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.

Running-room in the Mangle of Practice: Contemporary art in the thick of things.

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.

Richard Shepherd

2011

Abstract

This document and the exhibited artwork it accompanies aims to perform a positive aesthetic of exile that enacts the dislocating and shattering strategies of spatial, temporal and imagistic montage but also attempts to open a caesura in today's relentless flow of images and thickening temporality. It joins with particular currents in engaged contemporary art to re-imagine what documentary form might be as an act of revelation not reduction. I have advocated in word and deed a structure of desire that is promiscuous without being possessive and accounts for a mode of subjectivity that temporally emerges from its material conditions in the thick of things. The corpus of experimental work has traversed a wide range of media and intentions but always with these issues in mind. I have produced small, tentative gestures in the city and ambitious proposals for affective maps in a mixed-media installation. I have gathered together an ambitious chorus of voices from across disciplines to share in common in a dialectical movement of resistance and accommodation that seeks to expand the realms of conceptual and corporeal possibility.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks and appreciations to Massey University staff and supporters, Martin Patrick, Eugene Hansen, David Cross, Maddie Leach, Jeremy Diggle, Ann Shelton, Richard Reddaway; to Mike Heynes for his indefatigable technical support and advice.

All my love and thanks and heartfelt gratitude to the people who shaped this project and me:

Erica Sklenars, Andrew Beck, Tim Barlow, Heather Diprose, Wendy Richdale, James Bowen, Colin Luxton, Zoe Rapley, Sammin Son, Daniel Boobyer, Claire Harris, Katherine Stanbury, Daniel Munn, Elizabet Elliot, Stephanie McKenzie, Kendyl Oates, Hans Edward Hammonds, Paul Gallagher, Adam Lound, Marissa Flowerday, Penny Kane, Johanna Freeman, Kate Walker, Jason Shepherd, Neville Shepherd, Lesley Shepherd, Kurt Martin, Jessica Grace Martine Morris and Conrad James Loney, words will not express.