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ON MAKING THE IMMEASURABLE MEASURABLE: A SEARCH FOR SPIRITUALITY IN PAINTING PRACTICE

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.

AMBER HARVEY

2009

INTRODUCTION

*The task of painting is to render visible forces that are not
themselves visible*

(Gilles Deleuze, Francis Bacon: Logique de la Sensation)

Conceptually my interests evolve around the theory of the spiritual in art; in part because of my religious background as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and in part because of the influence that art has in my own life. Growing up in a musical family and in a faith where the power of music is often associated with that which is spiritual, I found myself wondering about the ability of art to do the same. Engaging in studio practice I struggled with the question of how to represent something seemingly intangible or ineffable, like the principle of faith or the feeling of the Holy Spirit, in a painting. The practice that has developed from this has been a search for a conceptual language to express these things.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could never have done any of this without the help and support of all those around me.

I owe much to the staff in the Fine Arts Department and would particularly like to thank John Di Stefano for his encouragement and guidance; Karin Van Roosmalen for her enthusiasm and advice; Mike Heynes for his expertise; and Richard Reddaway & Simon Morris for their help and support.

I would like to thank Molly, Greg, Catherine, Shelley, Virginia, Meighan, Mike, Justine, Hanne, Ruth, Fran, Gemma and Peter for their insights, encouragement and discussions throughout the year.

And also my family and good friends, for their patience and support. Particularly Jack, I could never have done this without your constant help and support. Thank you.

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*includes three DVDs.

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The insignificant is as big to me as any,

(What is less or more than a touch?)

Walt Whitman