

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.

Uncanny urges: the familiar made strange.

**An exegesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of**

Master of Fine Arts

At Massey University, Wellington

New Zealand

Adi Brown

2013

Table of Contents

Title page	1
Table of Contents	2
Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Illustrations	5
Bibliography	62
1: Early beginnings	7
2: This is not proper	9
3: Disrupting borders	16
4: Feminine interference	26
5: Disquieting humour	32
6: Further disturbances	35
7: Dead things	39
8: Unsettling materials	42
9: Uncanny urges and collections	50
10: This is not rational: methods and experiments	54
11: <i>The Gathering</i>	59

Acknowledgments

It is a challenging task undertaking a Masters in Fine Arts and one that is not completed in isolation. I would like to thank the following people.

My friends and family Pip Brown, Jo Morrison, Lisa Sinclair, Julie Lee, Nicki Stevens, Rebecca Holden, Maria Sainsbury, Lorraine Rastorfer, Malcolm Doidge, Anne Philbin who all encouraged my work, read drafts of my exegesis or supported me so I could write uninterruptedly for periods of time.

My peers and fellow masters' students, who welcomed me into the Massey University environment and introduced me to the School of Fine Arts graciously.

My supervisors Anne Noble and Bryce Galloway who provided assistance, critical feedback and contextual guidance.

COCA staff, David Cross, Maddie Leach, Heather Gailbraith, Mike Heynes, Jane Wilcox, Shaun Waugh, Peter Miles, Simon Morris, Martin Patrick, Sally Morgan, Eugene Hansen, Karin Van Roosmalen, Emma Febvre-Richards, Richard Reddaway, Tim Larkin.

Abstract

My research is centred on examinations of the uncanny. I am interested in strategies of the uncanny and the fetish, both Surrealist strategies and how these strategies create psychologically compelling images and objects. I perceive the uncanny in my work as the familiar made strange through eccentric juxtapositions of every day materials, objects and images. Through a diverse range of artists such as Pat Brassington, Sarah Lucas, Louise Bourgeois and Hans Bellmer I have explored key strategies of the uncanny to locate my own practice. I also draw theoretically from the works of Sigmund Freud, Nicholas Royle, Julia Kristeva and W.D. Winnicott. Methods of play are utilised to examine the possibility of an uncanny aesthetic through a process of bricolage whereby photographs and sculptural forms are constructed from various everyday materials available or on hand. Through this method I investigate how photographs and sculpture can operate as uncanny or fetishistic stand-ins for the body, which is always absent although a primary referent for my work.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. Adi Browns, Work space, 2012.

Fig. 2. Adi Brown, *Transitional Object Feathers*, 2012, feathers, tape, glue, MDF, plinth.

Fig. 3. Adi Brown, *Transitional Object Hair and budgie*, 2012, felted hair 80 x 40mm and taxidermy budgie, 80 x 40 x 40mm.

Fig. 4. Hans Bellmer, *La Poupée*, 1936/1938, photo-vintage print.

Fig. 5. Hans Bellmer, *The Doll*, Original 1935 and *The Doll*, recast 1965.

Fig. 6. Hans Bellmer, 1935, photograph.

Fig. 7. Adi Brown, *Out of body experience 1*, 2012, Digital print, 1200 x 900 cm.

Fig. 8. Adi Brown, *Out of body experience 2*, 2012, Digital print, 1200 x 900 cm.

Fig. 9. Louise Bourgeois, *Seven in a Bed*, 2001.

Fig. 10. Louise Bourgeois, *Temper Tantrum*, 2000, Pink fabric 22.9 x 33 x 50.8 cm.

Fig 11. Louise Bourgeois, 1997, *Passage Dangereux*.

Fig. 12. Adi Brown, *Wandering Womb*, 2012, bandages, glue, sticks, paint, feathers, 10 x 40 x 20 cm.

Fig. 13. Sarah Lucas, *Get Off Your Horse and Drink Your Milk*, 1994.

Fig. 14. Rene Magritte, *The Rape*, 1934.

Fig. 15. Sarah Lucas, *Nuds*, 1995, installation view.

Fig. 16. Sarah Lucas, *Nud 26* and *Bitch*, 1995.

Fig. 17. Pat Brassington, *Rising Damp*, 1995, Pigment prints, 85 x 63cm.

Fig. 18. Pat Brassington. *Boucher*, 2001, from *Gentle*, Pigment print, 60 x 43cm.

Fig. 19. Mike Kelley, 'Harems' from *The Uncanny*, 2004, Installation view, Tate Liverpool.

Fig. 20. Adi Brown, *Transitional object*, 2012, felted hair, 15 x 6 x 6 cm.

Fig. 21. Adi Brown, *Untitled Fetish*. 2012, Hair, cloth, rubber, organic material, paint. 22 x 4 x 4 cm.

Fig. 22. Adi Brown, *Transitional object 2 (Mummy)*, 2012, plaster, bandages, feathers, organic material, 40 x 50 x 40 mm.

Fig. 23. Adi Brown, Hair sculptures from *The Gathering*, 2012, Installation view.

Fig. 24. Adi Brown, *My very own private little Rrose Bush*, 2012, glass, fibres, organic material, white tac. 20 x 20 x 20mm.