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**Motor Memory: Re-working the Past.**

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## Abstract

Taking my own personal history as a starting point this paper will look at how we inherit culture and in turn shape it through the stories and objects that drive its formation. This extends into how these objects proliferate within our culture and the way in which the passing of History impacts on the way we view them and as a consequence ourselves as individuals and as a group. Identity is then passed on through generations through the act of storytelling, and this process is integral to this research paper.

This is also a personal journey, taking place in varying sites, from a rusting car hulk in a back yard in North Canterbury, to a University in Wellington and another rusted car, which has gone through a strange restoration. The Morris Minor has been embraced as a narcissistic object that I have chosen to double in order to explore my individual and wider national cultural history and identity.

One of the key themes of this inherited identity is largely based around Nostalgia for an ideal past. This ideal is a fiction, a layering of intended futures as well as a selective past. This works in the same way as the modern artistic preoccupation with gothic histories, but instead of a positive ideal we have the creation of a basement of horrors that lurks beneath the surface. Be it positivist idealism or Gothic inversion, one way of focusing on the way these fictions differ markedly from the reality of the objects existence, is to show the artifice of the stories told by enhancing the components of the story that are already exaggerated, for the Morris Minor this means getting as far away from its existence as a rusting hulk in the backyard as possible.

The longing for a past that may or may not exist, is less important as existing in reality but instead for what these fictions supply in their retelling. The concept of the Uncanny is integral to this retelling of memory, in that through a memories reanimation it can only approximate the original event leaving

gaps for circumspection and invention. This retelling necessitates a reorientation in the relationship between the teller of the tale and the listener and between the viewer and the object viewed.

The research culminates in the alteration of a Morris Minor to appear as one continuous surface. The intention of which is to engage with the differing versions of the objects past through taking an active part in its reconstruction as artwork with the aim of reassessment not only of my individual approach to the object but also the viewers.

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