

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

# **The Aesthetics of Immersion**

*Time, process and performance in practice*



A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.

Lisa Munnelly

2003

(Previous Page). Fig. 1, Lisa Munnelly. *Close up of fallen dust*. 2002. Digital Still.

# Introduction

The initial impetus for this inquiry stemmed from a visit to the group multimedia exhibition entitled 'In the Shed.com', which was part of the Wellington Fringe Festival in 2001. What particularly struck me with this show (described as an interactive upload of image layers and process) was how the paintings in it were completely overwhelmed by the accompanying digital projections. With this in mind I returned home later that night to watch the current affairs show '*Nightline*,' which previewed another exhibition on in town. The camera accompanied by some upbeat techno mix swooped, spun, jerked and ducked as if the cameraman was more inspired by the soundtrack than the work, which hung on the wall impassive, or helpless in its attempts to arrest the darting gaze of the camera. On reflection, I saw in this an alignment to Walter Benjamin's views that 'the masses seek distraction whereas art demands concentration from the spectator' (Arendt 1970:241). Studies on perception which show that motion has the greatest appeal to our senses led me to pose the question; how could the static artwork compete against the innate attraction of the moving image? Theories around what is called the "aesthetic experience" point out, that for a viewer to really engage with an artwork, the information contained within it must engage with information already stored in the viewer's mind. I saw this strategy being employed by artists such as Cindy Sherman and Peter Doig, whose work plays with the well known imagery of classic film genres, acting as contemporary versions of historical painting which portrayed widely known religious grand narratives. However the strategy of using a pictorial narrative to hold the viewer's attention in my own work became problematic as the question of *what* to show became overpowering. To free my work from such pictorial subservience, I turned to minimalist and process art practices for inspiration. Following the likes of the artist Lee Lozano, I drew up an action plan of verbs; scratch, pour, layer, stack etc, and applied them to different media. Being engrossed in the physicality of different materials acted as a release from the constant decision making element of artistic production, while a prior acceptance that these action pieces were explorations rather than arrivals absolved me of the responsibility of needing to know the end before I'd even begun, thus allowing for the new and unexpected.



# Acknowledgements

*I would like to take this opportunity to give recognition and pay gratitude to all those who have helped me throughout my two year candidature here at Massey. First and foremost, thanks to Simon Morris who supervised my studies, for his time, his open mind, and his subtle body language, which discouraged pursuit of some of the more cheesy (what he termed 'earnest') ideas I had. And thanks to everyone else in the Fine Arts Department; Sally Morgan, David Cross, Julie Roberts, John di Stephano, Maddie Leach, and Eugene Hanson for their feedback. Thanks to James Mc Carthy, Regan Gentry and Kyle Paton for helping set-up the exhibition. A big thanks to Gareth Gowan for helping get this document together. Thanks to Kate Griffin for her feedback and encouragement. Thankyou Struan Ashby for your camera skills, your balancing act and not minding about being covered in charcoal ... thanks to Brett Davidson for the plethora of related works or your "digressions".*

*Thanks to all my friends that were coerced or bribed into participation; Tone, Tracey, Sacha, Jared and Sarah in particular,  
and last but not least, thanks mum .*

# Contents

Genesis or Gestation ?	.....	page 1
Matter	.....	page 5
Traces	.....	page 7
Interstices	.....	page 9
Descent	.....	page 12
Histrionics	.....	page 18
Time	.....	page 20
Space	.....	page 20
The pressure of nothing	.....	page 22
Appendices	.....	page 29
Bibliography	.....	page 45

# Illustrations

Title Page,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Close up of fallen dust</i> . 2002. Digital Still.
Overleaf,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Dust triptych</i> . 2002. Compressed charcoal. 2.89 x1.37 m.
Page 4,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Footprints</i> . 2002. Slide.
Page 6,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Series of timed sketches</i> . 2002. Charcoal. A1 format.
Page 8,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Close up of falling dust</i> . 2003. Digital Still.
Page 10,	Caspar David Friedrich. <i>Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog</i> . 1815. Oil on Canvas. 94.8x74.8cm.
Page 14,	Karin Sander. <i>Lint pick-up</i> . 1998. Lint Pick-up, dirt particles. 10x14.5 cm.
Page 16,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Sweeping</i> . 2003. Digital Still.
Page 18,	Roman Opalka. Painting one of his first details.
Page 18,	Roman Opalka. <i>1965 I - 1 /Detail I- 35327/</i> .1965. Tempera on canvas. 196x135cm.
Page 22,	Lisa Munnelly. <i>Swing and white square</i> . 2003. Slide.
Page 24,	Lisa Munnelly <i>Drop Sequence</i> . . 2003.Digital Still.
Page 26,	Sacha Childers. <i>Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June</i> . 2003. Written text.

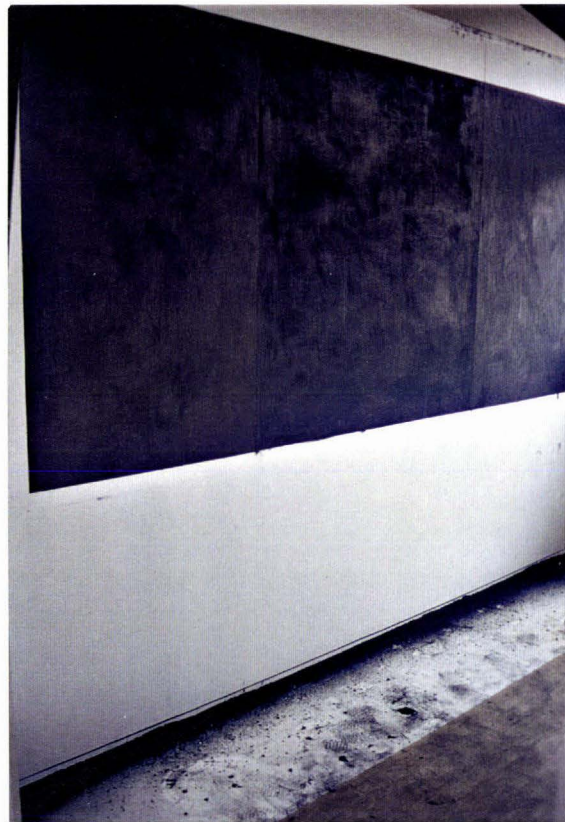


Fig . 2, Lisa Munnelly. *Dust triptych*. 2002. Compressed charcoal. 2.89 x1.37 m.

# The Aesthetics of Immersion

## *Time, process and performance in practice*

### *Genesis or Gestation ?*

I'm calling this work the 'Mother Board', as it gave birth to all the subsequent works under discussion here. But what is this birth? What does it mean to say that something "gave birth" to "something else", and can we say this at all about an oversized bit of board covered with charcoal remnants? Let's start by claiming that it is common sense to precede any discussion of "birth", with a comment on what came beforehand; the act of insemination.<sup>1</sup> Or is this the place to start? What about Immaculate Conception, the divine interference from on high? One might argue that this is a much more fitting framework to explore the realm of "making art". Let us say that in the first formulation we have creation out of matter, and in the second, creation issues forth from immaterial means. In doing thus we have identified two polarized positions on how the creative act comes into existence.<sup>2</sup> The analogy between the creative act and childbirth is a well-worn one, but still offers ground for further exploration. In ' *Sculpting in Time-Reflections on Cinema* ', author and film director Andrei Tarkovsky posits that the work of art is an organism, 'living and developing according to its own laws', that it 'grows within (the artist), like a fruit, and begins to demand expression' and that 'the poet has nothing to be proud of: he is not the master of the situation, but a servant' (Tarkovsky 1986, pg 43). I see in his words the suggestion of inevitability of outcome, this outlook stripping the artistic act of any unpredictability and the artist of any creative agency to intervene or discover the unexpected. One might rightly argue that Tarkovsky is merely saying that the artist has no choice *but* to create, that he is bound, as an artist, to the act of making art. Let me quote Tarkovsky in his own words, to answer this challenge;

' People tend to talk about experiment and search in relation to avant-garde. But what does it mean? How can you experiment in art? Have a go and see how it turns out? But if it hasn't worked there's nothing to see except the private problem of the person who has failed. For a work of art carries with it an integral aesthetic and philosophical unity; it is an organism living and developing according to its own laws. Can one talk of experiment in relation to the birth of a child? It is senseless and immoral. I like the story of Picassos, when asked about his search replied wittily and pertinently 'I don't seek I find'. (Tarkovsky 1986,pg. 97)

Tarkovsky believes that 'nothing could be more meaningless than the word *search* [when] applied to art [as it] covers impotence, inner emptiness [and] lack of true creative consciousness' (Tarkovsky 1986,pg.95), yet he praises Picasso for *finding*. Now I am confused: how I wonder, can one 'find' without looking or searching? Does Tarkovsky, lend

---

<sup>1</sup> **Seminal/** 'semm 1/a .of seed or semen or reproduction, germinal; (of ideas etc.) providing basis for future development.[F or L (semen)] (Oxford dictionary.1985:679)

<sup>2</sup> **Parturient.** *a.* about to give birth.[ ( L *pario part-* bring forth)], **Parturition** *n.* act of bringing forth young, childbirth. (Oxford Dictionary. 1985.:536)



value only to those artistic endeavors that haphazardly stumble upon inspiration, as if by chance? Tarkovsky defines the essence of his role as a film director as that of *sculpting in time* (emphasis mine) (Tarkovsky 1986: 63). There are two ways to create a sculpture: one way is to start from the surface and chip away to reveal the inner form; the other is to start from the inside and build up through addition until the final form is arrived at. Tarkovsky writes:

Just as a sculptor takes a lump of marble, and inwardly conscious of the features of his finished piece, removes everything that is not part of it- so the filmmaker, from a lump of time, made up of an enormous cluster of solid living facts, cuts off and discards whatever he does not need (Tarkovsky 1986, pg.63).

We can deduce two things from this statement. Firstly Tarkovsky aligns himself with the procedure of removing in regards to sculpture; and secondly, Tarkovsky *removes* so as to draw the material in line or closer to that of his inner consciousness. Therefore if we return to the opening paragraph, Tarkovsky's position aligns him to the view that art issues forth from immaterial means, which is then translated outwards through matter.

The art object, whether it be film, sculpture, painting, or drawing or whatever, seen in this light, could therefore be called a 'representation' of the artist / creator's essential idea.

In his essay on German Philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer<sup>3</sup>, Nicholas Davey explains how 'representationalists believe in an external transcendent reality as a primary truth' which is prior to art and the proper subject of art. This, he reasons, 'renders art as secondary to an original truth and limits it to a reproduction of that truth'. (Davey, 2003,pg.131). This version of art making seems to me to be too one-sided, complete and hierarchical, favouring subject matter at the expense of both process and matter. It is perhaps unsurprising that I've adopted this stance, considering the background to my current body of work. As I mentioned in my introduction, an attempt to use pictorial narrative devices to hold the viewers' attention led to a crisis of *what* to show. Thus to free my work from pictorial subservience, I focused my attention onto the inherent qualities of different media. Through experience I have learnt to appreciate (perhaps even to come to rely on) how one work informs another and how through the work's duration such an *informing*<sup>4</sup> might be the work's sole purpose as opposed to a work that is designed to be an end in itself. Gadamer's preference for the term 'presentation' over 'representation' relates to my experience when he posits that 'representation suggests an interpretation dependant upon a prior truth, whilst presentation speaks of a coming forth of a subject' ( Davey, 2003:131). Indeed the idea of presentation means that art is 'no longer subordinate to its conceptual subject but becomes a vehicle of its sensuous experience' (Davey, 2003:131). In my own practice I see a relation to Gadamer's terminology; I understand how one's senses are immersed in the act of making, the process

---

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002). Gadamer's aesthetics seeks to demonstrate that art does not re-present actuality but transforms it. 'Gadamer after meeting Martin Heidegger started to fuse classical philosophy with phenomenology a theme which has characterized all of Gadamer's work'. (Davey 2003:135) Main texts: *Time and Method* (1960) *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays* (1977) *Heidegger's Ways* (1983) *Literature and Philosophy in Dialogue: Essays in German Literary Theory* (1994).

<sup>4</sup> My use of the term *informing* relates to that of *intertextuality*. 'Intertextuality is a method of reading one text against another that illuminates shared textual and ideological resonance's. The term refers to both a method of reading that juxtaposes texts in order to discover points of similarities and differences as well as the belief that all texts and ideas are part and parcel of a fabric of historical, social ideological and textual relations.' ( Clippinger 2001:190)

indeed acting as a vehicle, one can specify how one is going to travel, but not what will be witnessed along the way. Such is the experience of discovery that I find it useful to document this journey like a travelogue, writing about the trials I have undertaken either during or immediately after the works completion. The following text, taken directly from my diary is an example of such documentation:

Dust Triptych 2 meters 88.5cms long, 3 panels, 1.37 meters high, started in late October (I think).

3 panels, 2 narrower flank widest central one. I started working on first panel, completely covered it in charcoal as I had done in earlier works, yet now I felt a sense of dissatisfaction, the charcoal on this surface seemed dead and flat. The walls offered the texture of paint rolled on- a stippled sponge-like effect but the acrylic paint didn't have a 'tooth' for the chalk to grip to, unlike the matte mount board where the charcoal was dense, black, velvety and deep, here it was pale, grayish, skittering over the surface.

To combat this on the middle panel a layer of plaster-based paint, just one coat was applied- a system was set up- 0,1,2. I hoped this coat would add what I'd thought lacking.

I'd made a swap away from compressed charcoal, which was very dear at \$3.30 a stick, to using boxes of black chalk pastel, I was chewing through these at an incredible rate, and they crumbled and snapped quickly. The dust exhaust seemed to be finer, and filming it proved to be a task in just getting the camera to pick it up. I found extreme angles the best and focus mid-stream.

To be honest, I was starting to tire by the second panel, the room was hot and stuffy, I was covered in dust, and I had more on my hands than on the wall.

I started utilizing this by spreading the charcoal out with my hands. I finished the middle panel and started on the last, had done about two hand sized patches when I called it quits. I went on holiday.

I came back maybe 1 and a half months later, determined to get something out of the trial, continued on final panel. Now I used my hands a lot more, the same amount of chalk was applied, but rubbed in to the surface more. Unintentionally about half way down the panel, in a left to right downwards arc, was the imprint of my left hand supporting my body, whilst my right hand did all the work.

Like some chemical reaction my hands had left a sweaty aura like imprint. I tried to cover them with even more chalk but they stubbornly remained.

In looking at the three panels now, the first is very light, dull and thin in appearance, the middle the darkest with patches of chalk dust and smoother areas where it has been rubbed in. The last panel with two layers of plaster paint underneath is lighter, it seems to have a yellowish metallic hue, in fact it looks more like graphite than chalk. It is stained by the two earlier patches (done before my holiday) which never assimilated with the rest, and the imprints of my left hand. Visible on the top of the wall are my thumbprints, holding on to steady myself up high, around the entire piece, the absence of the masking tape is outlined softly by dust that had gathered on its outer edge. The dust too is evident in the merest trace as it clings to the wall in its descent. The floor of the space I painted (beforehand) under each opposite wall with two white strips to catch the fallen dust, I am attracted to the crisp line of the white paint cutting into the lino. This pristine crispness was soon polluted by the black dust, a trail of dust led back and forth from this space to the adjacent one where I'd stored my equipment.

In my months absence, builders had been working next door- I could tell they'd used my test site as a yellowish patch of sawdust mingling with my charcoal indicated that they'd cut wood in my space. The imprints of shoes on the painted floor appeared to me to be rather humorous, designed features one forgets. My footprints predominated but I



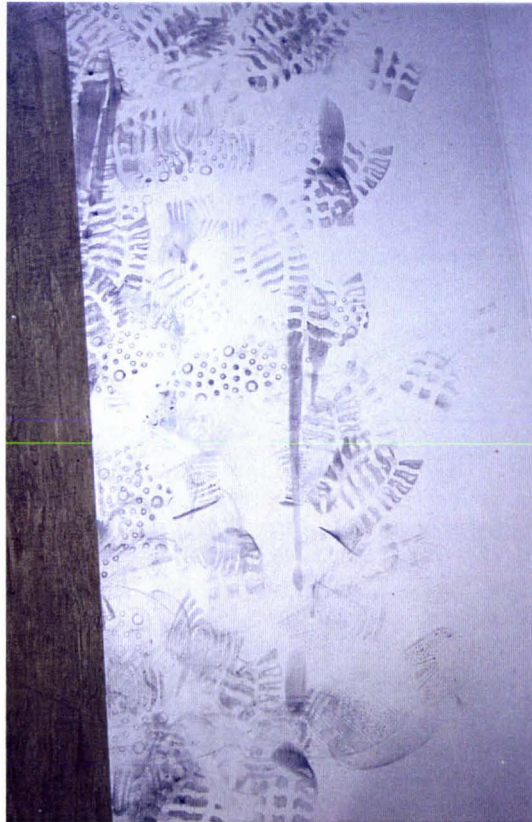


Fig. 3, Lisa Munnelly. *Footprints*. 2002. Slide.



was intrigued in those left by others, there was one of circles of two different sizes evenly spaced, one with cube edges interlaced, one typical work boot and one with little S's. The dust on the floor was thickest at either end, evidencing my lack of resolve in the middle. By the time I returned there was dust on 'my dust' - a fine gray coating. If you got in real close you could see small moths, they looked to me lying dead in the rubble like tiny plane crashes, you could see the point of impact and the scars of their last moments in the mountainous landscape of chalk. Indeed small strange creatures had trekked this terrain, starting from the far left corner nearest the window, light little feet had left indecisive trails that bended back and forth on themselves in convoluted journeys eventually crossing the great span to the other side (Munnelly, 2003).

## *Matter*

To revisit the idea of art as a "vehicle" I can think of no better analogy for the "journey" of making than that of Rupert Thomson's musings on travel:

The feeling of a ship or a train or a bus beneath me, each with its different rituals in different rhythms. A destination was useful because it was a substitute for purpose; it answered any question I was likely to be asked. Movement became my reason for being, my excuse. Movement for its own sake. I forget who it was who wrote about the importance of doing nothing, how the art of doing nothing is one that most people seem to have forgotten. Well I decided to resurrect the art. In doing nothing, I would be reduced to what I was moving through. I would quite literally, become part of the scenery. I would blend, immerse, dissolve. (Thomson, 1999:20)

In Thomson's description of the feeling of each vehicle I see a parallel for media. Pencil, chalk, video, acrylic, oil, each have their own different rituals and rhythms. I also liken his claim of the usefulness of a destination to that of the systems one puts into play in the construction of the art object. Whilst the blending, immersing and dissolving that he talks of, I liken to how one becomes absorbed in one's work. In Thomson's testimony to the importance of doing nothing, I see a link to my concept on the "potential of inefficiency". The meaning of this potential being drawn out of efficiency's definition; as being the quality of producing the desired result or the maximum effect with the minimum effort or expense. What I have explored in my work is that through a consistent urge to be increasingly more efficient we may be missing out on something. The quickest route may not always be the best, though by taking the motorway we may get to our destination faster, we pay for this through a lack of sense of place, and as a result we become numb to the subtle nuances of space. The suggestion that during the process of making the materials used each have their own rhythm and rituals draws a parallel to Henri Focillon's<sup>5</sup> statement that 'all different kinds of matter are subject to a certain destiny' (Focillon, 1934:97). Indeed, Focillon warns that matter must not be seen as a passive given that is there to organize form, for 'it is plainly observable how matter imposes its own form upon form' (Focillon, 1934:19). When I consider the development of my own work, I am compelled to agree with Focillon's claims for the demands of the medium, as matter has been a prevailing factor in determining the form my work assumes.

---

<sup>5</sup> Henri Focillon (1881-1943) French Art Historian. Interested in questions of technique and form, he believed in 'the existence of an internal organizing logic of all forms of art and the principle of unitary development, but he modulated his views by an insistence on the possibilities of invention through the experimental vigor of the individual.' (Gajewski-Kennedy, 2003:108). Best known texts are: *The Art of the West* (1938), *The Life of Forms in Art* (1934).



Fig .4, Lisa Munnely. *Series of timed sketches*. 2002. Charcoal. A1 format.



## *Traces*

When beginning my candidature I never envisaged that I would be dropping, sweeping or filming charcoal dust... I was familiar with the medium, having used it frequently for life drawing, indeed one of the first test works involved drawing with charcoal but I had no concept of the path my journey would take. I began with life drawing;

A series of timed figural sketches, ranging from one to forty minutes were executed so as one could ascertain what effect these set times had on; the psyche of the artist, the type of line and the final outcome. The one minute sketch I likened to taking a run to the dairy (pure action, no dilemma), whilst the forty minute sketch was like being lost in a huge shopping mall- one step back for every step forwards, uncertainty about where to go next, increased awareness of ones surroundings, heightened self-awareness, return to known landmarks for orientation...

As the time increased the marks became tighter, less expressive, more allover, given more time attempts would have been made to fix the overworked forty minute piece through the subtraction, this reminds me of Robert Smithson's example of entropy with the boy kicking up the white and black sand in the sandpit<sup>6</sup>, I saw a visual parallel in my desires with the forty minute piece, as the charcoal impregnated surface of my paper, like Smithson's sand could never be returned back to its initial state.( Munnelly, 2003)

From this test, came a new awareness of surface and saturation and a new imperative arose, exactly how much charcoal could be loaded onto the paper? I set about covering a large sheet of cardboard (103x152cms) with charcoal, but this time I abandoned the gestural sweeps and dashes of life drawing for small firm marks in the desire to completely cover the surface. About eight hours and seven charcoal sticks later I achieved my desire. The outcome of such a task was of a fairly predictable nature: I had created a blackboard (and a rather sore arm), yet it was the unexpected nuances of the material – of the charcoal – that fired my imagination. I found myself faced, not with a flat black board as I had expected, but a velvety deep expanse. Each meticulous mark seemed to catch the light like the wing of some great black moth. These marks, though tight in themselves, told a story. Because of the rigidity of size I had imposed upon myself, I had to constantly rearrange my body to within its confines, I was constantly changing hands and angles when fatigue set in and this had imposed an unforeseen structure to the work.

Another unforeseen element was the beauty of the falling charcoal; a fine stream of exhausted dust accompanied each small stroke. I discovered dust does not 'fly', rather it sets its own pace: small specks eerily hover, whilst middle sized particles lazily descend, in contrast to the larger chips which seemed like boulders crashing their way down to the floor. I discovered I wasn't alone in this rumination on the reflexivity of materials. Robert Morris wrote 'the black velvet of the powdered graphite reading less as a trace or imprint of the hands passage over the page than as a mirror surface for touch itself- the drawing touching back the artists hands' (Butler, 1999:85). I see a parallel to such 'touching back' in Gadamer's analogy of conversation. Gadamer saw art as a 'dialogical event', in that it speaks to us in the way that language speaks to us.

---

<sup>6</sup> If black and white/ blend/ soften and unite/ a thousand ways/ are there no more black and white? Pope: Essay on Man, II. 213-14 from Burke 1998:170

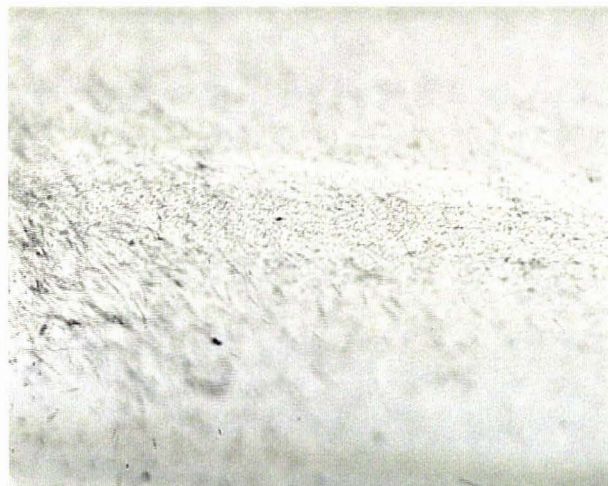


Fig. 5, Lisa Munnelly. *Close up of falling dust*. 2003. Digital Still.

'[C]onversations can bring things into mind and put things into play which the participants of an exchange would not have anticipated prior to their exchange' (Davey, 2003:133). The unforeseen aspects that arose out of applying the charcoal bear witness to this, just like a conversation, one cannot be sure of the direction the work will take, or be secure in its final outcome. And this is justly so, for if one were totally assured of the outcome of such endeavors, what would be the impetus to start at all? To extend the comparison of language to art, one could introduce the literary term *aspect* and the distinction between the perfective aspect (a situation viewed from the outside as completed), and the imperfective aspect (a situation viewed from the inside as ongoing).

As I have mentioned, Gadamer's likening of conversation to art, related not so much to the reflexivity between artist and material, but more to the 'inherited presuppositions (traditions) which structure an artist's pre-understanding of her chosen theme' (Davey, 2003:131). He argues further that a new rendition of a chosen subject can alter our preconceptions of it, labeling the entire art historical tradition as an 'ever evolving conversation'. As Davy notes, Gadamer's concept of art as a dialogical event stresses its participatory nature, with the participants keeping the conversation in play. 'Speaker and conversation, artist and subject matter are each ontologically dependent on the other to spring forth' (Davey 2003:134). What is so liberating in Gadamer's conversational philosophy is the opportunity for the artist to participate, if there is closure on a conversation (body of work, artistic movement) it is never final.

### *Interstices*

I agree with Gadamer that no one presentation of a subject matter can be definitive. Therefore there is always room to revisit such themes and opportunity to comment on and work with, the space opened up by such reinterpretation. Indeed, many of the themes that have surfaced throughout this body of work, i.e. theatricality, process, truth, the sublime are for the most part relegated to history textually, neatly compartmentalized – that was modernism, this is post modernism. I see my work as playing upon the space opened up or with the tension created between the ideologies of a modern and postmodern discourse. New York artist Polly Apfelbaum eloquently describes such a position when she states: 'faced then with what seem to me to be two unacceptable alternatives, I choose not to choose. These are hybrid works, poised between painting and sculpture; works not so much attempting to invent new categories but working promiscuously and improperly poaching- in fields seemingly all ready well defined' (Apfelbaum, 1995:86). One such site that opened itself up for comment was the concept of the sublime and its various modernist and postmodernist revisions.

The Abstract Expressionists, most particularly Barnett Newmann and Mark Rothko, were unapologetic about their appetite for the Sublime and it was this, along with their postwar angstiness, that made them a target- quite literally with John's- for Pop-Art's cool, sardonic fun. In our wry times, pop-jadedness still rules. You can talk about your masturbatory fantasies or your indifference to politics- but your taste for the sublime? Imagine the knowing cackles on Leno, Letterman or Conan O'Brien (Beckly, 2001:51).





Fig.6, Caspar David Friedrich.  
*Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*. 1815.  
Oil on canvas 94.8 x 74.8 cm. Kunsthalle,  
Hamburg.

Bill Beckly (quoted above), in a letter to Jeremy Gilbert Rolfe on the 'sticky subject' of the Sublime, asked why the sublime 'strangely sacred to modernists' was now 'strangely unclean' to postmodernists. Rolfe's reply was not given, but he is quoted later in the text as saying; 'one could not find the sublime where it was to be found two hundred years ago' (Beckly 2001:74). I propose that any effort to find out where the sublime is "now" must necessarily, ascertain where it was "then", before going any further one should explain how and why the topic of the Sublime became relevant to my own work.

I had not considered the "sublime" during the making of any of these works, I was addressing many elements attributed to it, namely- time, scale, limits, emptiness and infinity, but it was only further reading afterwards that brought to light how all these elements coalesced under the heading of the "Sublime". As Peter De Bolla once said 'the knowing that is the artwork is not always instantly accessible to the artist who made it' (Bolla, 2001:24), or perhaps more pertinently (as the association grew out of read texts) is Edward Forster's suggestion that 'the only books that interest us are those for which we are ready, and which have gone a little further down our particular path than we have gone ourselves' (Forster 1988:119). Viewers of my work have also referred to the Sublime, commenting on how the work's scale, its blackness and the dust act for them as metaphors for death or mortality<sup>7</sup>.

I found such interpretations interesting, as I stated earlier, the large scale of the works was purely a tactic for prolonged contact, the blackness a given fact from using charcoal, whereas the dust was a discovery that arose out of the meeting of the two. Yet on contemplating such comments I realized that indeed, any exploration into "time" must in some form or other address death or the end of time. Therefore through an exercise into materiality one discovers, that even basic materials are loaded with metaphorical significance. Such a discussion on the readings or reactions of the viewer in relation to the work leads us back to our earlier question – where was the sublime two hundred years ago? Edmund Burke's<sup>8</sup> '*Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*' published in 1757 sought to interpret aesthetic reactions in terms of universal instincts and sentiments basic to human nature. Burke distinguished between the pleasure gained from beauty, and the delight obtained from the sublime. To experience the sublime, the object of the experience must in some way be apprehended as being terrible, thus instilling fear or awe into the viewer. He notes how it seems paradoxical to suggest that one can derive pleasure from such an experience but explains that the fear experienced is felt at a safe remove. 'If pain and terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant about the present destruction of the person, they are capable of producing delight, not pleasure but a sort of tranquility tinged with terror- which as it belongs to self preservation is one of the strongest of all passions. Its object is the sublime' (Burke 1990: 123). The most famous early *visual* representation of the Sublime must be Caspar David Friedrich's, 'The Wanderer above the Clouds' painted in

---

<sup>7</sup>1. 'And I will show you something different from either your shadow at morning striding behind you, or your shadow at evening rising to meet you, I will show you fear in a handful of dust'. T.S. Eliot. *The Wasteland*. 1922.

2. Biblically, dust is used a simile for annihilation; in the New Testament dust on the head was a sign of repentance (Rev.18:19) but when shaken off the feet it was either a warning of judgement to come or a gesture of anger or of renunciation of all further responsibility ( Acts 13:51) -from Oxford Reference online.

<sup>8</sup>Edmund Burke (1729-97). British statesman and writer. In the history of aesthetics he is most noteworthy for his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, first published in 1757 by Robert & James Dodsley London, it went through 17 editions in his lifetime.

1815. Simon Morley in an essay entitled 'The Friedrich Factor' examines this work in regards to a number of contemporary artists, also addressing the sublime. Morley believes that a renewed interest in Friedrich is due to the way his work 'addresses a key problematic in postmodern culture: the transcendental', pointing out how Friedrich's wanderer, pictured at the summit of the mountain, is a perfect icon of the will to break free of boundaries, 'as the Latin origin of the word transcendence is *transcendere* which literally means to surpass or climb over' (Morley, 1998:28). The context for Friedrich's art, Morley explains, was the German Idealist philosophy in which 'a conscious attempt was made to shift mystical and theological motifs onto the newly articulated aesthetic experience of disinterested contemplation of the functionless artwork' (Morley 1998:28). Early on in my own work I researched theories of this 'aesthetic experience' with particular regard to the time of reading an artwork, time spent with the work being claimed as a crucial factor in facilitating the experience. "If you just walk by a painting you're not going to get anything out of it, anything at all, seeing takes time' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990:144).

### *Descent*

I felt the falling dust footage to be a successful solution to my desire to capture and hold the viewer's gaze. There was a mesmerizing quality to the way the dust fell in and out of focus, the speed and size of the particles playing not only with the limits of the recording device but also on our eyesight. My concerns reflected German Romantic's philosophy, which as Morley points out, situated 'the goal of art as the generation of the experience of liminality'<sup>9</sup> - of being placed at the boundary of consciousness' (Morley 1998:28). He adds that this was achieved not by any formal feature sited on the surface of the image but rather by something that happens between the work and the viewer (Morley 1998:28). What is of interest is how the evolving practice to represent the sublime in painting parallels the direction my own work has taken. As mentioned earlier, I first turned to pictorial means in an attempt to hold the viewers attention and explore the concept of time, but I abandoned this strategy with the realisation that the figurative images were too loaded, and consequently the problem of what to show became overpowering. A solution was found with the black charcoal enveloping and obliterating the selective lines of the figurative drawings.

This transition from figure to ground draws a parallel with the tactics employed by the artists of the nineteenth century. As Thomas Mc Evilly notes in Turner's<sup>10</sup> late work, the ground of the painting represents the sublime, whilst the figures on the ground represent the beautiful. 'The ground increasingly asserted itself over figures throughout the late nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, the ground finally took over, and the abstract sublime was born.' (Mc Evilly 2001:71). Mc Evilly's identification of the *ground* in Turner's work as the sublime element, draws from what Immanuel Kant<sup>11</sup> called 'negative presentation'. Kant cites the commandment ' *thou shalt not make*

<sup>9</sup> Liminal. Belonging to the point of consciousness, awareness below which cannot be experienced or felt. Late 19thC. Formed from Latin *limin-* stem of limen; border barrier threshold. Encarta World English Dictionary

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851) English Painter. 'The five star attraction of any tour of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Sublime would have to be Turner, who had himself roped to the mainmast of a sailing vessel so as to experience the heart of a roaring storm' (Beckley 2001:49). Constable wrote of Turner 'He seems to paint with tinted steam, so evanescent and so airy' (Chilvers, 1998:505)

<sup>11</sup> Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) German Philosopher *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1764).



*graven images*' (Exodus) as the most sublime passage in the bible in that it forbids all presentation of the absolute' (Lyotard, 1984:78). Kant's belief that optical pleasure when reduced to near nothingness promotes the contemplation of infinity relates to Morley's conversation on the figure/ground relationship with the British Painter Edwina Leapman. Leapman states that the 'trouble with Friedrich is that he puts figures in the way of the boundless expanses of his landscape'. (Morley, 1998:29).

I see in Leapman's criticism of the fixed form of Friedrich's wanderer (himself viewing the sublime landscape) an analogy to the tall person that inevitably sits in front of you at the movies -as a barrier, blocking your view thus prohibiting your ability to be carried away by the show.<sup>12</sup> Discussing the figure in the painting with a friend, I was however made aware of another view: that in effect Friedrich's contemplative wanderer facilitates the experience of the sublime by becoming the agent of the viewer in the landscape. The figure brings a temporal or mortal aspect to the image. This view fits with David Summers statement that the sublime idea of infinite space was matched by a new sense of the 'indefinite space of time necessary for the enactment of the geological history of the earth, which has neither beginning nor end; sea floors become mountains and mountains sea floors in an endless cycle' (Summers, 2003: 583).

Indeed such unimaginable expanses of time make our mere seventy years or so,<sup>13</sup> seem infinitesimally small, yet as Burke observed, great extension is indeed sublime but so is the 'last degree of littleness'<sup>14</sup> (Burke, 1990:66). I have played on this idea of scale, in the falling dust footage, as mentioned, zooming in on the minute specks of dust as they crash and career their way down to the floor. In such imagery I see a relation to Horace Walpole's<sup>15</sup> famous exclamation when crossing the Alps in 1739 'Precipices, mountains, torrents, wolves, rumblings – Salvator Rosa' (Chilvers, 1988:482). In effect what I am doing in this work is reiterating Anish Kapoor in his statement 'I think the real subject for me, if there is one, is the sublime...it's the whole notion of trying to shorten the distance of the sublime experience'<sup>16</sup> (Grieve, 2003:01). I propose this shortening or bringing closer is achieved through replacing remote rugged landscapes with the often-overlooked elements of the everyday i.e. dust, in an effort to evoke the sublime.

---

<sup>12</sup> Peter de Bolla in *Art Matters* states that the removal of the figure from the picture plane was more like a displacement than an erasure. 'In effect the depicted human form is displaced from the picture plane only to resurface on the other side as it were in front of the canvas.' ( Bolla,2001: 39)

<sup>13</sup> Whether or not one agrees with the theory itself, the Big Bang theory has made us perceive the real dimension of time. Newton still believed the universe was 6000 years old whilst today astrophysicists talk of 15000,million years...we just cant conceive of time on such a scale. Our brain is equipped to cope with a certain historical unfolding, a certain time span. We live between fifty and a hundred years. At best we can hope to know our great grand parents and children. So from our individual perspective we can contemplate up to 200 years of life either side of us. (Carriere 1999:115)

<sup>14</sup> I am reminded here of the wonderful poem My father used to say; 'little fleas have littler fleas upon their back to bite them, and littler fleas have littler still and so on *ad infinitum*.

<sup>15</sup> Horace Walpole (1717-97) author of the first Gothic Novel *The Castle of Otranto* published in 1764. The genre of Gothic Novels was inspired by the aesthetics of the sublime namely a taste for the 'savage landscape'.

<sup>16</sup> Anish Kapoor in an interview with Martin Gayford, *Modern Painters* Spring 2000.



Fig. 7, Karin Sander. *Lint pick-up*. 1998. Lint Pick-up, dirt particles. 10x14.5 cm.



Peter de Bolla in *Art Matters* states that 'these things the ordinary, the everyday, and so forth often have a strange power, call it the uncanniness of their proximity, to slip behind attention' (Bolla, 2001:64). The responsibility of the artist to thus call to attention the overlooked, is voiced through Emerson's<sup>17</sup> statement that 'the value of art lies in detachment, in sequestering one object from the embarrassing variety and in this power of detaching and to magnify detaching lies the quality and capacity of the artist' (Lastra, 1997:279). Such a capacity to re-frame the everyday is demonstrated in Karin Sanders work 'Lint Pick-Up' 1988. Through this piece Sander literally depicts one's immersion in the everyday through presenting the lint picked up from the entire surface of a person's body. 'The dirt particles thus garnered from the person's body creates a corpus of information analogous to an abstract portrait of the person in question (Sander 1998:99). An unavoidable immersion in the everyday (and *everything* in it) leads me to dispute Ad Reinhardt's statement that 'art is art and everything else is everything else'<sup>18</sup> (Harrison 2003:821) by asking, but surely the artist as a member of society is immersed in everything else, thus in some form or other this inflects on their work?

Such a query questions the traditional romanticized image of the "artist" as isolated from society. Martha Rosler comments on perceived role of the artist in her statement;

A version of the modernist paradigm has consistently translated the artist- bohemians' occupation of the low-down (or down market) corners of life into a search expedition, the well recognized safari for the bourgeois patrons of the artistic endeavor (we slum for you...). We artists have been expected to liven up patrons lives by dusting off the discarded, the overlooked, the obsolescent, translating these elements into treasures of taste and allegories of mortality (Rosler, 2002:07).

Yet whilst I may be cynical of the romanticism inherent in such a perception, Martha Rosler seems in fact to describe many of the concepts explored by my own work, the beauty of the discarded (the charcoal dust), the overlooked (the way it falls), allegories of mortality (the way it succumbs to gravity)... if I could just avoid the 'slumming' part please. A compromise between the view of the artist as isolated and the artist as immersed in society, can perhaps be found in Walter Benjamin's approach to history through trash. Benjamin likens his methodology to that of rag picking in his essay 'The Historian as Chiffonier' picturing the historian as 'a ragpicker at daybreak, lancing with his stick scraps of language and tatters of speech in order to throw them into his cart grumbling stubbornly, somewhat the worst for drink' (Highmore, 2002:63). In this picture we have a figure who draws from, and is therefore *part* of society, yet is still not in an easy relationship with it. As Ben Highmore notes, 'rag pickers outmoded by modernisation struggle to get by finding value in what has been devalued, outmoded. The detritus of modernity is scoured for its use value' (Highmore, 2002:63). My concern mentioned in the introduction with the topic of time, and of what place static art forms have in an increasingly animated environment- echoes such feelings of displacement. I feel I have resolved this issue by, seeing digital media as another tool for drawing, rather than its replacement.<sup>19</sup> Benjamin's itinerant ragpicker is mirrored in the term "peregrination" used by Jean-Francois Lyotard.

<sup>17</sup> Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803-82). Lecturer, essayist and poet. Chief works: *Nature* 1836, *The American Scholar* 1837, *Literary Ethics* 1838, *Poems* 1847, *Essays on Representative Men* 1849, *The Conduct of Life* 1860, *May-Day and Other Pieces* 1867, *Society and Solitude* 1870, and *Journals*, 1912.

<sup>18</sup> Quote from Reinhardt's essay 'Art as Art' published in *Art International*, Lugano VI, #10, December 1962.

<sup>19</sup> Bertolt Brecht- 'Reality changes, in order to represent it, modes of representation must also change' (From) *Everyday Cultural Aesthetics*. Ben Highmore. 2002.pg. 62.

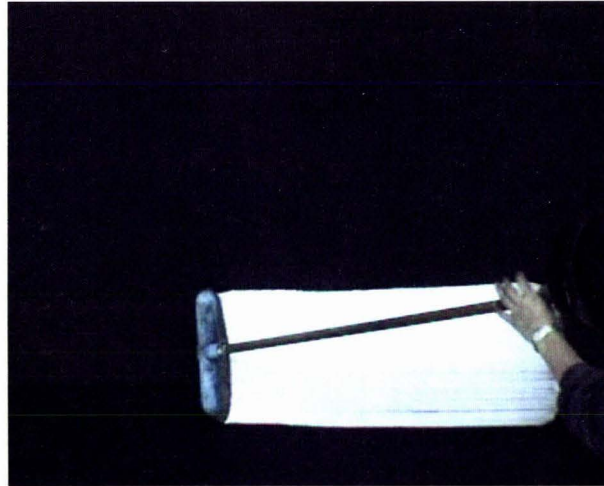


Fig. 8, Lisa Munnelly. *Sweeping Vistas*. 2003. Digital Still.

Beatrice Skordill explains that the term derives from the Latin word *peregrinus* (meaning pilgrim) and refers to the philosopher's itinerant movement in the world of ideas.

'According to Lyotard, ideas are like clouds, both light and indefinable in form; the moment one thinks one has begun to grasp them, one finds that they have changed. Hence a peregrination is a wandering among the clouds of ideas and a commitment to respect the ways in which they are constantly eluding our complete understanding' (Skordill, 2001:271).

Lyotard, Stuart Sim claims, displayed an obsessive concern with the concept of the sublime in his late writing. Drawing from Burke he regarded the Sublime as the manifestation of the unrepresentable, believing it to be the role of art to be in dialogue with this phenomenon: 'that there is something which can be conceived and which neither be seen nor made visible: this is what is at stake in modern painting'<sup>20</sup> (Lyotard, 1984: 78).

Friedrich, advised his fellow painters to 'close your bodily eye, so that you may see your picture first with your spiritual eye - then bring to the light of day that which you have seen in darkness so that it may react on others from the outside inwards' (Chilvers, 1998:187). His statement demonstrates the belief that such painting was motivated by some kind of transcendental vision. This belief was also adhered to by Abstract Expressionists such as Mark Rothko who sought to create the sublime within his saturated fields of color. Sigmar Polke foretold postmodernism's skepticism of painting's transcendental aspirations in 1969 when he wrote underneath a black triangle in the top right corner 'command from on high: paint top right hand corner black' (Morley, 1998:28). Simon Morley describes Polke's move as amounting to a 'witty debunking of the rhetoric of idealism' (Morley, 1998:29). The inclusion of parody and irony act as the differential between modernist and postmodernist attitudes. Bill Beckley states 'Burke's modernist sublime is almost blunt in its honesty, a bumpkin'; a certain naivety of blind faith pervades the modernist sublime, while the postmodern sublime is characterized by self-reflexivity and scepticism (Beckley, 2001:74).

There is an element of such parody in my work 'Sweeping Vistas' aesthetically conjuring up references to Rothko through its darkness and the horizontal divisions suggestive of landscape. This illusion is immediately refuted however, when one sees that the marks made are created merely by a domestic household broom (a cheap blue plastic one at that). The work plays with the viewer in that they are swept away by the image and with the disorientation between the formal appearance of the image and the way it comes into being. Here the fingerprint as index of the artists enlightened touch is replaced by baseness of the footprint. And the trademark tool of artistic genius (the paintbrush) is replaced by one of banal domesticity (the broom) thus calling to attention the idea of "women's work" in contrast to the male dominated arena of abstract expressionism.

---

<sup>20</sup> Quote by Lyotard originally from *The Post modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. (1979)





Fig. 9, Roman Opalka painting one of his first 'Details'

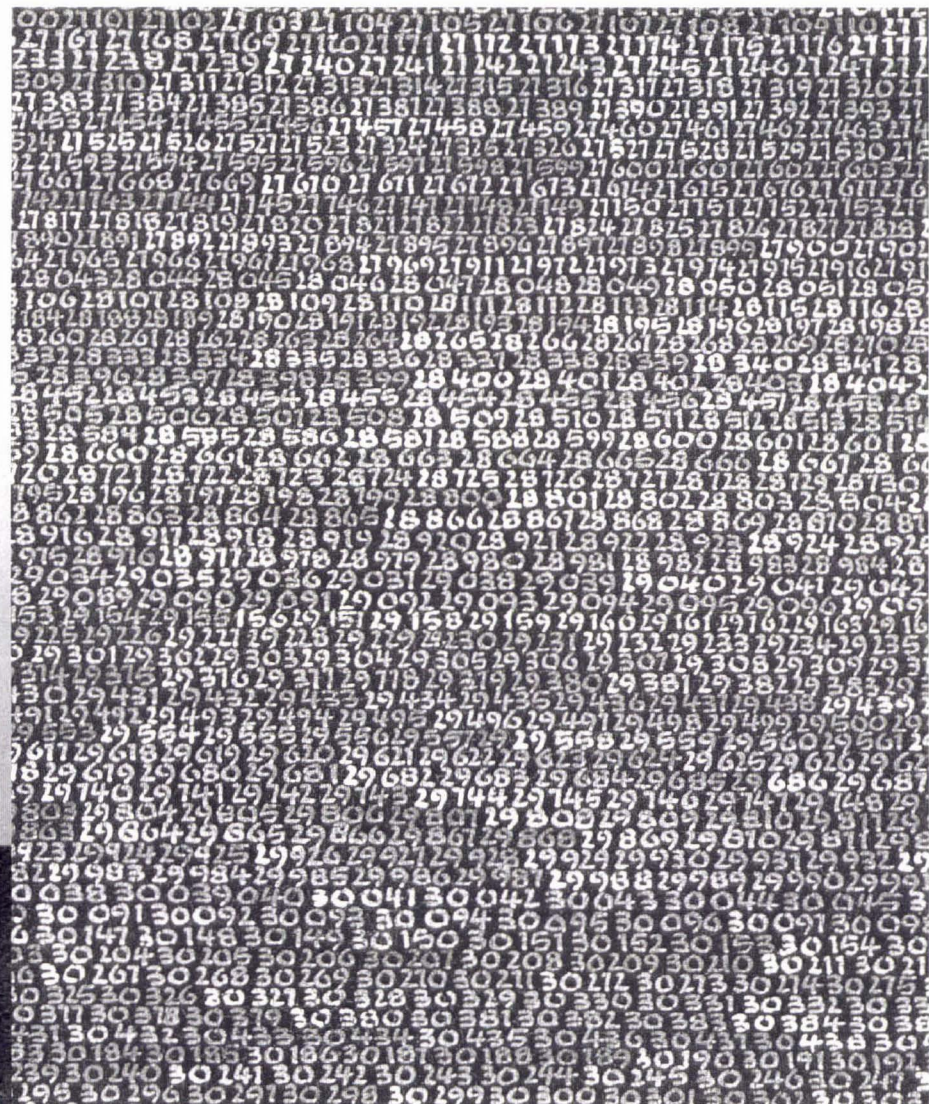


Fig.10, Roman Opalka. 1965/1 - ∞ [Detail 1- 35327] .1965. Tempera on canvas. 196x135cm



## *Histrionics*

I see a parallel in my efforts with this work to the issues raised by the artist Orlan's 'Mesurages' completed between 1976-84. In these performances Orlan measured public spaces using her body as the gauge. As Howard Caygill points out Orlan's use of her body as a metric 'replicates the use of the perfect male body as a metric in Vitruvius and later in Leonardo and Corbusier' but using a female body 'disrupts the smooth meshing of artistic perfection, masculinity and power' (Caygill, 2000:51). I see an analogy to Orlan's performative measurement in my own endeavors to show that one should not champion intuition or inspiration at the expense of time, labor and matter in art. Caygill states that in the original system of measurement the act of measurement is strikingly clean and timeless:

Vitruvian man to serve as a metric must be fresh from the bath, clean and naked, while the meter rod must be made of pure platinum. In addition to the purity of the metric, the act of applying it must be accomplished instantaneously without apparent effort or residue, producing a purely ideal result. Without these conditions the neutrality of the act of the measure would be undermined, revealing the violence of equating the different (Caygill, 2000:52).

By repeatedly laying down her own body in the dirt, marking its placement with chalk, then washing her soiled clothes and presenting the residual dirty water as 'relics', Orlan reveals measurement to be a physical, dirty, and time-consuming act.

The quintessential fusion of measurement and labor is to be found in the works of Roman Opalka, whose paintings consisted purely of numbers – increasing one at a time, the first number being number 1 whilst the last number he ever painted was 2194426. Writing on his work Anne Rorimer on his work states, 'through its presentation of the artists own image as an emblem of aging, the work of roman Opalka pits the idea of infinite numerical sequence against the brevity of a single lifetime' (Rorimer 2001:155). To my mind (though I have never heard his name used in connection with it), Opalka's work is indeed sublime if we use the definition; 'of that which defies comprehension'. The painter Chuck Agro's description of the sublime as 'something that points outside of itself that has no didactic or specific meaning...something between dancing and dying' (Beckly2001:54) seems like a custom made description for Opalka's labors. The example of Opalka's work leads me to contend that *labour* is an element often neglected in discussion of the sublime. If one refers back to the image of Friedrich's wanderer, awestruck at the mountain peak, one is compelled to ask whether he would feel the same exhilaration if he'd merely driven up to the summit, and hopped out his car to peer over the edge.

Friedrich's wanderer, having climbed to the mountaintop and yet pictured as *still* in contemplation, acts as the nexus between a materialist and idealist viewpoint. Idealist, as in he is presented in pure thought and yet materialist as he is only able to occupy the position through physical endeavor. In the opposition of idealism to materialism we find the division between mental labour and physical labour, between "pure" thought and matter. As I have been stressing the importance of matter throughout this text, one might presume I align myself to that of a materialist ideology - however my preoccupation is with how thought "emerges" through an immersion in time and matter. In positing an indissoluble relation of the two, I suggest it is, *movement* that acts as the key, binding element. Perhaps the term 'emerge' is a misleading one, as it suggests a slow

burgeoning of awareness, which one might presume, is correct when involved in such protracted processes. Yet I find that despite adopting such methodologies, I am ‘stung by the splendor of a sudden thought’<sup>21</sup> rather than a gradual awakening. Hegel reiterates such an observation when he states:

It has been said that there are no sudden leaps in nature, and it is a common notion that things have their origin through gradual increase or decrease. But there is also such a thing as sudden transformation from quantity to quality. For example water does not become gradually hard on cooling, becoming first pulpy and ultimately attaining a rigidity of ice, but turns hard at once. If the temperature is lowered to a certain degree, the water is suddenly turned into ice, i.e., the quantity- the number of degrees of temperature- is transformed into quality- a change in the nature of the thing. (Hegel. *Being*. 1975)

I have found the use of exertion and extended duration to *make room* for the unforeseen in my work, to relate to Martin Heidegger’s view of ‘Being’. Heidegger sees this ‘Being’ in the world not as being contained in it but more in the terms of a *dwelling*, of a being alongside, of proximity and of possible contact and encounter. The fact that viewers have noted my methodology is reminiscent of a Protestant work ethic, and have asked ‘am I trying to secure my salvation through labour?’ leads into Heidegger’s interest in the Christian relation to *Parousia*<sup>22</sup>. As Frances Dastur explains, the relation ‘is not an awaiting of a future event but the *readiness* for the imminence of this coming;’<sup>23</sup> ‘What interested Heidegger in the Christian experience is not revelation but that it is an experience of life in its *facticity*- a life which takes no theoretical distance from itself but understands itself within the realm of its own unfolding’ (Dastur 1999:10). In looking at the effect of time on making, I was drawn to Heidegger’s assertion that Being must be thought of as Time. Dastur suggests that such an assertion rejects the way in which Being, traditionally, has been disassociated from time and identified with eternity.

Traditional interpretations miss the essential finitude of temporality by understanding time as an indefinite or infinite sequence of now’s. But Heidegger stresses that ‘infinite time’ proceeds and derives from finite time. Only because primordial time is finite can ‘derivative ‘ time temporalise itself as infinite (Dastur, 1999:xv).

According to Heidegger, to ‘infinite’ time is to level it off and conceal its structural elements, namely significance and discontinuity, he further contends that such leveled off time (public time) belongs to everyone, ‘that is to say the temporality of nobody’ (Dastur 1999:50). I see this as echoing Howard Caygill’s earlier statement citing measurement as the ‘repeated violence of adapting the different to the same’ (Caygill, 2000:51).

---

<sup>21</sup> ‘Stung by the splendor of a sudden thought.’ (quote from) Robert Browning. *A Death in the Desert*. (1864:59)

<sup>22</sup> The “Parousia” refers to the second coming of Christ - signalling the end of time.

<sup>23</sup> I am reminded here of the fervently religious parents of the main character in Zadie Smith’s book *White Teeth* who always had their suitcases packed- ready for the imminent Day of Reckoning.



## *Time*

The idea of time as an indefinite series of nows was built upon in the presented sound piece. This work comprises of three speakers, one of which emits the regular concatenation of a metronome, repeating itself over and over again, each beat indistinguishable from the last. This refers to Graham Gussin's idea that 'if all is the same over and over, then nothing is distinguishable; deprived of a means to measure of the ability to tell one from another, one point from the next, we slip, merge into an enveloping sameness and lose our place' (Gussin, 2001:11). The sound emitting from the second speaker is made by repeatedly drawing the symbol for eternity ( $\infty$ ) in chalk on a blackboard. Looped every forty minutes the sound again like the metronome is indivisible and all embracing. Situated between these two renditions of infinity lies a hybrid of both sounds - the punctuation of the metronome and the constant looping of the figure  $\infty$  combined- is the sound of me writing in chalk on board. I include the sound of me writing for the following reasons; firstly it reiterates the idea of presenting what is normally withheld to the viewer. People may easily forget that the artist is often called upon to not only make the work but also write and talk about its engagement in a wider theoretical framework. Secondly, it embodies the structural elements of time (significance and discontinuity) referred to by Heidegger. Significance is demonstrated through literary means symbolically by exclamation marks, "parenthesis", **bold type**, (brackets), CAPITALS, and though in this work one cannot see these signifiers they are still inferred through sound. Similarly speech or writing without pauses or full-stops would be nonsensical, as Heidegger states 'silence is not the opposite of speech but one of its essential modes'<sup>24</sup> (Dastur, 1999:33). Indeed the full stop or pause is not only necessary in making sense, but also in adding weight or meaning to what is said.

I once taped a casual dialogue. People were talking without knowing they were being recorded. Then I listened to that tape and thought how beautifully it was written and acted. The logic of the characters movements, the feeling the energy - how tangible it all was. How euphonic the voices were, how beautiful the pauses, and Hemingway's stylistics seem pretentious and naïve in comparison with the way that casually recorded dialogue was constructed (Tarkovsky, 1986:65).

## *Space*

Empty spaces have been a recurrent theme to this body of work since its inception. Initially putting my work up against animated media (which I saw as carrying the viewer along a linear horizontal narrative). I attempted to "pull" the viewer in through *depth*, resorting to transparent and semitransparent media such as wax and glass to achieve this. I likened such attempts to Brian Eno's interest in film scores, which he saw as music with its center missing, as the film itself is the music's center. Eno states 'If you just listen to the music alone without seeing the film, you have something that has a tremendous amount of space in it, and that space is important, because it's the space that invites you as the listener into the music. It sucks me in that kind of space'<sup>25</sup>. My interest in the space created by silence, evolved into whitewashing identically sized

<sup>24</sup> 1. 'Keeping silent and hearing are said to constitute essential possibilities of discourse. To keep silent has nothing to do with being dumb, and as a mode of discourse it can make one understand better than words could, for the articulation of disclosedness can also take place in keeping silent.' Quote by Heidegger. (Dastur, 1999:33)

2. 'Under all speech there is a silence that is better, silence is as deep as eternity, speech is as shallow as time'. Quote by Thomas Carlyle, *Essay on Sir Walter Scott* pg. 190

<sup>25</sup> Quote From Interview with Brian Eno on 'Paul Merton's Hour of Silence Interview' 01/01/95. 1FM. (Obtained online) from <http://www.nwu.edu/music/eno/thursaft-2.html>



Fig. 11, Lisa Munnelly. *Swing and white square*. 2003. Slide.



rectangles onto various locations around town. Situated in graffitied alleyways, carpark, bus stops, playgrounds I personified them as the person who stands alone in the corner at the party, useless at introductions, enviously watching the billboards and advertisements engage the crowd with their one liners. The perplexed reactions they received from passerby's is echoed by David Pectorius's observation that 'what viewers find so traumatic about the monochrome is not that there is nothing to it but that the nothing it presents is rendered- rendered just enough so that it can simultaneously tempt and inhibit us from seeing something represented'<sup>26</sup> (Pectorius, 2001:69).

The tension created by the white squares' refusal to divulge, became another strategy to hold the viewer's attention. In utilizing video footage to capture long shots of little or no action, I saw a way to exaggerate this potential of frustration, expectancy and curiosity<sup>27</sup>. One associates such media with happenings and events as illustrated by David Hockney's comment that 'the media we use find it easier to show Rome being burnt than being built' (Joyce 1988:169). My video footage on 'The fullness of Emptiness' presents to the viewer an empty white space, the accompanying sounds (from outside of the frame) discussing where best to erect cameras, lighting supports, etc in relation to the space -alerts the viewer that what they are witnessing is not a paused image but a real time feed. In presenting what is normally denied to the viewer (in this case, aspects such as; feedback from others, how equipment works, the true time of set up etc) one could argue I am concerned with the element of truth yet paradoxically, the whole set is one of staging. It is theatrical. I am in effect directing, (an act Tarkovsky earlier described as sculpting in time) and the materials have become my actors. The material in this case is a large amount of charcoal dust, which is (eventually) dropped into the white space from up high, out of view. The script is such that the dust should fall, at first appearance like a gestural sweep, the first bold dash on the white ground of the canvas, but should then expand and lose definition like the intentional smudge one adds to suggest weight and mass. This expansion should continue until it envelops the entire ground and an ambiguity is created- that what is full appears as empty<sup>28</sup>... then a quiet fade out please, with the last shot being the main character lying inert on the floor.

### *The pressure of nothing...*

To draw a line on a blank piece of paper activates and affects the paper in itself, as is evidenced by John Berger's observation;

I now began to see the white surface of the paper, on which I was going to draw, in a different way. From being a clean flat page it became an empty space. Its whiteness became an area of limitless opaque light, possible to move through but not to see through. I knew that when I drew a line on it- or *through* it- I should have to control the line, not like the driver of a car, on one plane: but like a pilot in the air, movement in all three dimension being possible. Yet when I made a mark,

<sup>26</sup> 'One artist in the history of art making a white square is not so annoying for many people. They draw the line at more than one doing it. Repetition in art is bad enough, they think. Artists should be original and always think up new things. But repeating nothingness is beyond the pale.' Matthew Collings. *This is Modern Art*.

<sup>27</sup> Heidegger posits that curiosity is characterized by a craving for the new that derives to actualize a possibility and to extricate itself from waiting.

<sup>28</sup> On the potential *fullness of emptiness* Gilles Deleuze talks about the empty spaces in his curriculum vitae: 'If you want to apply bio-bibliographical criteria to me, I confess I wrote my first book fairly early 1991, on, and then produced nothing for eight years. I know what I was doing, where and how I lived during those years, but I only know it abstractly, rather as if someone else was relating memories that I believe but don't really have. It's like a hole in my life, an eight-year hole. That's what I find interesting in peoples lives, the holes, the gaps, sometimes dramatic, but sometimes not dramatic at all. There are catalepsies, or a kind of sleepwalking through a number of years, in most lives. Maybe it's in these holes that movement takes place. (Gussein,2001:21)

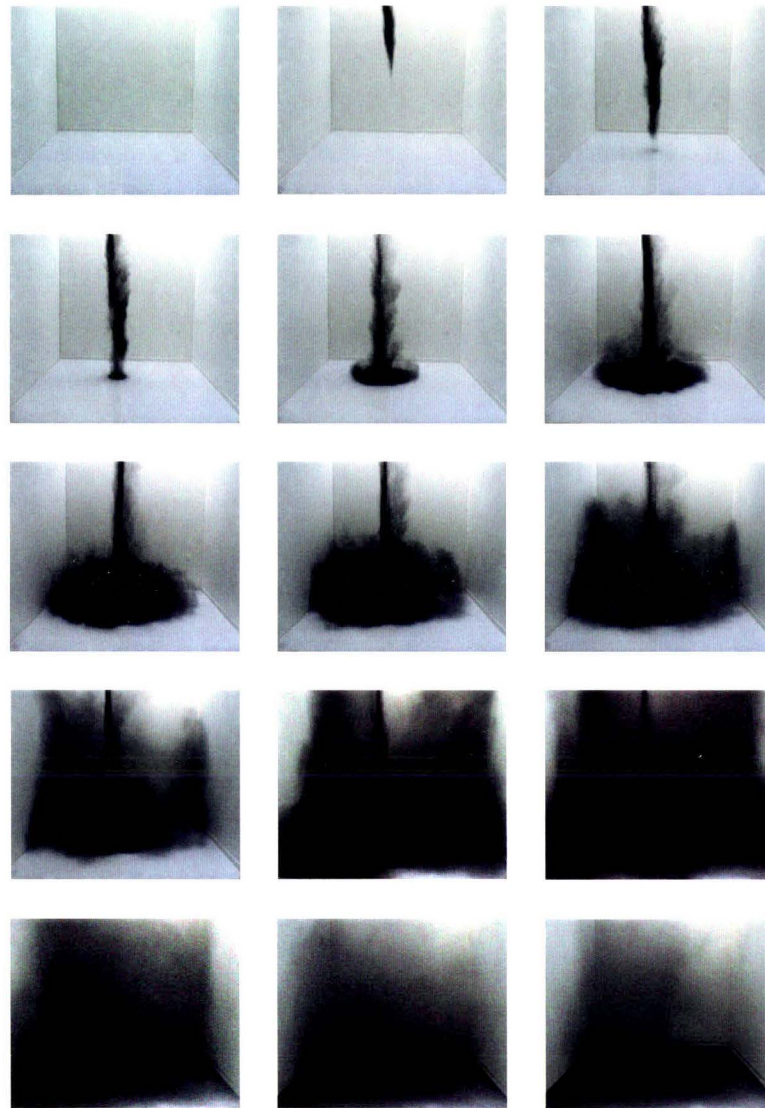


Fig. 12, Lisa Munnely *Drop Sequence*. . 2003.Digital Still.



somewhere beneath the ribs, the nature of the page changed again. The area of opaque light suddenly ceased to be limitless. The whole page was changed by what I had drawn just as the water in a tank is changed immediately you put a fish in it. It is then only the fish you look at. The water merely becomes the condition of its life and the area in which it can swim (Berger, 1972:167).

In the dropping dust footage the empty room acts as a substitute for the blank page, and the tension created through the extreme eventlessness of the shot parallels the pressure felt by the artist faced with a blank canvas. In his 1984 essay 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde' Lyotard raises this issue. He begins by reiterating Gadamer's philosophy that words already pronounced are not the last words: 'the school, the program, the project - all proclaim that after this sentence comes that sentence, or at least that kind of sentence is mandatory, that one kind of sentence is permitted, while another is forbidden' (Lyotard 1984:198). He claims that this also holds true for painting and in this respect there is little difference between an avant-garde manifesto and a university curriculum:

Both are options in respect to what they feel is a good thing to happen subsequently, but both also forget the possibility of nothing happening, of words, colors, forms or sounds not coming; of this sentence being the last, of bread not coming daily. This is the misery that the painter faces with a plastic surface, of the musician with the acoustic surface, the misery the thinker faces in the desert of thought and so on' (Lyotard 1984:198).

I personally encountered this "misery" that Lyotard speaks of in my initial crisis of *what* to show to represent time. In redirecting attention onto procedural rather than pictorial means I give form to Asger Jorn's<sup>29</sup> suggestion that action art reduces art to an act in itself, that the work of art is a mere trace and in which there is no more communication with the audience, 'this is the attitude of the pure creator who does nothing but fulfill *himself* through the materials for his own pleasure' (Harrison 1992:709). Thus the earlier works such as 'Mother Board' where I laboured, with my back to the world and face inches away from the picture plane were solely for my own benefit, the work, a "working through" the crisis of *what* to show – to *present* further questions rather than *represent* an answer. The latter work (such as the dropping dust footage) in contrast, sees me step back, rather than blocking the picture - I am now nowhere near it, repositioned behind the camera, all is set up for how it will be viewed by the audience.

These two works (the former adopting a formalist approach, the latter theatricality) reiterate my earlier point of playing with both modern and postmodern ideologies, illustrating Lyotard's statement that 'the artist attempts combinations allowing events' (Lyotard 1985:206). Lyotard discusses such a shift from creation to reception in *The Sublime and the Avant-Garde* stating that the question is no longer 'how does one make a work of art? But what is it to experience an affect proper to art? (Lyotard,

---

<sup>29</sup> Asger Jorn (1914-1973) Artist involved in early stages of the Situationist International and closely allied to Guy Debord. Noted texts: *Forms Conceivable as Language* (1949) & *Detourned Painting* (1959). Originally quote from: *On the passage of a few people through a rather brief moment in time: The Situationist International 1957-72*. Cambridge, MA & London MIT Press 1991 pg. 140-42.



(Wednesday 29th)  
#7. My name is Sacha + I have been drawn into illegal art terrorism acts by the cover of darkness and completely motivated. What seemed to be a chill night out at Indigo quickly degenerated into standing still, shivering. Sacha complete with USAs blackland + bottle of beer.

Lisa came + physically dragged me from my cosy perch + even cosier chat with cute boy onto sub-zero Wellington streets. Lucy my picturate had fallen over walking up hedges stairs so was relieved to run along with us.

Art Attack #1 was outside small scruffy greasy panel beaters (I think?) and once blackland in place, the photo shoot began.

I was chief lookout. Bloody hard. Couldn't bloody see my own hand in front of my face, but I was fixed at my assigned position. Spent majority of time lying canno-style on footpath sipping beer + taking arty angled photos of Lisa's painted arse. Nerve came along. Feet quite let down. Then bowed. The Squares are rather large. And very white. According to Mikel (Lucy's Shag) this means "calm - inner sanctum".

Whatever.

Art Attack #2 was more daring. A bus stop outside Polytech on Wallace St.

Art Attack #3 was even more - the car park outside Indigo on Cuba Street. Lots of degenerate folk for me to keep my eye on. The photo shoot was in full swing even though I had lost the use of my hands through frostbite. Since I was becoming grumpy + abusive as the booze was being taken from my system, Lisa promised triple single mums to aid flogging interest. Worked a treat.

Approached by dumb guy. Tried distracting his rapid advance with a barrage of in decent insults but this proved only encouraging. A truly dumb specimen of manhood.

Chose to scowl at him threateningly while he chatted up Scottish flatmate with such memorable lines as "You from Sweden?" "Romania?" "Iceland?" etc till she screamed

"Fucking Scotland, you moron!" and he replied that he was getting to that. Humm. Undeterred by my menacing looks, Dumb Guy asks Lucy to watch the sunrise with him. Then he disappeared. Or maybe I blacked out? I'm pretty sure nothing sinister happened.

After waking up choking on my own dribble I decided to 'capture' artily the completed large white square. Walking backwards with now gangrenous fingers clutching camera, I tripped over a palette thoughtlessly discarded with no thought of the danger, and sustained severe bruising to right buttocks. I still bear the scars.

Kies too drunk to pick myself up so rolled aimlessly for a while, while the girls had a right laugh.

Someone must've picked me up since I was soon justly rewarded with a triple single mums.

Whatever.

Sunday 2ND June

Bloody Hell! We've been cornered into it again. Is this Art? What's the point? It's definitely not inner sanctum - fah! White bloody squares.

Lisa + I take Lucy to airport - watch to make sure she gets her uzi and heroin through metal detectors - all fine. She's finally going. In sad. To cheer me up Lisa drives me to Farmers to freeze arse off again. It's not working. Now I'm grumpy as well as depressed. And sober. Sorry state of affairs but one must stick by ones friends. Even if they are bordering on some pathological illness relating to squares.

Lisa begins measuring but soon realises she won't be able to reach the top corner. Abandon project.

Next site in alleyway between Able Smith + Vivian. Square must be positioned over graffiti between 2 windows. Lisa soon realises she won't be able to reach top corner. I suggest pulling car close + painting from rooftop. We abandon project.

Back to school to grab step ladder. I begin to complain about lack of vodka. I begin to wonder if I have drinking problem. Abandon this thought.

Alleyway goes without hitch - I begin writing this rubbish to slap brain from cackling. Capture drunk - winning photo. Another car pulls into alley. We escape uncaught! Back to Farmers. I ignore Lisa + watch a courier driver watching us. It passes the time. Hard to tell if the square exists against blandness of wall.

Perhaps this is more "inner sanctum"? Lisa getting excited by thought of walking thru town + spotting her squares. I announce "This is not Art. It's ego!" She appreciates my candour.

Off again in the love wagon - not before nearly driving over a taxi - to Frank Kitz Park. Plan to paint square on hill. Now this appeals to me. Abandon project. Grass too lumpy. Fah. Artists these days lack the iron constitution. Doesn't help that Lisa is a cow-hugging vegetarian freak. Toughen up!

Lisa has a Plan B - damn - thought whisky might be it but no. Some steps into sea instead. Pass by fountain at lagoon - wee firm Seminated teen frolicking in suds. Lisa + I get all excited. Take another prize winning shot. Pride soon dampened when realise I have to walk to next site. Put my foot down. To no avail. Decide that steps too wet. Choose damp spot under children's swings instead. Lisa hopes that the patterning of tiny feet will muck the square. Yay.

Loads of teens loitering about. Staring. Lisa has cunning plan to spray paint square. Lucky as I'm nervous about the amount of people about. Group of state boarders watch from a distance. Get a job!

I complain that it's too patchy. The stakos move on. I complain that the paint smells funny. I think I'm getting head ache. All this in the name of Art. Whatever.

Fig. 13, Sacha Childers. Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June. 2003. Written text.



1985:203). He contends that the idea of the sublime disrupts the traditional harmony of a technique-based model taught in the Academy and appreciated by an aristocratic public. The avant-garde, in resisting or confounding sense, perception and the consensus of taste, thus enables reason to become the primary means of enjoyment 'it is in the aesthetic of the sublime that the logic of the avant-garde finds its axioms' (Lyotard, 1984:77). Thus it is the effect on the viewer that lends the sublime element to the avant-garde as the 'method behind the madness of Avant-Garde is incomprehensible' (*ibid*:79).

Lyotard's point on the inability to comprehend is illustrated by the comment written by a friend I roped into painting the white squares (mentioned earlier), 'one must stick by one's friends even if they are bordering on some pathological illness relating to squares...' (Sacha, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2003). Indeed the reaction from friends to the direction my work has taken over the course of my candidature has been mainly one of confusion. Commenting on the *figures* rendered in charcoal, 'I wish I could draw like that' whilst the boards covered in charcoal provoked 'but why? Anyone could do that?□'.

Avant-garde art, exemplifying the novatio sublime<sup>30</sup>, is the possibility of infinite experiment and development, which, by being virtue of being infinite, is itself unrepresentable. The nature of art in other words becomes problematic. Painting, for example, is no longer a mere reflection of the socio-political and religious order of things; rather, it becomes solely a reflexive endeavor to determine what painting is (Crowther 1993:155).

The question of *what counts as painting* is explored by Stephen Melville in his essay 'Counting /As Painting'. In closing I shall refer to its main points in conjunction with my work. Melville suggests that 'if painting finds itself most fully only where it is most deeply in question it is just here that one might expect to find whatever measuring or discovery of itself painting is yet capable of' (Melville 2001:03). Throughout this body of work I have consistently asked questions as to what constitutes painting's essential elements. For example; I challenge the idea of art as demonstrating the technical skill of the artist by opting for laborious and repetitive marks, whilst the notion of divine inspiration is refuted through using set plans and procedures. Clement Greenberg's claim to the essentiality of flatness is negated by billowing clouds of dust, and the claim that a painting must at *least* be suspended, is teased by such dust which hangs for just a few moments... before falling. The argument that the art object must be just that - an object - is dematerialised through use of sound and lastly, facing my initial question 'how can painting withstand the innate attraction of the moving image' I have countered; why must a painting be static? I am aware that such denials of painting's essential attributes have been made before: Toroni's brush marks, Le Witt's pre set plans, Fontana's slashed surface, Morris's floor works and Turrell's light have all called into question such claims. Yet Melville's comment of 'painting as having no essence outside of history, thus gathering, dispersing and regathering itself at every moment' (Melville 2001:01) is fortuitously reenacted by my selection and handling of material. For Melville

---

30 .Lyotard points out there are modes of sublimity in art- different ways of emphasizing the unrepresentable alluded to by means of technique. He labels the Romantic striving for communion with nature or Absolute Spirit as 'melancholia'. 'Novatio' on the other hand places emphasis on the increase of being and the jubilation which results from the invention of new rules of the game, be it pictorial, artistic or any other'. (David 2003:03)

‘the crucial question is not what those minimal and so to speak timeless convictions are but rather what, at a given moment is capable of compelling conviction of succeeding as painting. This is not to say that painting has no essence, it is to claim that the ‘essence i.e. to that which compels conviction is largely determined by and therefore changes continually in response to the vital work of the recent past’ (Melville 2001:10).

The practice of art is a continually changing conversation, making grand claims one minute, poking fun at itself the next. Sometimes it stutters repetitively and sometimes it pauses uncomfortably. I have found myself to be involved in such conversation, and have surprised myself at times with the direction it has taken. Initially I envisaged this conversation would be full of grand statements, with my prose wittily illustrating current concerns, such as our media saturated environment (figurative works along the lines of Sherman and Doig’s narratives) yet I soon found myself at a loss for words. So I changed tack, I started talking...very quietly at first... to myself and after a while... I found my work was talking back to me. I wasn’t asking of it the sort of questions that required hard and fast answers, all I wanted in reply was a prompt, a promise, a glimmer of potential, a yet to be realized, something to chase. As Jean Dubuffet declared, ‘chances are quite rightly the game the artist hunts, with which he constantly calls out to, watches and traps’<sup>31</sup> (Harrison, 2003:604). What Tarkovsky would make of all of this searching I don’t know, but I suggest that what he so derisively calls the ‘inner emptiness’ of the ‘searching’ artist could be more accurately termed as an *openness*, an openness that does not fight, but rather embraces the unforeseen. As Gadamer so eloquently wrote; ‘the indeterminacy of existence means tolerating a world in which the things (subject matters) which concern us – meaningfulness, goodness, love – remain uncertain in nature and outcome’ (Davey 2003:132).

---

<sup>31</sup> Originally from Dubuffet’s *Notes for the Well-Lettered*. Paris 1946 pp.47-99.



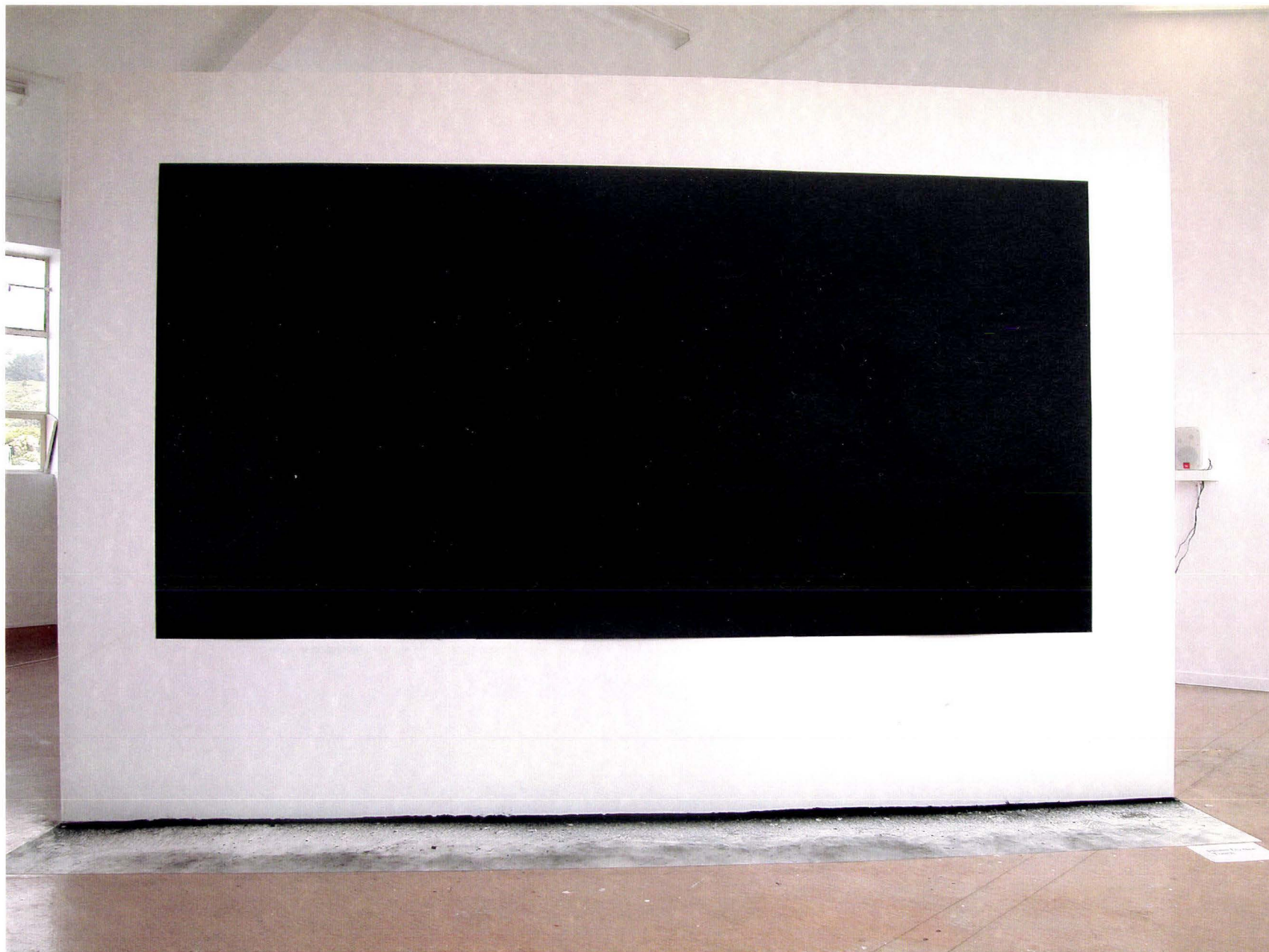
## *Appendices*

### Exhibition Images.

- Page 30 Lisa Munnelly. *Motherboard*. 2003. Compressed charcoal on matte board.
- Page 31 Lisa Munnelly. *Motherboard* (Detail).
- Page 32 Lisa Munnelly. *Motherboard* (View 2). 2003
- Page 33 Lisa Munnelly. *Motherboard* ( View 2, detail).
- Page 34 Lisa Munnelly. *The Fullness of Emptiness*. Dvd sequence. 2003.
- Page 35 Lisa Munnelly. *Eternal Discontinuity*. Sound Piece. 2003.
- Page 36 Lisa Munnelly. *Sweeping Vistas*. Digital Projection. 2003.

### Earlier Works.

- Page 37 Lisa Munnelly. *First Drop*. Performance. Digital Stills. 2003.
- Page 38 Lisa Munnelly. *The Pressure of Nothing*. Installation with room, stool, journal, pen and metronome. Digital still .2003.
- Page 39 Lisa Munnelly.  $\infty$  *Looped*. Chalk on blackboard. Digital still. 2003.
- Page 40 Lisa Munnelly. *Dusted Light*. Dust and light beam. Digital Still. 2003.
- Page 41-43 Lisa Munnelly. *Writing in Dust*. Coal dust. Digital still. 2003.
- Page 44 Lisa Munnelly. *Section*. Installation. White paint, charcoal. 2003.







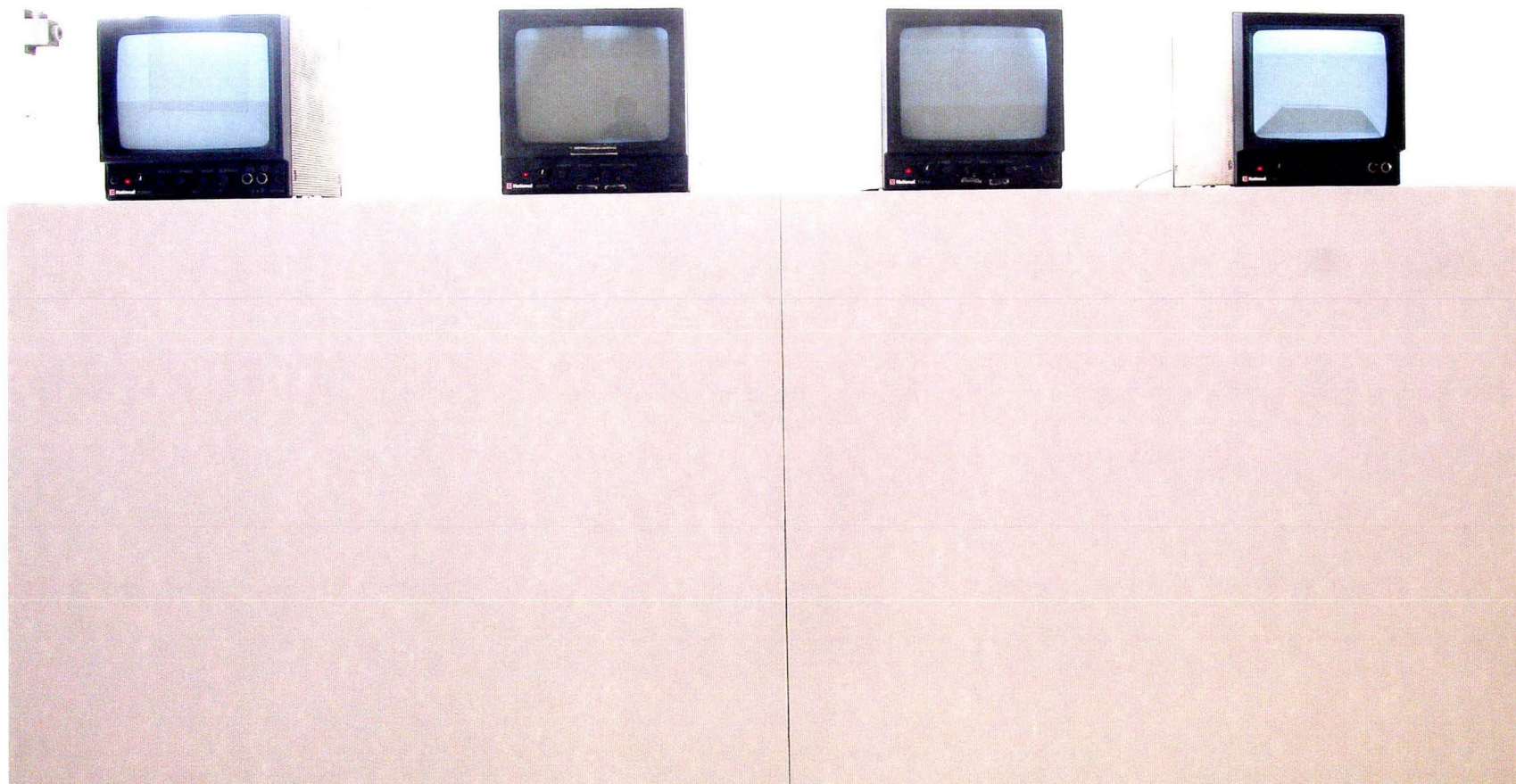




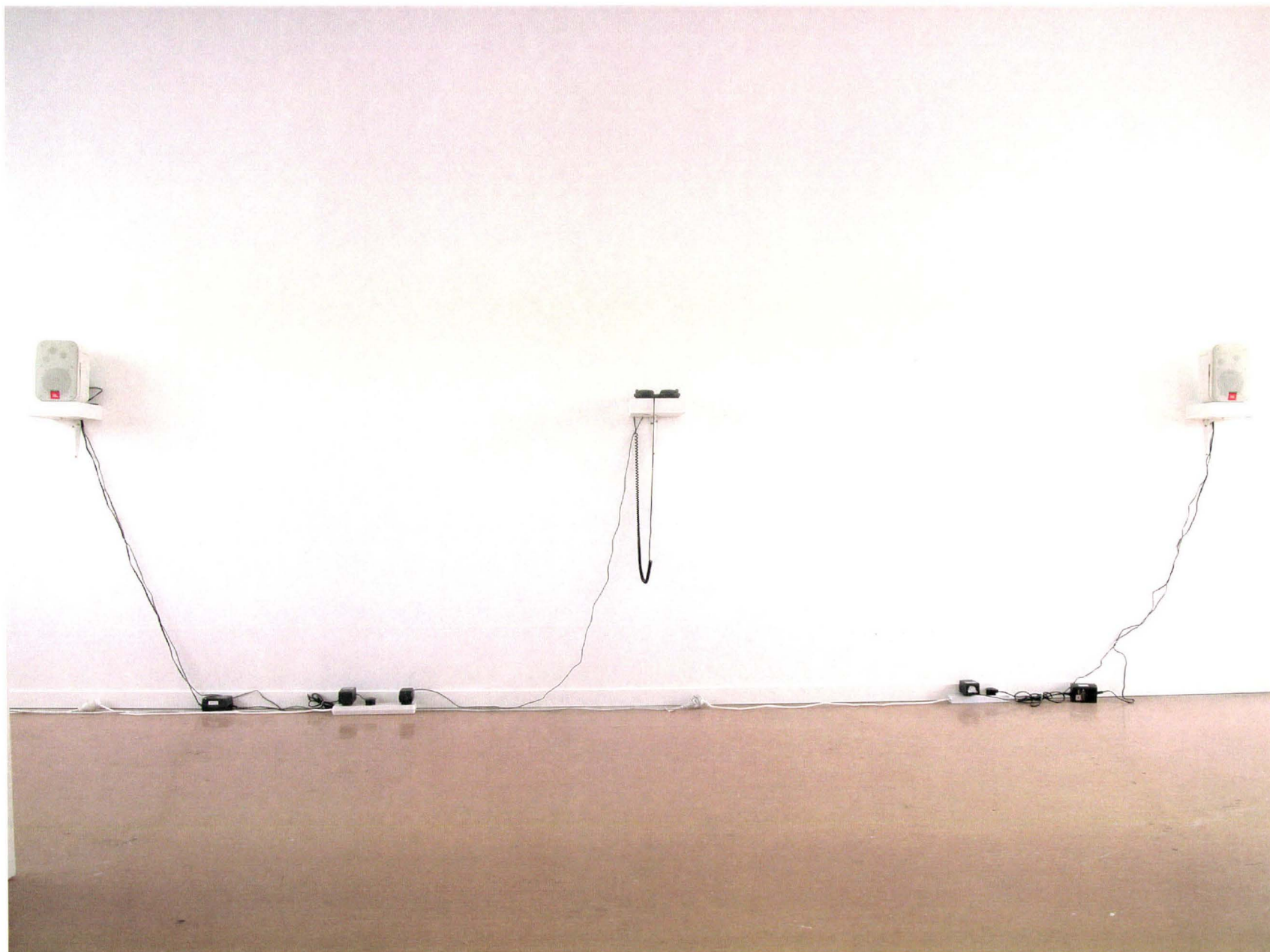


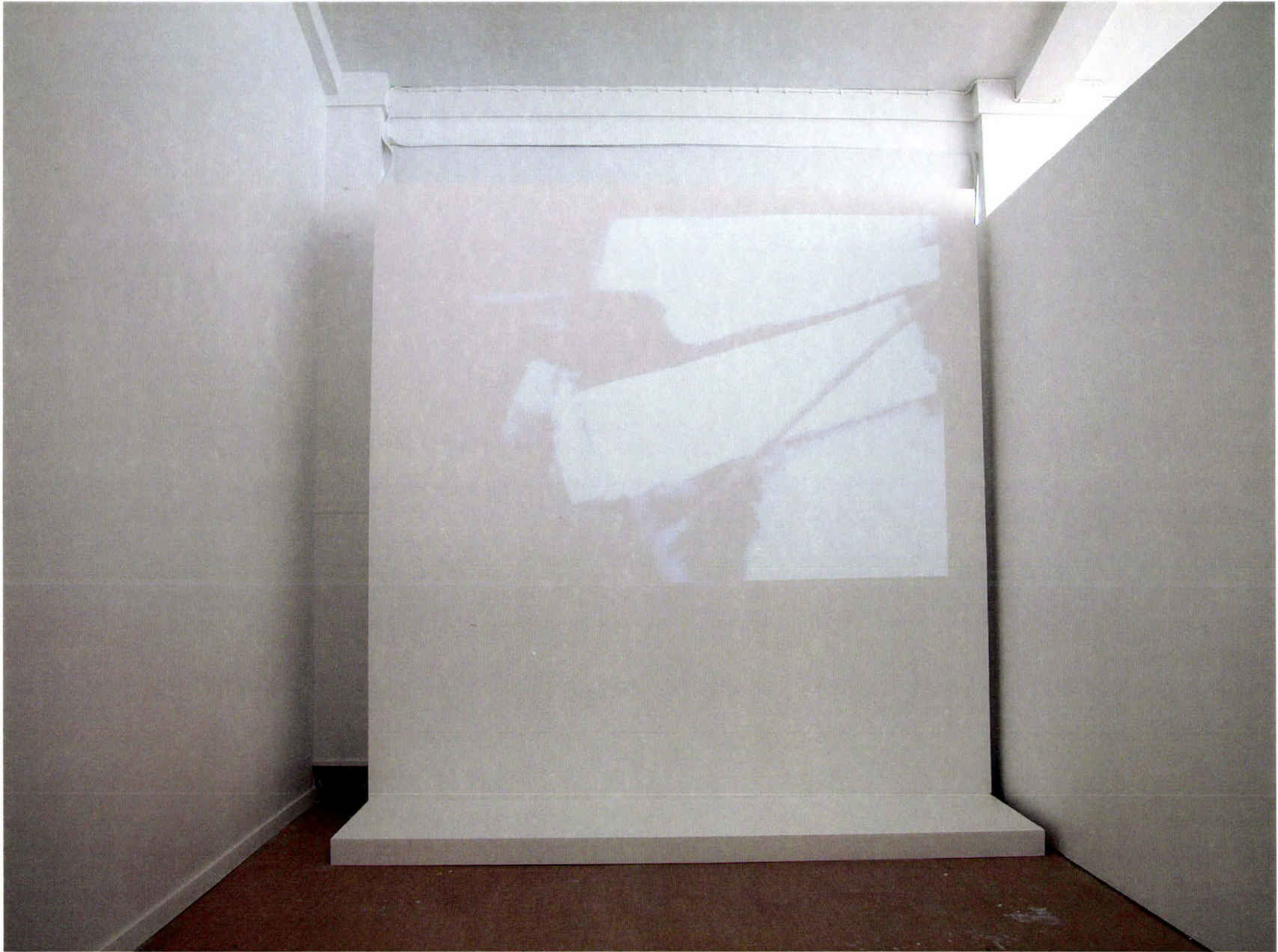




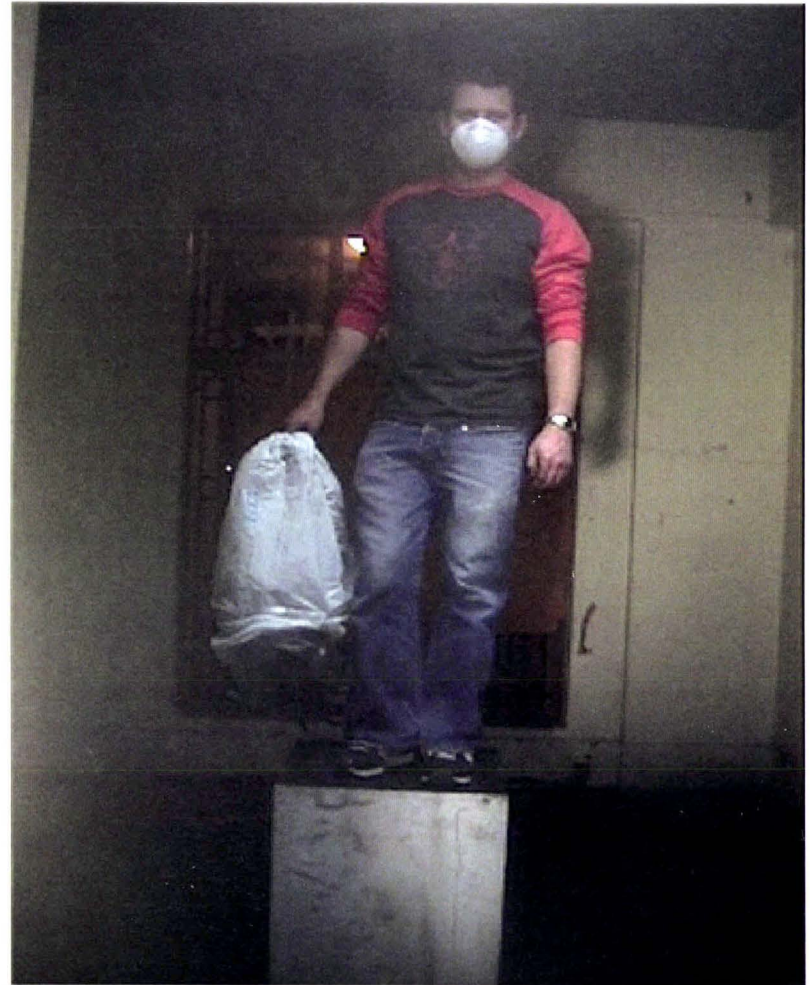




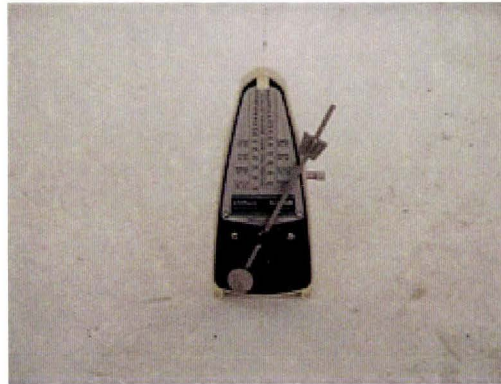
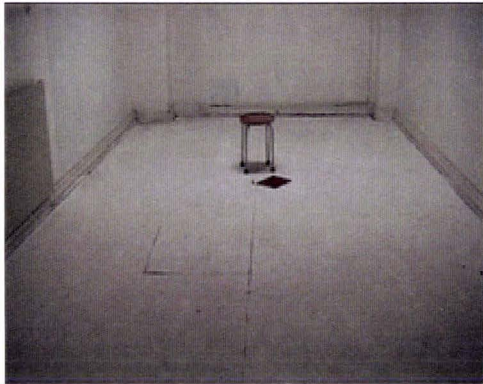


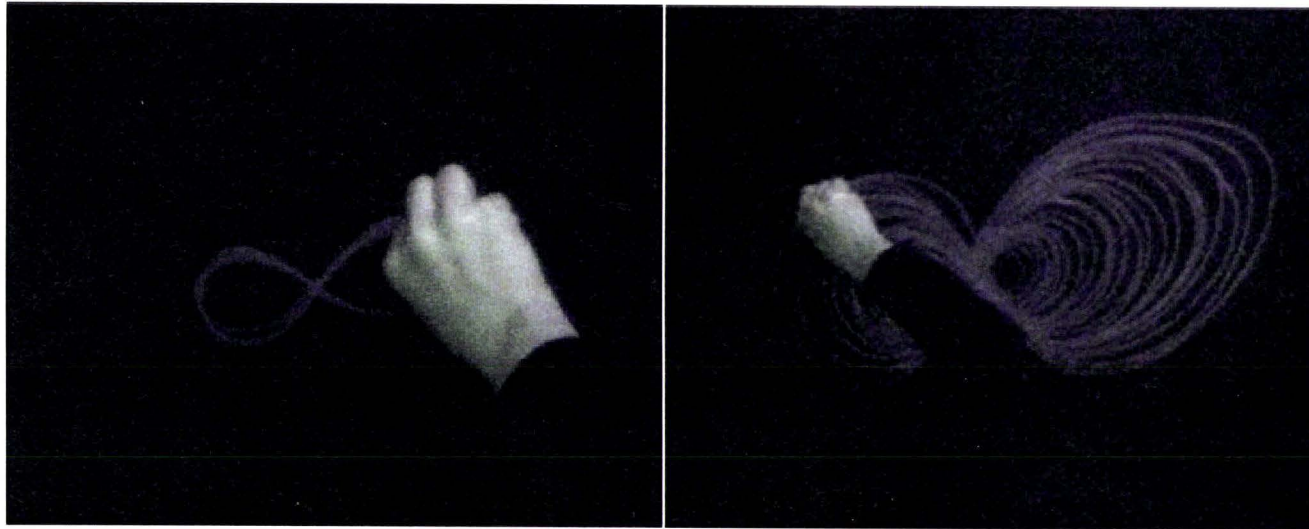


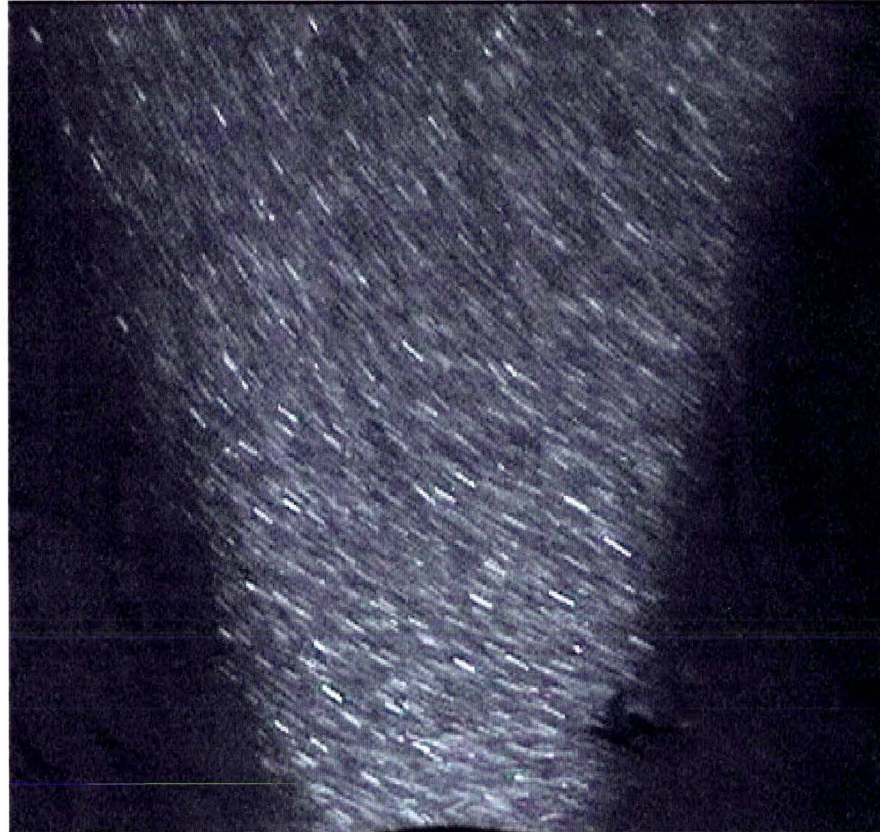




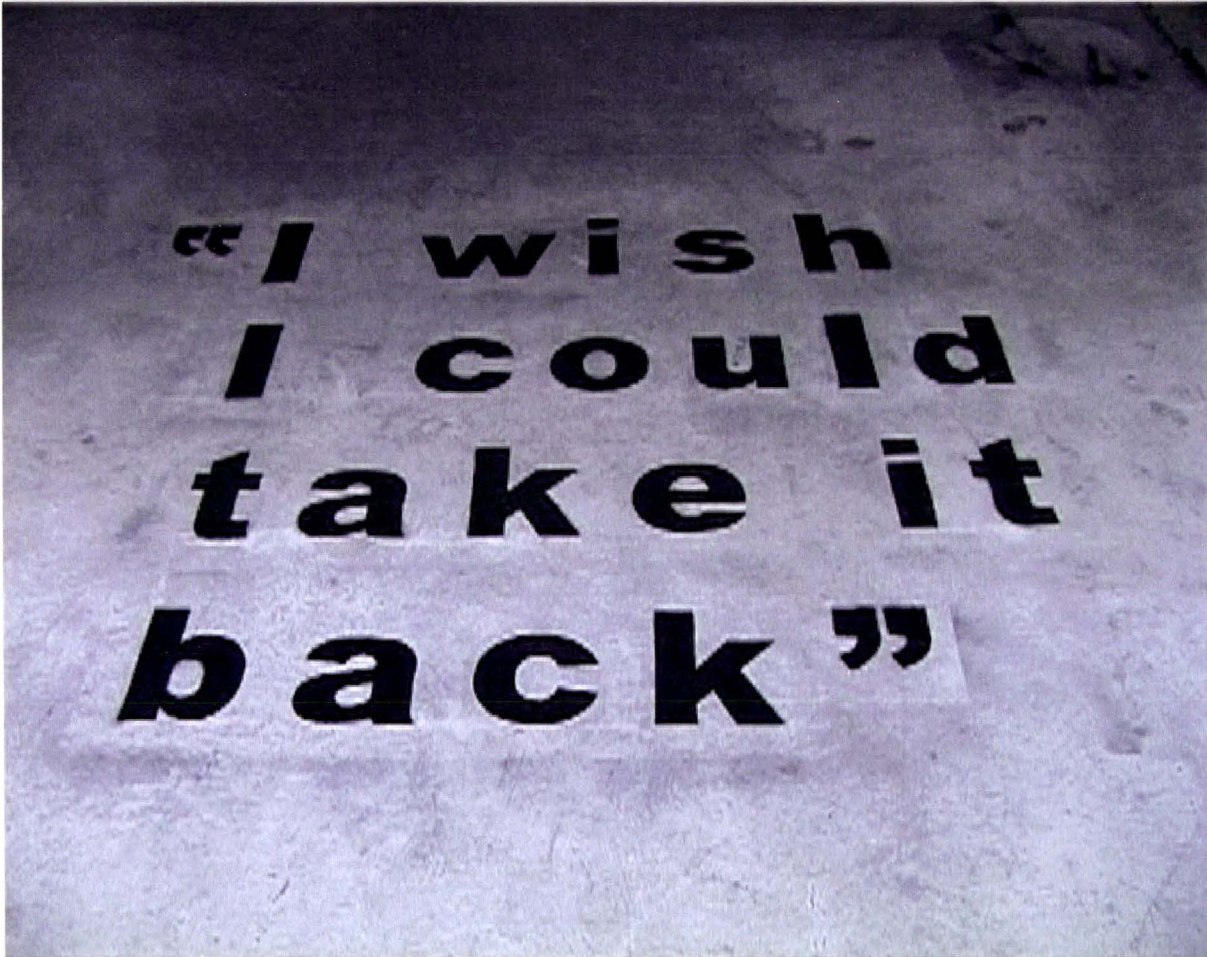




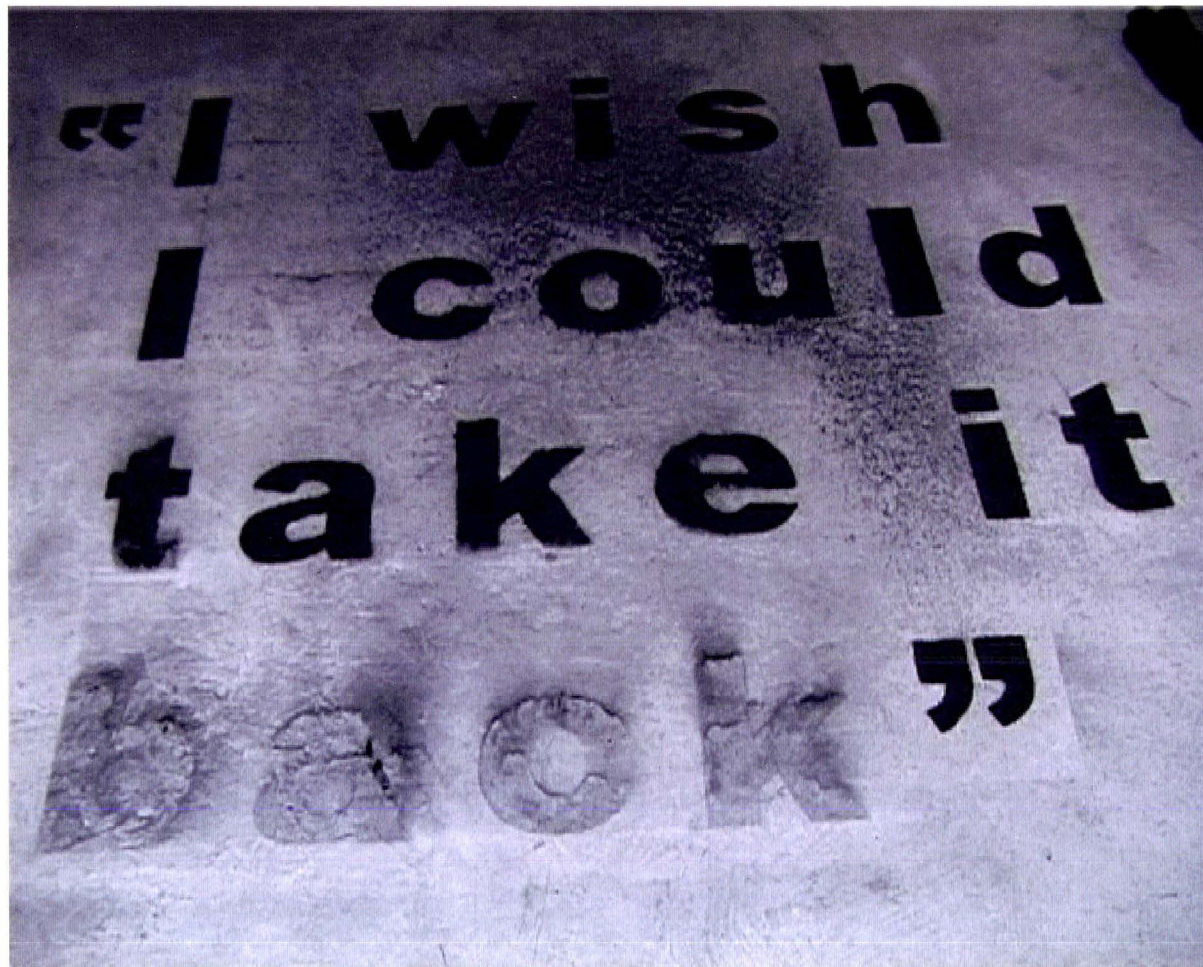




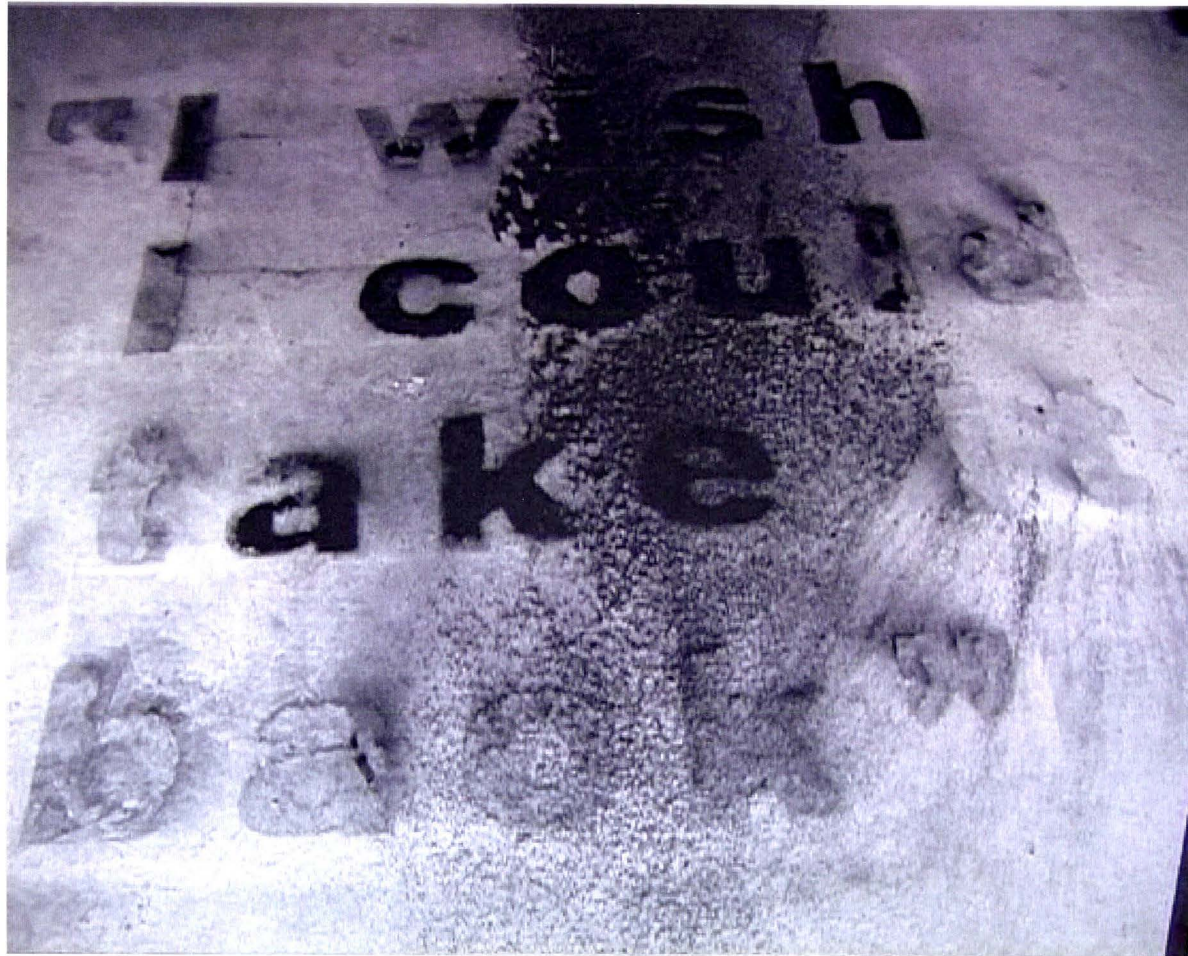


A photograph of a wall with a quote in large, bold, black letters. The quote is "I wish I could take it back". The letters are cut out and pasted onto the wall. The wall is a light, textured color. The quote is centered on the wall.

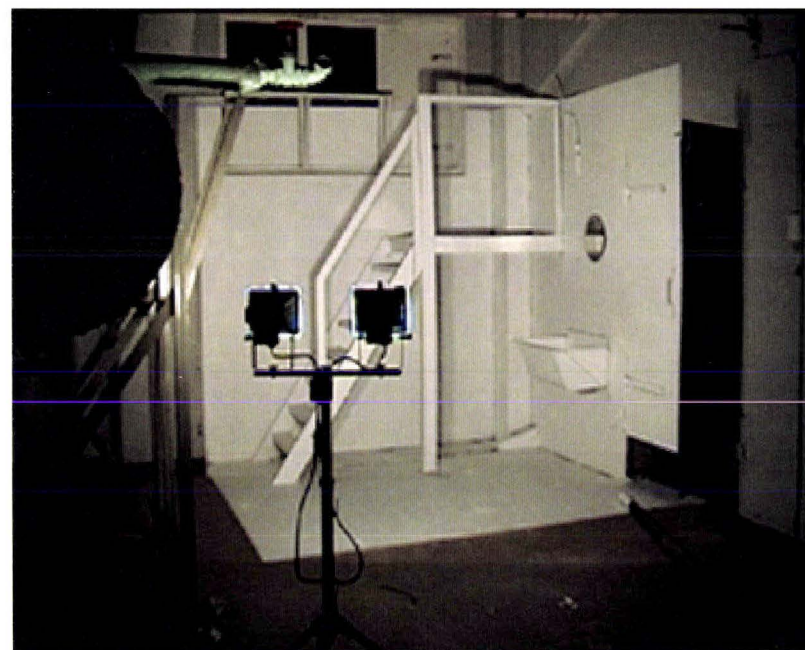
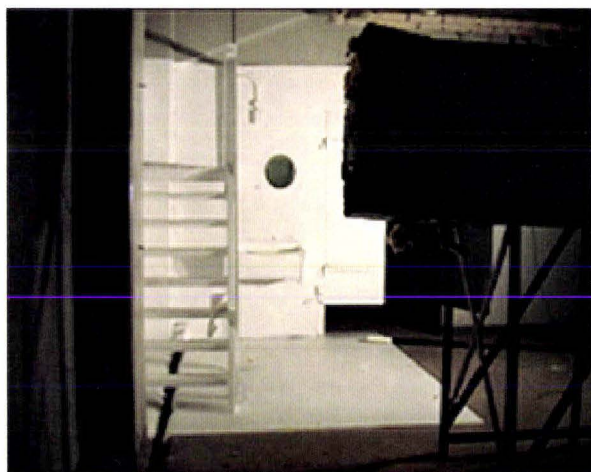
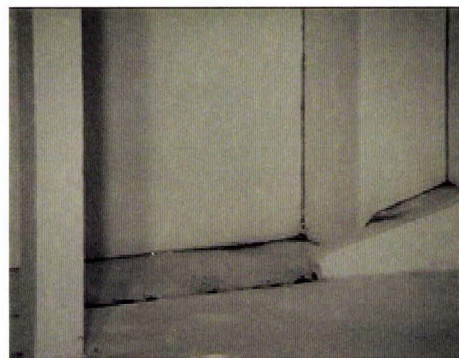
**"I wish  
I could  
take it  
back"**











## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Apfelbaum, P. (1995). Varieties of Abstraction: A Partial Taxonomy. *Abstraction. Journal of Philosophy and Visual Arts*. #5.pgs.86-89.
- Bachelard,G. (1969) *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Beckly, B. (2001). *Sticky Sublime*. New York. Allworth Press.
- Benjamin, A. (1989).*The Lyotard Reader*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford. Blackwell Publishers.
- Benjamin, W.(1970) The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. In H.Arendt (Ed.) *Illuminations*. London: Jonathon Cape.
- Berger, J. (1972). Questioning the Visible. Drawing. In *Selected Essays and Articles. The Look of Things*. Harmondsworth. Penguin Publishing.
- Bolla ,P. (2001).Serenity: Barnett Newman's Vir Heroicus Sublimis. *Art Matters*. Harvard University Press.
- Browning, R. (1904) *A Death in the Desert*. New York: Dutton. (Original published 1864)
- Burke, E. (1990). *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (originally published in 1757). Oxford and NY, Oxford University Press.
- Butler,C.H. (1999). *AfterImage: Drawing Through Process*. Museum of Contemporary Art. Los Angeles.: MIT Press .
- Carlyle,T.(1881). Essay on Sir Walter Scott. *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*. New York: Collier and Son Vol 4. Pg 190.
- Carriere, J.C. (1999). *Conversations about the End of Time*. Allen Lane: Penguin Press.
- Caygill,H. (2000). Reliquary Art: Orlan's Serial Operation. In Gill, C.B (Ed.) *Time and the Image*. Manchester University Press.
- Chilvers, I.(1998). *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*. Oxford , New York. Oxford University Press.
- Clippinger, D.(2001). Intertextuality. In Taylor,V.E. and Winquist ,C.E. (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
- Collings, M. (1999). *This is Modern Art*. London: Seven Dials.
- Crowther, P. (1993). *Critical Aesthetics and Postmodernism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Csikszentmihalyi, M & Robinson, R. (1990). *The Art of Seeing- An Interpretation of the Aesthetic Encounter*. Malibu, California: A joint publication of the Paul Getty Museum and the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. Paul Getty Trust.
- Dastur, F. (1999) *Heidegger and the Question of time*. New York: Humanity Books.
- Davey, N. (2003). Hans-Georg Gadamer. In Murray, C (Ed.). *Key Writers on Art: The Twentieth Century*. London & New York: Routledge.
- David, A. *Lyotard on the Kantian Sublime*. Retrieved 29/10/03, from <http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Cont/ContDavi.htm>
- Deleuze, G. (1991). *On Philosophy, Negotiations 1972-1990*. Columbia University Press.
- Dubuffet, J. (2003). Notes . In Harrison, C. & Wood, P. (Ed.) *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Malden & Oxford: Blackwell Publishing (Original work published 1946).
- Eliot, T.S. (1972 ) *The Wasteland*. In *Selected Poems*. London: Faber and Faber. (The Wasteland first published in 1922).
- Eno, B. (01/01/95). *Paul Merton's Hour of Silence Interview*. Retrieved 17/10/00 from <http://www.nwu.edu/music/eno/thursaft-2.html>
- Focillon, H. (1989) *The Life of Forms in Art*. New York: Urzone Inc Zone Books. (Original work published as *La Vie des Forms* in 1934).
- Forster, E.M. (1988). In. *Simpsons Contemporary Quotations. The Most Notable Quotes Since 1950*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Friedrich, Caspar David. (1815). *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*. 1815. Oil on Canvas. 94.8 x 74. 8 cm. Retrieved September 2, 2003 from [http://www.artchive.com/artchive/F/friedrich/sea\\_of\\_fog.jpg.html](http://www.artchive.com/artchive/F/friedrich/sea_of_fog.jpg.html). Original housed in Kunsthalle, Hamburg.
- Gardiner, P. (2001). Edmund Burke. In Cooper, D. (Ed.) *A Companion to Aesthetics*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Grieve, L. (2003, May). Anish Kapoor. *BBC ARTS*. Retrieved 09/05/03. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/news\\_comment/artistsinprofile/kapoor.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/news_comment/artistsinprofile/kapoor.shtml)
- Gussin, G. (2001). Out of It. In Gussin, G & Carpenter, E. (Ed.) *Nothing*. August and Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art.
- Harrison, C. & Wood, P. (2003). *Art in Theory 1900-2000. An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Malden, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1975). *Being. Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Heidegger, M. (1996). *Being and Time*. Albany: State University of New York. (Original work published 1953)
- Highmore, B. (2002). *Everyday Cultural Theory. An Introduction*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Jorn, A. (2003). On the Passage of a few people through a rather brief moment in time: The Situationist International 1957-1972. In Harrison, C. & Wood, P. (Ed.) *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Malden & Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.



Joyce,P (1988). *Hockney on Photography*. London: Jonathon Cape Ltd.

Lastra, J.(1997). From the Captured Moment to the Cinematic Image: A Transformation in Pictorial Order. In Dudley, A (Ed.) *Art and Cinema in the Age of Photography*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Lyotard, J.F.( 1984). Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism? In Bennington, G. & Massumi, B. (Trans) *The Postmodern Condition : A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lyotard, J.F. (1994) *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Mc Evilly, T. ( 2001). Turned Upside Down and Torn Apart. In Beckley, B. (Ed.) *Sticky Sublime*. New York: Alworth Press.

Melville,S. (2001). Counting as Painting. In Armstrong, P & Lisbon, L. (Ed.) *As Painting: Division and Displacement*. Wexner Center for the Arts. Ohio State University. MIT press.

Morley,S. (1998). The Friedrich Factor. *Contemporary Visual Arts: Focus on the Sublime*. #19. Pgs.26-33.

Opalka, Roman. *1965/1 - ∞ [Detail I-35327]*. 1965. Tempera on canvas. 196 x 135 cm. Retrieved 11/12/ 2003 from <http://www.jointadventures.org/opalka/index.html>

Pestorius,D. (Dec2000-Feb2001). *Monochromes*. Brisbane University art Museum

Reinhardt ,A. (1962, Dec). Art as Art. *Art International* , Lugano .vi. # 10.

Rorimer,A. (2001). *New Art in the Sixties and Seventies- Redefining Reality*. London: Thames 7 Hudson.

Rosler, M.(2002). Artist Questionnaire:21Responses. *October 100. Obsolescence A Special Issue*. Spring . pgs.7-12.

Sander,K.( Exhibition Catalogue) *Lintpick-up*.1998. Lint pick up, dirt particles. 10x 14.5 cm. Staatsgalerien Stuttgart. Gudrun Inboden (Curator). Hatje Cantz Publishers.

Sim, S. (2003) Jean Francois Lyotard. In Murray.C (Ed.) *Key Writers on Art: The Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge.

Skordill,B. (2001). Peregrination. In Taylor,V.E & Winquist, C.E (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.

Summers, D. (2003). *Real Spaces. World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism*. London & New York: Phaidon Press Ltd.

Tarkovsky,A. (1986). *Sculpting in Time- Reflections on Cinema*. London: Bailey Head Ltd.

Thomson,R. (1999). *The Book of Revelation*. London, New York: Knopf.

Walpole, H. (1929) *The Castle of Otranto*. London: The Scholartis Press. (Original work Published 1764)

