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SURFACE BUILT

MAKING
THE NEW
ZEALAND
HOME

LAURA
FORD
2010





SURFACE BUILT

Making The New Zealand Home

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Masters of
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Surface Built

Surface is the skinning spread all around home
Coated with languages of texture and chrome
The library of traces of who here has been
Roughed to our body's round edges and leans

Mottled by bath water and hung ornaments dandy
Victim to the violence of the people called handy
Collisions all day with shoes, toes and shoulders
Stabbed by the plug holes and toothbrush holders

Tired skins go away – rolled back like old hosiery
Layer on layer of flowers, stripes and Chinoiserie
Wear-holes that ladder and expose the dark nooks
Nudes shivering patiently for new linings and hooks

Papered, painted with quite suffocating coverage
A way inside requiring of quite forceful leverage
Fractured to behold the under unseen structures
Exposing the 'neath through gapping big punctures

Our oily dark smears – the coats between coat
An anthology of remembering on which we all dote
Patinas polished to smoothed and roughened stasis
Marking our heights and lives on a day to day basis

Peppered with our hairs and dusty fragments of skin
Becoming untidy and marred till we flee and wherein
Abandon the place that once was our intimate hovel
Break new ground and begin again elsewhere novel

Laura Ford
2009

Abstract

The potential for prefabrication has been sidelined by the process of the design>build>do-it-yourself model of building, maintaining and updating houses in New Zealand. Working from an industrial design perspective this research charts the possibility of a shift in home construction from site building towards factory-manufacture. Mindful of New Zealand's creative, do-it-yourself heritage and personal rituals of homemaking, this study explores domestic ritual and the iterative nature of amateur home alterations. Just as we have the right to alter our own body's surfaces so too should the homeowner have the ability to alter the surfaces and services they own and with which they interact. Flanked by the design-to-manufacture model promoted by industrial design and the emphasis on inhabiting and rearranging the home from spatial design a hybrid notion of housing design and production is put forward. Suggesting a product that deals affordably with the home's surfaces and services, within the customs of daily and seasonal acts of maintenance in the home, offers an area of prefabrication that seems attainable for New Zealand interior.

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