enquiry* . I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd.

Buchanan, R. (1992). Wicked problems in design thinking. *Design Issues, 8(3),* 7-35.

Burgess, R. & White, C. (Eds.). (2019). *Fibershed: growing a movement of farmers, fashion activists, and makers for a new textile economy*. Chelsea Green Publishing.

Burleigh Evatt NZIER. (2001). Textile and clothing industry scoping study. Industry New Zealand, Wellington.

Carr, C., & Gibson, C. (2016). Geographies of making: Rethinking materials and skills for volatile futures. *Progress in Human Geography*, *40*(3), 297–315. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515578775

Carr, C., & Gibson, C. (2018). Towards a politics of making: reframing material work and locating skill in the Anthropocene. In *Craft Economies: contemporary cultural economies of the handmade.* Luckman, S. & Thomas, N. (Eds) (pp.61-69). Bloomsbury publishing https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474259576.0012.

Chitham, K., U Māhina-Tuai, K., & Skinner, D. (2019). *Crafting Aotearoa: A cultural history of making in New Zealand and the wider Moana Oceania*. Te Papa Press.

Cleveland, D. (2018). *Transformational cloth: Weaving the undervalued threads of textile waste into a value added change model*. Unpublished PhD thesis, AUT https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/12002

Cochran, V. (2020). This elaboration. *Landfall*, *239*, 128–136. https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.463178418162788

Cody, A., & Keam, R. (2005). Report on Rotorua, New Zealand. *Bulletin of the Global Volcanism Network*, *30*(5). https://doi.org/10.5479/si.GVP.BGVN200505-241816

Cross, N. (1982). Designerly ways of knowing. *Design Studies, Elsevier*, *3*(4), 221–227. https://doi.org/10.1016/0142-694X(82)90040-0

Cross, N. (1999a). Design research: A disciplined conversation. *Design Issues JSTOR*, *15*(2), 5–10. https://doi.org/10.2307/1511837

Cross, N. (1999b). Natural intelligence in design. *Design Studies*, *20*(1), 25–39. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0142-694x(98)00026-x

Cross, N. (2001). Designerly ways of knowing: design discipline versus design. *Design Issues*, *17*(3), 49–55. https://doi.org/10.1162/074793601750357196

Cross, N. (2004). Expertise in design: an overview. *Design Studies, Elsevier*. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0142694X04000316?casa_token=cT61XsMXSKUAAAAA:OVuoXZFtCDgN-o4pE7JC2KuchiUX-TpczS-b-96FplMZXLw0PdmFaiPtATNMMkzvjGwbizSUpwaD

Cross, N. (2011). *Design thinking: understanding how designers think and work*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Davies, F., & Hatherton, S. B. E. (1977). *Materially yours - A handbook on dressmaking, textiles and related topics for secondary schools*. Price Milburn for New Zealand University Press.

de Pont, D. (2021). *The 1970s fashion revolution*. New Zealand Fashion Museum. https://nzfashionmuseum.org.nz/the-1970s-fashion-revolution/

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (2020). *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia.* Bloomsbury Publishing.

DeLong, M., Heinemann, B., & Reiley, K. (2005). Hooked on vintage! *Fashion Theory - Journal of Dress Body and Culture*, *9*(1), 23–42. https://doi.org/10.2752/136270405778051491

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2011). Introduction; the discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1–21). Sage.

Department of Statistics. 1976 *New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings*. (1980).

Dolan, A. (2014). The fabric of life: Time and textiles in an eighteenth-century plebeian home. *Home Cultures*, *11*(3), 353–374. https://doi.org/10.2752/175174214X14035295691238

Dolan, A. (2019). Touching linen: Textiles, emotion and bodily intimacy in England C. 1708-1818. *Cultural and Social History*, *16*(2), 145–164. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780038.2019.1586810

Dolan, A., & Holloway, S. (2016). Emotional textiles: An introduction. *Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture*, *14*(2), 152–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/14759756.2016.1139369

Donovan, J. (2015). *Fabricating intimacy reducing subliminal distances between people and textiles*. Unpublished Master of Art and Design, AUT. https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/9842

Edelkoort, L. (2020). Coronavirus offers a blank page for a new beginning. In *Dezeen.com*. https://www.dezeen.com/2020/03/09/li-edelkoort-coronavirus-reset/

Fletcher, K. (2010). *Local wisdom: post-growth fashion*. www.localwisdom.info

Fletcher, K. (2016). *Craft of use: post-growth fashion*. Routledge.

Fletcher, K. (2019, September). *Local wisdom - gallery*. University of the Arts London. http://localwisdom.info/use-practices/view/347/double-value

Fletcher, K. (2021). *Local wisdom | katefletcher.com*. https://katefletcher.com/projects/local-wisdom/

Gauntlett, D. (2013). *Making is connecting*. John Wiley & Sons.

Greenbank, J. (2006). *Tea Party | Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū*. Te Puna o Waiwhetu/Christchurch Art Gallery. https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/2007-026a-f/jacquelyn-greenbank/tea-party

Greenhalgh, P. (1997). Introduction. In P. Dormer (Ed.) *The culture of craft* , (pp. 1–40). Manchester University Press.

Griffin, G. (2003). Handycrafts: At home with textiles. *Te Tuhi*, 6–28.

Hamon, J. (2007). *The New Zealand dressmaker: experiences, practices and contribution to fashionability, 1940 to 1980*. Unpublished PhD thesis, RMIT University https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/New-Zealand-dressmaker-experiences-practices-and-contribution-to-fashionability-1940-to-1980/9921861214401341

Harmsworth, G., Awatere, S., & Robb, M. (2016). Indigenous Māori values and perspectives to inform freshwater management in Aotearoa-New Zealand. *Ecology and Society*, *21*(4). https://doi.org/10.5751/es-08804-210409

Hēnare, M. (2015). Tapu, mana, mauri, hau, wairua; a Māori philosophy of vitalism and cosmos. In C. Spiller & R. Wolgramm (Eds.), *Indigenous spiritualities at work* (pp. 77–99). Information Age publishing.

History of the Kaiapoi woollen mills. (2021). Waimakariri Libraries. https://libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz/heritage/local-history/places-of-the-waimakariri/kaiapoi/history-of-the-kaiapoi-woollen-mills

Hunter, I. (2010). Manufacturing - an overview - protection in the mid-20th century. In *Te Ara - the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (p. 4). Ministry for Culture and

Heritage Te Manatu Taonga. https://teara.govt.nz/en/manufacturing-an-overview/page-4

Ingold, T. (2000). *The perception of the environment essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2009). The textility of making. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, *34*(1), 91–102. https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bep042

Ingold, T. (2010). Ways of mind-walking: reading, writing, painting. *Visual Studies*, *25*(1), 15–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725861003606712

Ingold, T. (2011). *Being alive: essays on movement, knowledge and description*. Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2013). *Making: anthropology, archaeology, art and architecture*. Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2014). *Tim Ingold on thinking through making*. Synthetic Zero. https://syntheticzero.net/2014/03/12/tim-ingold-on-thinking-through-making/

Ingold, T., & Hallam, E. (2021). Creativity and cultural improvisation: An introduction. In T. Ingold & E. Hallam (Eds.), *Creativity and cultural improvisation* (pp. 1–25). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003135531-

Jackson, T. (2017). *Prosperity without growth: economics for a finite planet.* Earthscan, London.

Kaur, G., & Kaur, C. (2020). Covid-19 and the rise of the new experience economy. *FIIB Business Review*, *9*(4), 239–248. https://doi.org/10.1177/2319714520958575

Kincheloe, J. L. (2005). On to the next level: continuing the conceptualization of the bricolage. *The Qualitative 1nquiry*, *11*(3), 323–350. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405275056

Kincheloe, J. L. (2011). Describing the bricolage. In K. Hayes, S. Steinberg, & K. Tobin (Eds), *Key works in critical pedagogy* (pp. 177–189). Sense. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6091-397-6_15

Larson, V. (2001, August). Fashion High. *North & South,* Australian Consolidated Press NZ.

Lévi- Strauss, C. (1962). The science of the concrete. In *The Savage mind* (pp. 1–22). University of Chicago Press. https://sites.google.com/a/georgetown.edu/remix/files/Levistrauss-Science-of-the-Concrete.pdf

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. (1966). *The savage mind.* University of Chicago Press.

Lima de Miranda, K., & Snower, D. J. (2021). *How covid-19 changed the world: G-7 evidence on a recalibrated relationship between market, state, and society.* Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-covid-19-changed-the-world-g7-evidence-on-a-recalibrated-relationship-between-market-state-and-society/

Mäkelä, M. (2007). Knowing through making: The role of the artefact in practice-led research. *Knowledge, Technology & Policy*, *20*(3), 157–163. https://doi.org/10.1007/S12130-007-9028-2

Mäkelä, M. (2016). Personal exploration: Serendipity and intentionality as altering positions in a creative process. *FormAkademisk*, *9*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.7577/FORMAKADEMISK.1461

Mäkelä, M., & Nimkulrat, N. (2011). Reflection and documentation in practice-led design research. *Nordic Design Research Conference*, 1–9. https://archive.nordes.org/index.php/n13/article/view/98 Month?

Mäkelä, M., & Nimkulrat, N. (2018). Documentation as a practice-led research tool for reflection on experiential knowledge. *FormAkademisk*, *11*(2), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.7577/formakademisk.1818

Manzini, E. (2016). Design culture and dialogic design. *MIT Press*, *32*(1), 52–59. https://doi.org/10.1162/DESI_a_00364

Manzini, E., & Coad, R. (2019). *Politics of the everyday; designing in dark times*. Bloomsbury.

McLeod, R. (2005). *Thrift to fantasy: Home textile crafts of the 1930s-1950s*. Harper Collins.

McLeod, R. (2013). *With bold needle and thread: Adventures in vintage needlecraft*. Random House.

McLeod, R. (2019a). *How crafts were affected by the depression*. Crafting Aotearoa Online https:/Www.Aucklandmuseum.Com/Crafting-Aotearoa.

McLeod, R. (2019b). Making do in hard times. In K. Chitham, K., U Māhina-Tuai, & D. Skinner (Eds.), *Crafting Aotearoa: A cultural history of making in New Zealand and the wider Moana Oceania* (pp. 225–226). Te Papa Press.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2005). *Phenomenology of perception* (Colin. trans. Smith, Ed.). Taylor Francis.

Monbiot, G. (2014). *Feral: rewilding the land, the sea and human life*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago and London

Molloy, M. (2004). Cutting-edge nostalgia: New Zealand fashion design at the new millennium. *Fashion Theory - Journal of Dress Body and Culture*, *8*(4), 477–490. https://doi.org/10.2752/136270404778051537

Morrison, K. (2002). Featured quilter; Katherine Morrison. *New Zealand Quilter*, *28*, 4–6. https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/54065c699821f50e3cc9b5e2

Nicholson, H. (1998). *The loving stitch: A history of knitting and spinning in New Zealand.*. https://aucklanduniversitypress.co.nz/the-loving-stitch-a-history-of-knitting-and-spinning-in-new-zealand/

Niedderer, K., & Roworth-Stokes, S. (2007, November). The role and use of creative practice in research and its contribution to knowledge. *IASDR International Conference.*. https://www.academia.edu/download/30831635/IASDR07SRS.pdf

Nimkulrat, N. (2007). The role of documentation in practice-led research. In *Canada Journal of Research Practice Journal of Research Practice*,, *3*(1). AU Press. http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/58/83

Nimkulrat, N. (2011). Material inspiration: From practice-led research to craft art education. *Craft Research*, *1*(1), 63–84. https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/intellect/CRRE/2010/00000001/00000001/art00004

Nimkulrat, N. (2012). Hands-on intellect: integrating craft practice into design research Introduction: Craft, design, and practice-led research. *International Journal of Design*, *6*(3), 1–14. http://www.ijdesign.org/ojs/index.php/IJDesign/indexMetadataRecord:https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/11352www.ijdesign.org

Nimkulrat, N. (2013). Situating creative artifacts in art and design research. *Form Akademisk-for Design*, *6*(2), 1–16. https://journals.oslomet.no/index.php/formakademisk/article/view/657

Nimkulrat, N., Seitamaa-Hakkarainen, P., Pantouvaki, S., & de Freitas, N. (2016). Experience, materiality, articulation. *Studies in Material Thinking*, *14*. http://www.materialthinking.org

Packer, A. (2006). *Stitch: Contemporary New Zealand textile artists*. Random House New Zealand.

Pajaczkowska, C. (2005). On stuff and nonsense: the complexity of cloth. *Textile, 3*(3), 220-229

Pajaczkowska, C. (2010). Tension, time and tenderness; indexical traces of touch in textiles. In A. Bryant & G. Pollock (Eds.), *Digital and other virtualities: New encounters, arts, cultures, concepts* (pp. 134–148). I B Tauris and Co. https://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/id/eprint/1265

Pallasmaa, J. (2000). Hapticity and time. *Architectural Review*, *207*(1), 78–84. https://www.academia.edu/download/32755280/69185184-Pallasmaa-Hapticity-and-Time.pdf

Pallasmaa, J. (2005). Hapticity vision. *Architectural Design*, *75*(4), 137–138. https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.119

Payne, A. (2020). *Designing Fashion's future: present practice and tactics for sustainable change*. Bloomsbury publishing,

Pohatu, T. W. (2011). Mauri-rethinking human wellbeing. *MAI Review*, *3*. http://www.review.mai.ac.nz

Pollock, K., & Labrum, B. (2010). *Second-hand trade.* Te Ara- The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/second-hand-trade Date accessed: 24/10/2021

Regnault, C., Hammonds, L., & Lloyd-Jenkins, D. (2010). *The dress circle: New Zealand fashion design since 1940*. Random House.

Renault, C., & Turner, D. (2018). *Creative fibre*. New Zealand History Online. https://nzhistory.govt.nz/women-together/creative-fibre

Roberts, L. (2018). Spatial bricolage: The art of poetically making do. *MDPI Humanities*, *7*(43), 1. https://doi.org/10.3390/h7020043

Royal, T. C. (2018). Politics and knowledge: Kaupapa Māori and matauranga Māori. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, *47*(2), 30–37. https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/INFORMIT.446746674901479

Sadokierski, Z. (2020). Developing critical documentation practices for design researchers. *Design Studies*, *69*, 1–33. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.DESTUD.2020.03.002

Schneider, J. (2006). Cloth and clothing. In C. Tilley, K. Webb, S. Kuchler, M. Rowlands, & P. Spyer (Eds.), *Handbook of material culture* (pp. 203–220). Sage.

Schneider, J, & Weiner, A. (1989). *Cloth and the human experience*. Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological research.

Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner.* Taylor and Francis Ltd

Scrap Definition & Meaning. (2022). Merriam Webster. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scrap

Seamon, D. (2018). *Life takes place: phenomenology, lifeworlds, and place-making*. Routledge.

Sennett, R. (2008). *The craftsman*. Allen Lane Penguin Books.

Singleton, J. (2012). Reserve Bank, 1936 to 1984. *Te Ara, The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatu*. https://teara.govt.nz/en/reserve-bank/page-2

Sullivan, G. (2009). Making space: The purpose and place of practice-led research. In H. Smith & R. T. Dean (Eds.), *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts* (pp. 41–65). Edinburgh University Press. https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mBCrBgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA41&dq=making+space+the+purpose+and+place+of+practice+led+research&ots=CrasM0zFi3&sig=Uqj6QO_U9s85qJtjJIsn44k3X14

The Dowse Museum. (2002). *Thrift to Fantasy*. Exhibitions. https://dowse.org.nz/exhibitions/detail/thrift-to-fantasy

The Statutes of NZ, (1988). The Tarriff Act, Vol 3.

Twigger-Holroyd, A. (2013). *Folk fashion: amateur re-knitting as a strategy for sustainability*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Birmingham City University www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/4883/1/2013_Holroyd_631676.pdf

Twigger-Holroyd, A. (2017a). *Folk fashion: Understanding homemade clothes*. https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=EBiWDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=amy+twigger+holroyd&ots=s7n3Gze8KG&sig=nyC9-n__UhpC4sCtYh1iuNB4wJg

Twigger-Holroyd, A. (2017b). *Project gallery – Reknit Revolution*. Reknit Revolution. https://reknitrevolution.org/project-gallery/

Twigger-Holroyd, A. (2018). Reknit revolution: Knitwear design for the domestic circular economy. *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, *6*(1), 89–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/20511787.2018.1452141

Veltheim, H., Kuosa, T., & Neuvonen, A. (2020, May 22). *End of globalisation post COVID-19 – and the rise of self-sufficient cities*. Futures Platform.

https://www.futuresplatform.com/blog/end-globalisation-post-covid-19-and-rise-self-sufficient-cities

Vincent, D. (2018). *Dressmaking: How a clothing practice made girls in New Zealand, 1945 to 1965* Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy at Massey University. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343063412_Dressmaking_how_a_clothing_practice_made_girls_in_New_Zealand_1945_to_1965_a_thesis_submitted_in_partial_fulfilment_of_the_requirements_for_the_degree_of_Doctor_of_Philosophy_at_Massey_University_Well

Williams, L. R., & Henare, M. (2009). The double spiral and ways of knowing. *Target Article*, *MAI Review,3*3. http://www.review.mai.ac.nz

Wilson, J. (2005). *Nationhood and identity*. Te Ara - the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/nation-and-government/page-9

Wolfe, R. (1997). *All our own work; New Zealand's folk art*. Viking.

Wolfe, R. (2001). *The way we wore*. Penguin Books.

Yee, J. S. R., & Bremner, C. (2011). Methodological bricolage-what does it tell us about design? *Doctoral Design Education Conference*, 1–11. http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/8822/1/313_Yee_Bremner_%282%29.pf

Zahavi, D. (2019). *Phenomenology: The basics* (Vol. 1). Routledge. https://librarysearch.aut.ac.nz/vufind/Record/1488642

Ziek, B. (2004). The felt frontier – Polly Stirling, contemporary felt maker. *Surface Design Journal. 28*(4). 35-38.

Glossary of project terms

Craft	The definition as applied to this research relies on theorist Richard Sennett's view of craft, which he describes as a purposeful connective engagement with materials, skill intention and the body (2008, p. 21).
Improvisation	A deliberately designed system of discovery, intended to produce textiles through a series of unpremeditated acts, chance material encounters, and opportune acquisitions of tools.
Locale	Drawing from Ezio Manzini's definition, the locale in this research is not defined by its physical limits, but is instead an operational boundary of networked encounters with the maker at the centre. (Manzini & Coad, 2019, p. 78).
Making do	To utilise existing tools and materials in resourceful ways. In particular, with reference to creative domestic practices that have developed in Aotearoa New Zealand during past periods of scarcity (Griffin, 2003, p. 28).
Kiwiana	Iconic artefacts New Zealanders recognise as part of their national identity. Some examples include black gumboots, the Buzzy Bee wooden toy, pavlova cakes, plastic tikis, pāua shell ashtrays, marching girls and NZ railways issue crockery (Wilson, 2005).
Remediation	Reworking textiles repeatedly as they connect to new materials or new experiences that may arise.
Scrap	A textile remnant that is considered 'waste' and superfluous, and is paradoxically, a material ripe for renewal. Merriam-Webster supplies a nuanced meaning of the word 'scrap' when used as a verb, which is relevant to my applied usage. 'Scrap' is to discard, cast, shed, slough or to consign to junk. This implies a forceful 'letting go' or repudiation of something that has become useless or

	superfluous but not intrinsically valueless. There is an intrinsic or implied suggestion that a consequent renewal of vitality will follow (*Scrap Definition & Meaning*, 2022) .
Story telling	A metaphor applied to the making process used in this research. Using the theories of Tim Ingold who suggests making, storytelling and journeying, are similar processes that are part of being alive (Ingold, 2010, 2011, 2014). The making processes used in this research acknowledge and link material narratives that are imbued in collected textile elements to form new material narratives.
Vernacular	Drawing upon Peter Greenhalgh's (1997), definition of the term, vernacular craft can be assigned to textiles created as part of a lived experience using materials at hand. Rosemary McCleod (2005) also applies the term to describe textile artefacts that spring from skills ordained through the needs of daily life rather than formal training.

Catalogue of project/exhibition works

1		Elemental [Vintage blanket, needle felted, and hot wash felted with alpaca, lamb's wool and silk fines. Embroidered. 2100 x 1200mm]
2		Aue teri nei tiki [Needle felted silk with lambswool and white alpaca. Lace collage, digital animal prints, embroidered. 1100 x 700mm]
3		Reflected sky and field-felted [Needle felted corriedale wool batt, digital print, needlework and silk fibre. 1100 x 650mm]
4		Salvage [Re-purposed, woollen jacket, with applique, smocking, lace inserts and stitch elements]
5		Trans-terraform felt [Worn linen panel, felted with corriedale and alpaca wool and hot wash felted. Embroidered 2200 x 1100mm]

6		Water worn [Felted knitted and woven elements, lamb's wool, alpaca, and appliqued crochet with digital prints. 2000 x 900mm]
7		Rivulet [Needle felted linen with alpaca fibre and hot wash felted. Embroidered. 2200 x 1100 mm]
8		Remnants from Te Wairoa [Needle felted textile elements with merino wool, alpaca. Hand stitched. 1850 x 400mm]
9		Waimakariri-braided [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool, smocked, appliqued and stitched. 950 x 200 mm]
10		Furrows [Vintage silk needle felted with merino wool. Hot wash felted and embroidered. 800 x 180mm]
11		Sulphur point [Worn blanket, long staple alpaca, needle felted and hot washed. Embroidered. 1460x 1060mm]

12		Waipara. Vintage silk needle felted with merino white merino wool and black lambswool. Hand stitched detail. 800 x 400mm
13		Waipara - transmuted [Montaged needle felts with applique and hand stitched. 800 x 400mm]
14		Motunau-reserved [Vintage silk needle felted with merino. Walnut dyed. 800 x 400mm]
15		By the lake, Tarawera [Vintage silk, needle felted with lamb's wool. Walnut dyed, hand stitched and appliqued. 1250 x 400mm]
16		Mended anew [Lambswool felt loomed with vintage handloom hemp scraps, digital print, stitched-in vintage needlework. 800 x 300mm]
17		Imbued. [Felt loomed vintage textiles with merino wool, hot water washed and handstitched with vintage embroideries. 650 x430mm]

18		Little River – reticulated [Merino wool, various textiles and sundries, needle felted and stitched. 1250 x 700mm]
19		Gathering. [felted vintage blanket, with knitted and stitched elements. Embroidered. 800 x 500mm]
20		Cashmere, woven in [Needle felt collage, wool blanket, dyed handloom hemp, cashmere knit and wool. Embroidered. 800 x 650mm]
21		Eddies retouched [Needle felted and hot washed silk with merino wool. 400mm x 400mm]
22		N-twined [Felt-loomed vintage needlework, layered with embroidery and digital prints. 700 x 500mm]
23		Exhumed [Merino wool and remnants, felt loom and hot wash felted textile. 600 x 500mm]

24		Impression [Felted crochet shawl, needle-felted with corriedale wool into sacking. 750 x 600mm]

Appendix A: Using dyestuffs from the locale

The surrounds, local values and landscape, affect the textiles that are created. Through the studio, which acts as a nexus point, the materiality of the studio and locale speak. The studio where the works are created looks out over the Ngongotaha stream, which flows into Lake Rotorua a short distance away. In the indigenous Te Arawa tribal (Māori) culture of the locale, the river and the land around it, are thought of as protagonists in daily life; contributing gifts, resources and histories (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013; Hēnare, 2015; Williams & Henare, 2009).

The local Te Arawa approach to place creates a sense of relational awareness leading to the observance, acceptance and inclusion of local resources that may not otherwise have occurred. A giant black walnut tree, growing out over the Ngongotaha stream flowing past the studio, was one of the casualties of a catastrophic flood in 2018, which

Figure 111: Clockwise from left;1. The Ngongotaha stream 2. Black walnuts floating down 3. Black walnut dye bath.

wrought damage all along the riverbank. Before the bank collapsed, the tree obscured the sky, fifty metres upstream from the studio. Its branches spread across the river, dipping deep into the stream and slowing the water. Large boughs criss-crossed the stream, making an archway or branches, which were a maze for kayakers. During late summer the masses of black walnuts on the tree ripened and dropped and floating upstream. Each year, a deposit of black walnuts washed up onto the bank outside the studio door.

Figure 112: from left; 1. Black walnuts from the Ngongotaha stream. 2. Walnut dye bath. 3. Dye test on silk

The walnuts are collected and stored, eventually sparking a series of experiments. They are boiled to provide dye baths and wrapped inside wool fibre, silk or felt. Textile and felt are soaked with the walnuts to create patchy stains, burn-like marks or even 'all over' colour. Dye mordants (to fix the dye or change the colour), are made from objects around the studio such as iron nails, or aluminium castings.

Shades of taupe, greys and black, are created using walnuts. Some shades wash out immediately. It is a struggle to produce consistent results. Things that do not work, are not discarded but are considered from a new perspective and used in a new way.

Figure 113: from left. 1. Expired molasses dye test. 2. Expired coffee dye bath.

Along with the walnut, dye experiments expired foodstuffs are briefly explored as dye agents. After the walnut tree is felled during the council's reparation work to the riverbank, other local opportunities for dye stuffs are explored. Oak trees are discovered growing along the lakefront. These trees provide acorns, twigs and leaves, which spark a new series of tests and a new colour range.

Figure 114: from left; 1. Oak tree detritus. 2. Iron, aluminium and tin dye mordants. 3. Dye tests and boiled wool. 4. Oak tree detritus dye bath.

Appendix B: Preliminary Felt Test

Prior to beginning the work, I conducted some tests using the felt loom. At the early stages of the research, I did not know how the textiles I had collected would combine and I was unsure of which methods I could use or adapt to the materials I was accumulating. I completed a felting workshop at Auckland University of Technology's Textile and Design Lab in 2018, where I tested a range of materials through the felt loom, using wool fibre as a base and a binder. At that time, I also saw Donna Cleveland's doctoral work in felt manufacturing, on display in the Lab (Figure 115). Cleveland had produced a body of work using recovered fibres she obtained through dismantling and carding waste garments. The fibres were then felted on AUT's needle felt loom, into large scale textile panels. Some of these panels were made up into a range of household artefacts, including a patterned rug and various other textile objects.

From Cleveland's practice and findings, I learned that the felt could be manufactured into large and very uniform textiles, using the needle felt loom. I noticed that when she applied patterns into her work, there was good edge fidelity for the shapes she was using so I learned that subtleties could be preserved through the mechanical processing of the loom. The binding capacity of the needle felt loom, is well documented throughout Cleveland's practice as she was able to control and thoroughly combine a range of different fibres (Cleveland, 2018, pp. 196–200). Unlike Cleveland's research, I did not

Figure 115: Cleveland, D. (2018). Felt collection [Salvaged fibre, needle felted textile artefacts]

want to card the fibres from the elements I collected from my environs, as I hoped to preserve each element's individual textility and character as a signifier of the textile's journey and connectivity. From my own subsequent tests, it became clear, that wool could be applied in layers over a range of textiles, and the elements would become bonded. Later throughout the research, I experimented with stitch and various combinations of fibres, along with wet felting methods. At the preliminary phase

I was searching for a way to bond elements other than through using stitch, as I wanted to achieve a blended effect, a uniformity where the character of each montaged element was preserved. These images of some of the tests performed, show the wool fusing with the needle work element, bonding it to the wool in places (Figure 116 and Figure 117).

Figure 116: Donovan, J. (2018). Felt test [Digitally printed silk, needle work and wool needle felted)

Figure 117: Donovan, J. (2018). Felt Test 2 [Detail]

Appendix C: Felt making using mixed textiles

The method of making for this series of textiles builds upon earlier knowledge within the project; layering wool and textiles together on a blanket or wool batt, through the needle felt loom. As before, scraps of textile contribute visual narrative, which are spliced together using the felt loom technique, to form each of the new textiles in this series.

Figure 118: showing tacking stitches and pins holding elements onto the backing blanket, during the felting process

Remnants of silk and linen, combine with knitted elements, digitally printed linen and heritage hand work. Some elements are dyed using the stream's walnuts or the decomposing acorns, twigs and leaves gathered from under the oak trees at the lake front reserve. Pins and tacking stitch keep the elements together during the felt process. Stitch is used after the felting to further unify the elements into finished works.

Figure 119: clockwise from lower left; 1. Wool and white alpaca being applied 2. Felt piece is rolled into a cotton sheet. 3. Partially blended textiles and fibre. 4 & 5. Fully blended fibre

Fusing wool to silk, linen or handwork produces varying results. Fine areas such a stitch or embroidery can be lost if too much wool is layered over the detail. Fine layers of fibre are applied for up to eight passes through the felt loom, small amounts at a time, to preserve detail. After pressing and stitching, the elements are fully blended into a single felt. During the needle felting, delicate textiles such as velvet or silk, often finish with a puckered, quilted appearance that can lend itself to receiving stitch.

The textile central to this piece is an embroidered cream silk piano shawl. It is a large piece, 1250mm2 excluding the long fringe of tassel that is hand knotted on all four sides. It is decorated with embroidered chrysanthemum motifs, rendered in metallic thread. The thread was probably once gold but is now corroded to a darkened, earthly bronze.

Figure 120: from left; 1. Crumbling silk. 2. Digital print and needle work elements used in the piece.

The silk is barely holding together and crumbles easily. The metal-thread motifs are heavy enough to tear the silk when the shawl is lifted. The flower forms do not survive if the silk falls away; without the silk ground, the metal stitches tend to collapse into knots. A batt of alpaca fibre is carded and layered to receive the silk remnants. Drawn elements, printed onto silk, are cut into remnants for use. White needlework and embroidered

Figure 121: Figure 122: preparation for the felt loom; elements are laid out onto an alpaca batt

elements are also worked into the design. The fragility of the silk piece and the corroded metal stitches present challenges when felting. The punching action of the needle felt machine breaks the silk into fragments, which becomes fused into a randomised pattern into the alpaca.

Using the start-stop-reverse function on the felt loom, the batt and fragile elements are gently manoeuvred through the loom, repeatedly, until the textile is stable enough to be handled more. The digital print patches and heritage lace work help to stabilise the piece, as they are added. As the piece begins to form, the metal thread embroidery begins to fuse well with the alpaca batt. The areas of embroidery are released into the new work as the silk ground disintegrates and merges with the alpaca fibre.

Whether or not the disintegrating silk panel will hold together through the needle felt process, is unknown during the process. Working with the aging textile contains an intrinsic value, as if the material's decline and clear impermanence, lend to it a fading quality that becomes of renewed worth in the new piece. The felt finally does begin to form after repeat layers of alpaca are applied in fine wisps, to strengthen weak areas.

Appendix D: Exhibition

The exhibition of the textile work produced through this research, was held at the Art and Design School, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, Rotorua, Bay of Plenty. The venue was chosen due to its connection to the locale and community where the research took place. The exhibition was opened through mihi and karakia provided by Kaumatua Eru Biddle and Kaitiaki Wāhine Tangiwai Doctor, and in accordance with our local tikanga, food was provided.

The following images describe the layout, and the exhibition event that took place. Following these images, the additional findings that took place through the exhibition are discussed.

Figure 123: Donovan, J. (2022). Exhibition of textile work invitation [Graphic design]

Figure 124: Fraser, A. (2022). Overview of exhibition layout, Part one [Photograph]

Figure 125: Fraser, A. (2022). Overview of exhibition layout, Part two [Photograph]

Figure 126: Fraser, A. (2022). Guests examine and discuss the textiles [Photograph]

Figure 127: Fraser, A. (2022). From left: Aue tiki nei teri, reflected sky with field, salvage, trans-terraform felt, water worn and rivulet. [Photograph]

Figure 128: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Aue teri nei tiki, detail, stack of textiles [Photograph].

Figure 129: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Trans-terraform felt, rivulet detail [Photograph]

Figure 130: Fraser, A. (2022). From left: Waimakariri-braided. Folded textiles. Remnants from Te Wairoa [Photograph]

Figure 131: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Elemental, detail. Remnants of Te Wairoa [Photograph]

Figure 132: Fraser, A. (2022). Images from left: Water worn, detail. Collection of textiles handled and jumbled by exhibition visitors. [Photograph]

Guests were invited to handle the textiles, look at the rear view side and engage with the textiles through exploration. Due to spatial considerations some of the larger textile works were hung on the walls, but the majority of the work was folded and stacked on plinths in the gallery space.

Many of the guests were interested in holding, handling and examining the textiles. Some guests were taking images of small details they enjoyed, as in the example depicted in figure 135.

Figure 133: Fraser, A. (2020) Little River -reticulated. Button detail captured on a visitor's smart phone [Photograph]

As the textiles were handled, there was discussion about the techniques used, the origin of materials and what the textiles could represent or be utilised for. Many people did seem to engage with the textiles' histories. 'This reminds me of-', 'I used to have something like this-' were common phrases overheard during the exhibition. As people identified with the textiles, some elements seemed to draw a sense of prior knowledge, recognition, appreciation and even emotion. One guest recorded her experience of the textiles in a hand written note:

> There were a couple of pieces that really moved me – reminded me of my grandmother – her resilience, her economies, her hard work but also the beauty created by her hands (Pam Fleming, personal communication, 24th August, 2022).

Folded inside the note, was an exquisite piece of lace made by her great-aunt. The act of preservation, rescuing precious handwork, and the skill of a family member was recognised in the textile pieces and reciprocated in this gesture.

Figure 134: Coward, B. (n.d.). Butterfly [Hand made lace, 60 x 35mm]

Although it was not a research aim, to convey stories and the narrative journey of textile elements to the viewer specifically, it was nevertheless of interest, to see some of the viewers drawing together some of the narratives that the researcher experienced through the making process. The viewers seemed to experience the textiles' 'placeness'. They were the joined threads from a locale, a space that included community, past makers, materials, tools, experiences and influences. This research finding as to the longitudinal nature of the textiles through the process used, was reaffirmed through the exhibition.

The issue of presentation reflected a compromise and caused the researcher to think more deeply on how 'living' textiles could be displayed or experienced in future. Rather than hanging against a wall, it could be better to allow them to flow in some way. Perhaps such a display could also be part of an interactive event, where visitors bring textile elements of their own, to begin a textile conversation of their own. The interactions with the textiles observed at the exhibition, drew attention to the communicative nature of textiles that are alive, and this could offer valuable opportunities for future research.

Appendix E: Contact sheets of local images

Figure 135: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 001 [Contact sheet]

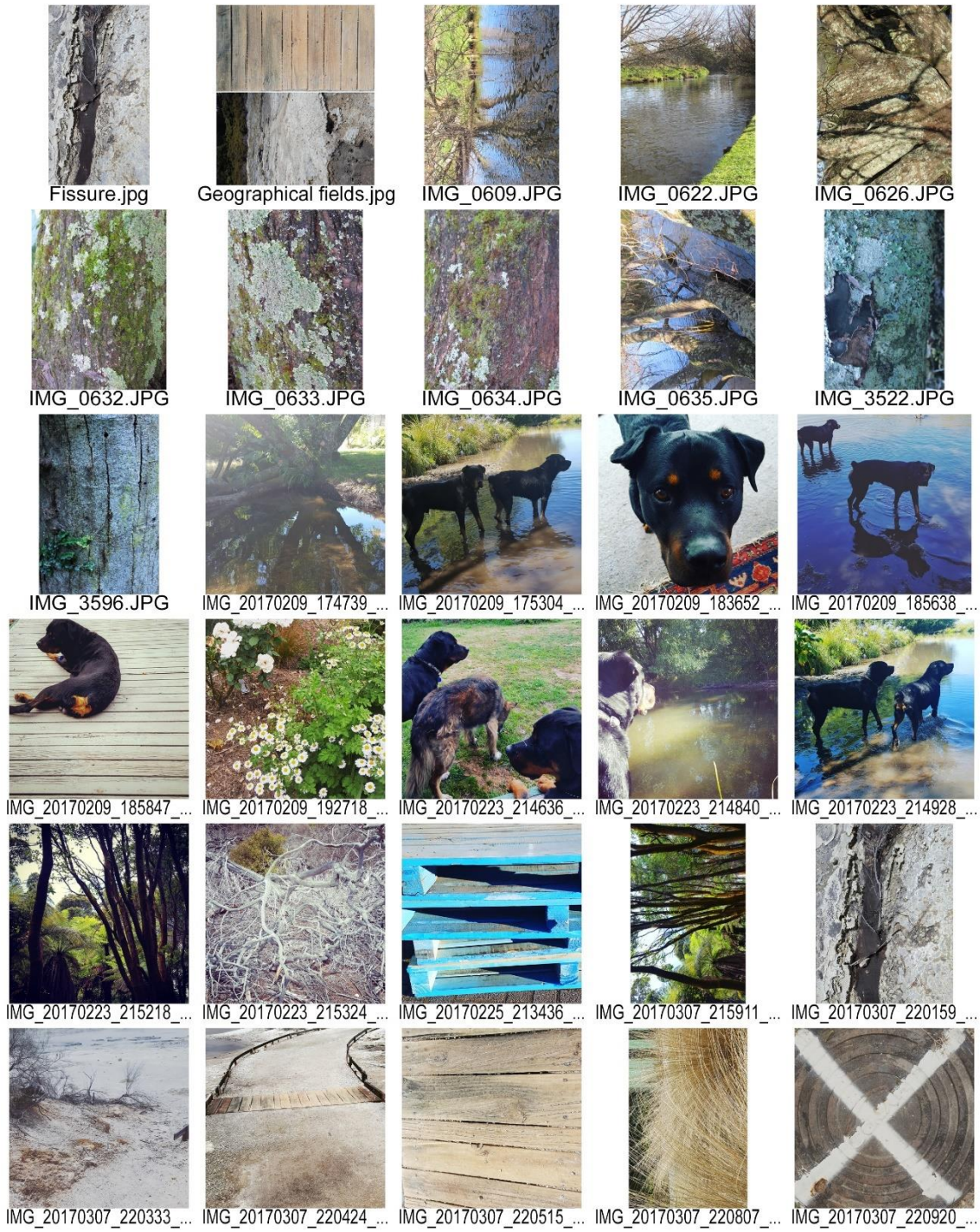


Figure 136: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 002 [Contact sheet]

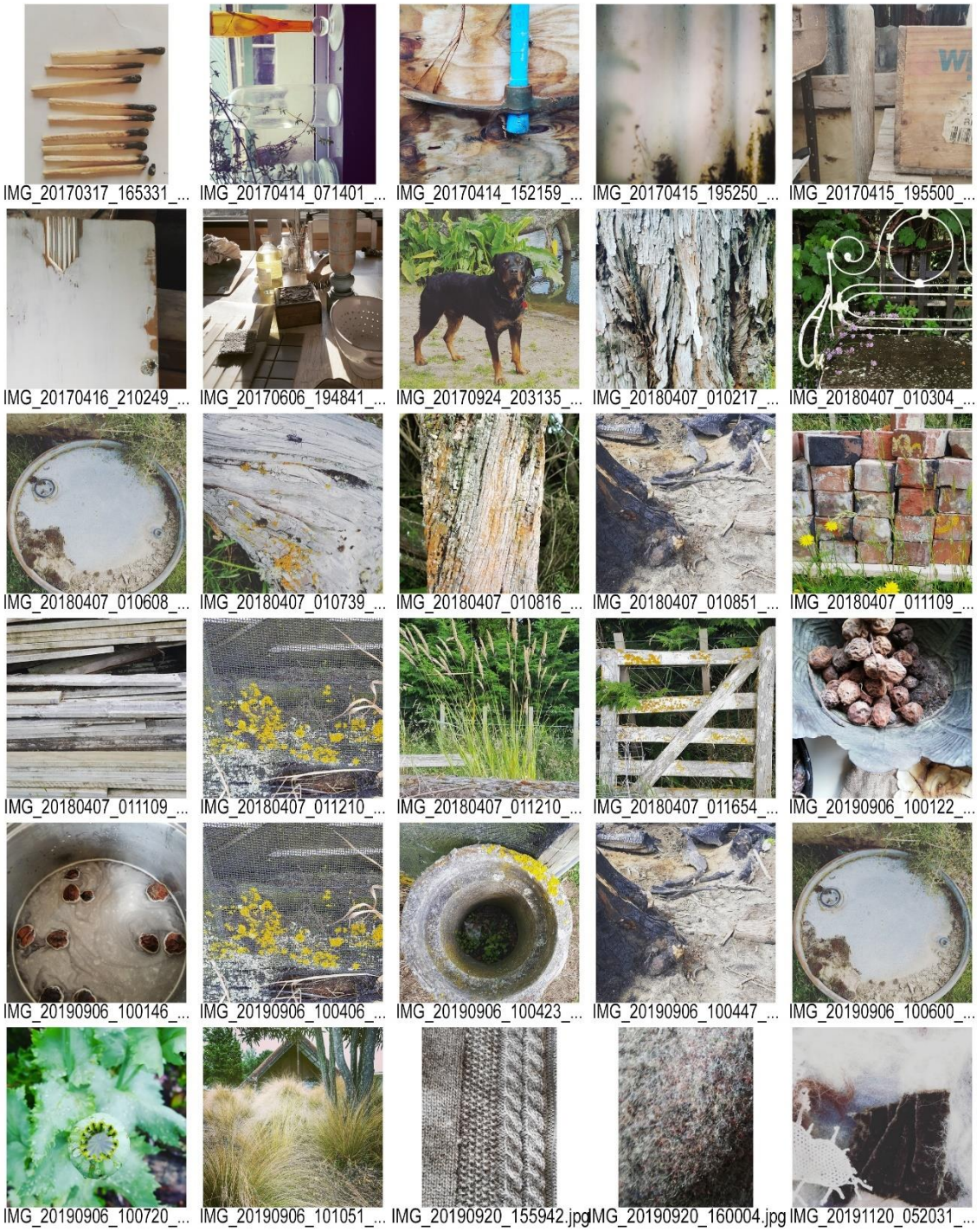


Figure 137: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 003 [Contact sheet]

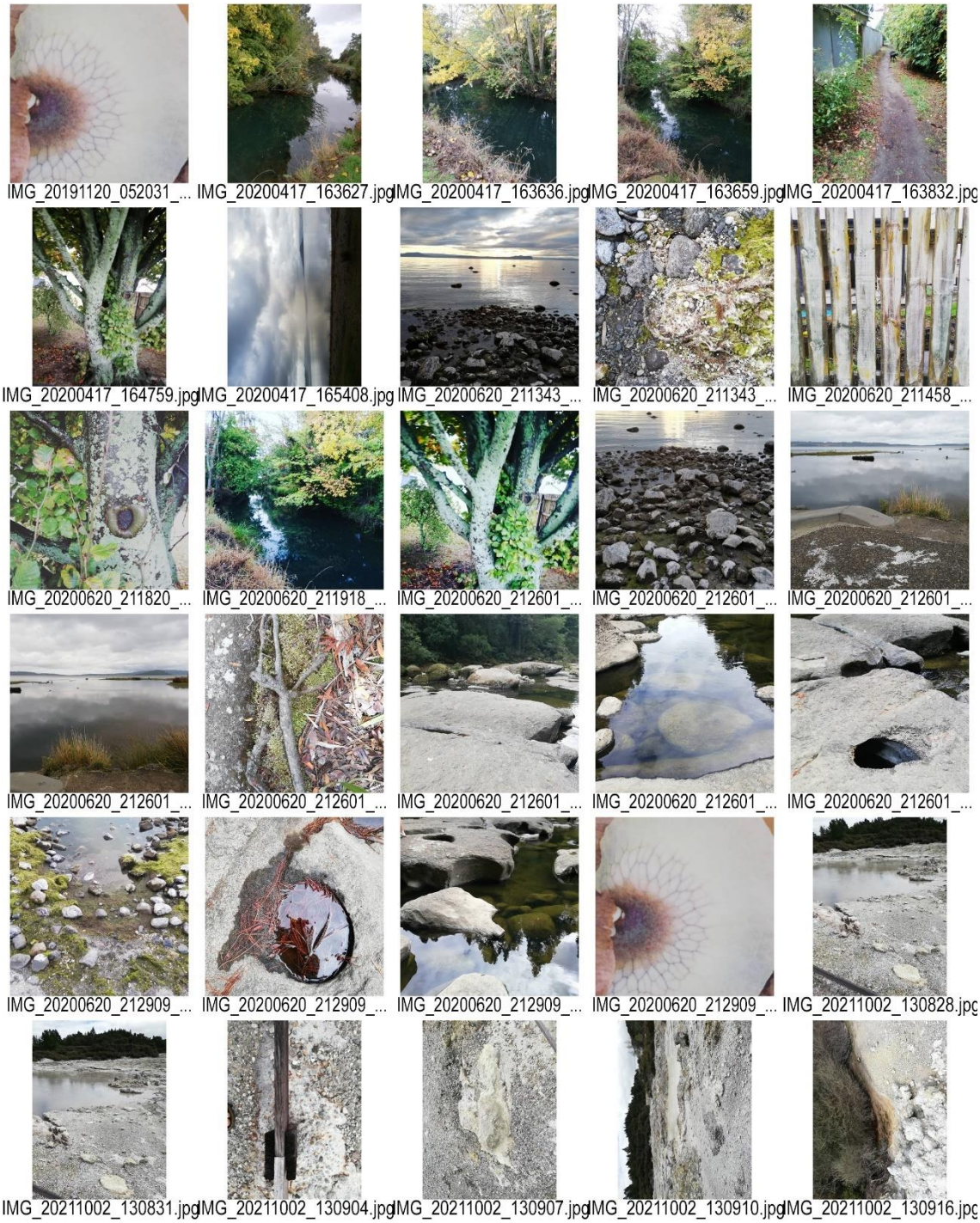


Figure 138: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 004 [Contact sheet]

Figure 139: Donovan, J. (2022). Images from the locale 005 [Contact sheet]

Appendix F: Permissions for use of images

AUT

Joanne Donovan
8a Manuariki Road,
Ngongotaha, Rotorua
22/12/2021

Mr. Richard Donovan
38 Main Southbrook Road,
Rangiora, 3010

Dear Richard Donovan, (father)

As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology and am writing a thesis on localised self reliance in textile design for a PhD.

I am writing to request permission to use the attached images of you, to be included in my thesis:

A digital copy will be made available online via the University's digital repository Tuwhera. This is an open access research repository for scholarly work, intended to make research accessible to as wide an audience as possible. A small run of print copies will also be made, one of which will be made available to you.

I am seeking from you a non-exclusive licence to include these materials, (images of you), in my thesis. The materials will be fully and correctly referenced.

If you agree, I should be very grateful if you would sign the form below and return a copy to me.

If you do not agree, would you please let me know. Thank you for your support.

Arohanui, Joanne Donovan

I Richard Donovan_____ agree to grant you a non-exclusive licence for an indefinite period to include the above materials (images of myself), of which I am the owner, in the print and digital copies of your thesis.

Date: 22/12/2021

AUT

Joanne Donovan
8a Manuariki Road,
Ngongotaha, Rotorua
22/12/2021

Mrs. Pamela Donovan
38 Main Southbrook Road,
Rangiora, 3010

Dear Pamela Donovan, (mother)

As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology and am writing a thesis on localised self-reliance in textile design for a PhD.

I am writing to request permission to use the attached image of you, to be included in my thesis:

A digital copy of the thesis will be made available online via the University's digital repository Tuwhera. This is an open access research repository for scholarly work, intended to make research accessible to as wide an audience as possible. A small run of print copies will also be made, one of which will be made available to you.

I am seeking from you a non-exclusive licence to include these materials (the image of you), in my thesis. The image will be fully and correctly referenced.

If you agree, I should be very grateful if you would sign the form below and return a copy to me.

If you do not agree, would you please let me know. Thank you for you support,

Arohanui, Joanne Donovan

I Pamela Donovan_____ agree to grant you a non-exclusive licence for an indefinite period to include the above materials (images of myself), of which I am the owner, in the print and digital copies of your thesis.

Date: 22/12/2021

AUT

Joanne Donovan

8a Manuariki Road,

Ngongotaha, Rotorua

22/12/2021

Ms. Liana Donovan

38 Main Southbrook Road,

Rangiora, 3010

Dear Liana Donovan, (sister)

As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology and am writing a thesis on localised self-reliance in textile design, for a PhD.

I am writing to request permission to use the attached image of you, to be included in my thesis:

A digital copy of the thesis will be made available online via the University's digital repository Tuwhera. This is an open access research repository for scholarly work, intended to make research accessible to as wide an audience as possible. A small run of print copies will also be made, one of which will be made available to you.

I am seeking from you a non-exclusive licence to include these materials (the image of you), in my thesis. The image will be fully and correctly referenced.

If you agree, I should be very grateful if you would sign the form below and return a copy to me.

If you do not agree, would you please let me know. Thank you for your support,

Arohanui, Joanne Donovan

I Liana Donovan_____ agree to grant you a non-exclusive licence for an indefinite period to include the above materials (images of myself), of which I am the owner, in the print and digital copies of your thesis.

Date: 22/12/2021

AUT

Joanne Donovan

8a Manuariki Road,

Ngongotaha, Rotorua

22/12/2021

Ms. Celine Brown

38 Main Southbrook Road,

Rangiora, 3010

Dear Celine Brown, (sister)

As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology and am writing a thesis on localised self-reliance in textile design, for a PhD.

I am writing to request permission to use the attached image of you, to be included in my thesis:

A digital copy of the thesis will be made available online via the University's digital repository Tuwhera. This is an open access research repository for scholarly work, intended to make research accessible to as wide an audience as possible. A small run of print copies will also be made, one of which will be made available to you.

I am seeking from you a non-exclusive licence to include these materials, (this image of you), in my thesis. The materials will be fully and correctly referenced.

If you agree, I should be very grateful if you would sign the form below and return a copy to me.

If you do not agree, would you please let me know. Thank you for your support,

Arohanui, Joanne Donovan

I Celine Brown, _____ agree to grant you a non-exclusive licence for an indefinite period to include the above materials (images of myself), of which I am the owner, in the print and digital copies of your thesis.

Date: 22/12/2021