ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

*THE SCULPTURAL, DISPLAY, LOCATION AND
FORGETFUL MEMORY*

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*A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia
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ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF *ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES*

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This thesis explores the nature of contemporary sculptural practices in relation to the broader field of installed sculpture (which deploy articulated, interrelated, but autonomous components) and in the context of recent approaches to both curation and display. The artistic work and attendant commentary constitute a response to the issues of sculptural agency and display raised by both the practice-based outcomes and key works of several contemporary artists: Gabriel Kuri, Gedi Sibony, Melanie Counsell, Marc Camille Chaimowicz and Michael Dean. In a number of exhibitions 'post-installation' practices and the function of 'montage' sculpture is examined. Through outlining the current landscape of sculptural production and medium specificity a progressive notion of the monument is established. The sculptural artwork is seen to retain a political resistance, as both art-object and thing in the world. An assessment is made of how sculptures produce space within and through their exhibition context, directly related to the production of space as a whole (a social morphology posited by Henri Lefebvre). Applying a conception of time in reference to spatial production opens up the artwork's potential to draw on complex codes of mnemonic function, which can potentially generate emancipatory agency from ideological issues in late-capitalism. Re-readings of key installed works by Marc Camille Chaimowicz and Mark Dean, through contexts derived from Nietzsche and Mark Fisher, reveal how sculptures can activate specific mnemonic codes, or collective memory. Such art works utilise a 'forgetful memory' – a reflexive process of positing, junking and reimagining relationships to cultural information. The body of artistic work produced for this research, intertwined with its critical reflection, makes an original contribution to knowledge by interrogating theoretically and experientially the potentials of 'the sculptural', as part of the plural production of art and exhibition-making. By means of practice and its outcomes, the research engages the current dynamics of spatial production and radicality of sculptural objecthood. The work examines the complex relationships between social memory and historicity, with which sculpture in an exhibition environment can engage.

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Thesis Introduction

Preface

This thesis is the result of a research project, which has taken the form of a body of work developed during several exhibition and residency-based projects. During these experiences I have developed dialogues with other practitioners and engaged with the specific context of each circumstance. As a result, the 'practice-based' research methodology is reflexive, moving between production, display, discussion, analysis and writing (as both a creative and theoretical outcome). The research project has offered me the opportunity to augment my object-based art practice, to include speculative reflections as an outcome, and inhabit the concerns of the project. Thus, the result is a synthesis of creative and conceptual outcomes; offering an original contribution engaged in forms of critical output.

This thesis takes the form of a document, including an introduction of the questions presented, and context for the research projects, three chapters – exploring the primary questions of the research – and a conclusion outlining the outcomes of the project. Embedded throughout are the relationships between the practice-based works I have undertaken.

At the start of each thesis chapter is a brief exegesis, mapping in the artwork I have produced, its display context, other outcomes and the questions the work has presented. The resulting text augments the concerns presented by the practical work undertaken. The works I have produced, indicated in the text, are also illustrated, referred to as (Doc. #), throughout. Having closely examined a number of contemporary practitioners' works throughout the thesis, illustrations are present and referred to by (Fig. #). I have included the published texts I have written during the research. These texts have been produced in response to the opportunities I have encountered, to explore the subject matter of the project alongside the production of other artworks (referred to in the text, via the Appendix).

Outline

In September 2010, as a result of a six-week-long residency in Chongqing, China, I produced the solo exhibition *End, Success or Wonderful Forever* (Doc. 11-17). The exhibition of sculptural and textual items hoped to augment specific renderings of a universal problematic of current spatio-temporal production – exploring the slippages of culturally specific materiality and iconography. Entering the large, white, high-ceilinged gallery, the viewer was faced with a conspicuous blue barrier – a partition wall dissecting the space. *Untitled (Wall)*, six metres long and just over human height, was covered in adhesive billboard posters, the colour tone graded across its surface. The colour was selected from found photographic adverts, having turned blue due to environmental duress. This was combined with a bluish-green, generated from sampling swatches of paint used on 1970s council housing developments, close to my home in London. In front of the blue obstruction were placed two low plinths, on top of which black and white photographs were placed. The first of the images depicted a worn badge, recognisably 1960s and American in origin – the pin showed the graphic of a mushroom cloud and the text 'the end'. The second photograph depicted a postcard of a local Chinese institutional building, its national flag spherically cut out to propose the production of a new badge. The images spoke of the temporal relationships to the production and affiliation of political iconography. At the rear of the gallery was placed, high up on the wall, a bright red rectangle. This work, *New Century*, was made from a strip of locally sourced floor matting, the sort someone may place below a sink in a domestic kitchen. Overlaid was red vinyl, cut with the motif of three interlocking rings, referencing a local supermarket logo, from which the work took its name. This echoed the exhibition's title, also appropriated from a local supermarket chain, although harder to translate – success or wonderful forever. Accompanying the displayed works was a printed multiple. One side of the handout showed a scan of the aforementioned 'end' badge, the other, a text, which stood in for a press release. Citing the song 'Helter Skelter' by the British punk group Siouxsie and the Banshees, a cover version from 1978 of The Beatles song, written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney (1968), the lyrics outlining a cyclical space of the romance of perpetual descent:

> 'When I get to the bottom
> I go back to the top of the slide
> When I stop I turn, go for a ride
> When I get to the bottom when I see you again – yeah

Well you maybe a lover
But you ain't no fucking dancer'
(Lennon, J. and McCartney, 1968)

Selecting and emphasising this lyric positioned my interest in exploring ideas of cultural unease, which Milan Kundera examines in his book *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984) (a text important to me during the development of this exhibition). Kundera states a description of modernity, which reveals the 'profound perversity of a world that rests essentially on the non-existence of return, for in this world everything is pardoned in advance and therefore cynically permitted' (Kundera, 1984, p.4).

In both my writing and art practice I have been concerned with articulating a critical discourse for how sculptural agency has purchase on addressing the conditions of contemporary cultural production in late capitalism through an exhibition context, of which the work *End, Success or Wonderful Forever,* produced in the first year of my research suggests. I see sculptural modality (objecthood and spatiality) as under stress, from its status within a pervasively plural production of contemporary art and the critical limitations of current discourse. Thus, my research assesses how utilising sculptural agency can engage with socio-political concerns, specifically the cultural production of space and social mnemonic functions.

Reviewing sculptural media-specificity, to purpose the term both in theory and practice, I analyse object-based exhibition processes from three angles. 1) A current landscape of sculptural production and its relationship to a progressive idea of the monument – aligned to a plural media age. 2) Assessing how sculpture produces space within exhibition-making and how this relates to the production of space in culture as a whole, in a growing international context. 3) How sculpture may interact with the 'political', through historicity, or, rather cultural memory – I analyse how the object-based, spatial and display tendencies of sculpture can function as a progressive 'forgetful memory', a dynamic, engaging contemporary culture.

My original contribution to knowledge is the production of a body of work, which interrogates a theoretical and experiential examination of the potentials of the sculptural, as part of the plural production of art and exhibition-making. By means of practice and the outcomes of that practice and research engages the current dynamics of spatial production and outlines the complex relationships between social memory and historicity, indexed to

sculptural and exhibition space.

Context

Boris Groys has stated contemporary art can be understood primarily as an exhibition practice (Groys, 2009). This must be understood in a European and North American context and may be increasingly challenged; it must also be clarified by stating the exchange of such a practice increasingly takes place through the dissemination of information through other means, primarily the internet. What the parameters of an exhibition are is continuingly in debate.

In the early part of the last decade the term 'space' was frequently used in art journalism and theory. The fervour around practices exemplified, for instance, by Rachel Whiteread, Gregor Schneider and Mike Nelson, with their use of narrativised locations, resulted in reviews and critiques abundantly referencing the term. A distinct shift has occurred in the last few years, moving away from foregrounding spatial concerns; resulting in a profusion of sculpture that has deployed 'everyday' materials and specific antecedent reference points and a subtle emphasis on form. In the words of curator and critic, Sacha Craddock, a type of sculpture that, 'use[s] found elements as if notes in a tune, the tune would collectively make a line, [there's] a notion of reading something perhaps, from left to right […] not to do with a sense of singularity […] all about the sense in sculpture of a possibility' (Craddock, 2011)[1]. Perhaps this shift is best internationally framed by the exhibition *Unmonumental – The Object in the 21ˢᵗ Century,* at the New Museum in New York in 2008 and its resulting publication. Yet, also is evidenced in the UK by artists such as Steven Claydon, Ian Kiaer, Alice Channer, Lucy Skaer and Seb Pantane; a non-exhaustive list. A specific example of this shift is the work of Sean Edwards, which I consider in more detail here. Edwards' work operates within what may be termed post-installation practice, acknowledging the singularity of the works and the exhibition's gestalt, this is done through producing a distinct economy within materials and media, carefully exercising the potentials of objects, still and moving image.

Spike Island's sizable, varied and industrial galleries dictate a viewer's passage through an exhibition. Sean Edwards' exhibition seemed to take this as a fundamental principle of the

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[1] This quotation is taken from Sacha Craddock, speaking as the chair at the ICA's *Trouble with Sculpture* panel discussion, 19 January 2011.

display of the work, collected together in *Maelfa* (2011) (Fig. 1). The exhibition was titled after a semi-abandoned shopping centre in Llanedeyrn, Wales – close to where the artist grew up. In gallery one, photographs were serialised in the work *Tea at My Father's House (part 1 to 13)*, like a dormant film strip. Spread over the gallery walls were four large black and white g*iclée* prints. The prints were adhered directly to the walls at various heights, depicting degraded details of surfaces, with a dusty toner finish. At the back of the space were four oval forms, expediently constructed from MDF and adhesive, leant against the gallery walls, making discreet reference to window frames. Through the linking second gallery space, one had to negotiate *The Reference*, a work looming overhead; a large informally produced plywood form citing an architectural volume taken from the project's stimulus (Fig. 2). This work acted like a Spielberg-esque action and adventure filmic prop, weighing overhead as you proceeded through the exhibition (Fig. 2). The final exhibition space was given over to a large projected high-definition video, with layered dense colours, depicting the surfaces absent from the previous sculptural forms. In the video work the camera silently and slightly shakily panned left to right, across the reflective surfaces of the deteriorating shopping centre (Fig. 3). This central piece in the exhibition evidenced the artist's interest in 'disappearing communities and failed utopian aspirations'.[2] The viewer encounters each work in Edwards' exhibition as singular piece, however they also unite to create a configured whole. David Trigg, in reviewing *Maelfa*, sees this as a paradoxical, present and retrospective space. Trigg further states the work is 'hovering at the intersection of architecture and memory' (Trigg, 2011, p.29).

Edwards' work explores the functions of 'sculptural' production and display. William Tucker, writing in 1969, presented a pertinent definition of sculptural capability. In his text, *An Essay on Sculpture* (from Studio International 1969), Tucker states: 'Picasso's *Glass of absinthe*, Boccioni's *Development of a bottle in space*, Duchamp's *Bottle Rack* revealed that sculpture could take both form and content from the object world [developing into] a sculpture that disown[s] the monumental […] an object among objects, privileged by its

unique configuration' (Tucker, 1969). Tucker's work and career is used here as a point of orientation for thinking of the current state of sculpture. British born, having studied at the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London, under Anthony Caro, Tucker's

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[2] This phrase is taken from the exhibition press release (2011).

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

work can be seen as distinctly recognisable as modernist in reference; exploring volume and form, his career spanned four decades (including a relocation to America in the 1980s). I am drawn to his writing as a practitioner because, much like the writings of artist Robert Morris, they evidence vigour for the function of a chosen medium. Tucker's writings are very much of their time, here they can be seen, I hope, as useful in their insightful phenomenological scrutiny of how sculpture has operated and can go against the grain of current conditions of medium that I lay out. I make continual reference to Tucker's writing to span a schism in sculptural discourse, and additionally, underpin the generational heritage embedded in the sculptural modalities.

Sean Edwards' exhibition may also serve to contextualise the way sculptural items produce space within an exhibition environment. His works, as objects, represent architectonic structures; gallery walls are transformed with surfaces and forms. I see such work as being 'post-installation'. Post-installation work draws on display mechanisms of installation practice and hopes for an exhibition to be seen as an entirety, yet the exhibition space retains its singularity and is not transformed into an alternate locale, as in an installation (work by *Ilya Kabakov may serve as an example of how installations create such alternate sites).*

In light of this I address how sculpture may act as props in such post-installation work. I review how the notion of sculpture as a prop interfaces with performative practices, video work and work that directly engages relationships to community. These concerns begin to align sculpture in parallel with 'the political', of which I take forward in Chapter 2, through addressing the specifics of spatial production and sculptural agency.

Whether exhibition space is sovereign or subject to the production of space of culture, is an important question. Edwards' subject matter engages this debate through his depictions of a shopping centre in the process of decay – ripe for regeneration. Henri Lefebvre stated in 1974 'the state was built on the back of old cities, and their structure and code shattered in the process' (Lefebvre, 1994, p.47). The example of Edwards' work presents the question of how the production of sculptural space augments these concerns. This is also bound to personal and collective issues of remembrance, as Edwards connects depictions of the site of having tea with his father and the representation of a communal architectural environment, invoking the past, in a complex present; a generational cycle. This may be

coded in a paternal sense, and the inheritance of sculptural devices, tropes or recitations. How the sculptural may activate such mnemonic codes is the final context of this thesis' research. How a dynamic space of a reformist partial loss of memory, embedded in some sculptural practices, may be examined and purposed, lies at the core of my original contribution to knowledge. This may be best contextualised by Paul Connerton in his 2009 book, *How Modernity Forgets*. He states:

> 'The current preoccupation with memory [in culture] is surely, paradoxically, in part a concerted effort of cultural discarding, an attempt to slow down the processes of this communicative burden, by retrieving a mode of reflection outside and in opposition to the world of accelerated information overload.' (Connerton, 2009, p.79)

This notion of locating concerns of sculpture to a cultural malaise, due to the surfeit of information, is of importance and Edwards' subject matter deals with this concern.

How a current reading of late capitalism impacts such concerns is also of great importance throughout this project. Mark Fisher contextualises a reading of a contemporary complex in his 2009 book *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*, where he maps the work of a number of key theorists, such as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, and Fredric Jameson, on to specific phenomena evident in politics, films, fiction, work and education in Britain today. Most relevantly in one of the book's chapters entitled *'…if you can watch the overlap of one reality with another': capitalist realism as dreamwork and memory disorder'* he specifically addresses cultural mnemonic processes. Fisher outlines how one may operate in a culture that is infinitely revisionist – creating a type of cultural memory disorder. In using this as a point of reference I explore how sculptural processes may make use of and augment such concerns.

The subject matter that has orbited my practice has regarded processes of translation from personal remembrance to collective/universal effect and how materiality can explore these concerns. The work I have produced, during the research, has been manifest in a number of key outcomes. The production of photographic works and three-dimensional pieces has been driven by exhibition-sited projects and I discuss these specific artefacts, as well as their capacity within the located projects. In addition, I have undertaken a number of curatorial projects, as a way to facilitate the questioning of some of the specifics of the concerns – orbiting these results are a number of writings I have produced throughout the research period. These works have been published in conjunction to the display of artworks, and

have been used to exploit a space adjacent to exhibition-making, where I can isolate subjects (such as regeneration, site and subjectivity) in relation to the larger concerns of the project (these texts are present in the thesis' appendix). Thus, the impact of this research is cumulative and has been tested out, through presentations, discussions and screenings, in national and international settings, through a number of residencies I have undertaken. The resultant body of work, again aligned to the discursive outcomes of a residency, intertwined and charged with the trajectory of this research – both in its subject matter and form.

The textual part of the thesis outlines the theoretical concerns directly read through onto a number of recent exhibition outcomes, by a number of key artists, exhibiting over the last three years, namely: Gabriel Kuri, Gedi Sibony, Melanie Counsell, Marc Camille Chaimowicz and Michael Dean. The works and exhibitions analysed were carefully selected from a greater number of exhibitions and chosen to access the contemporaneous concerns of media specificity, issues of subject and content. These examples are selected to highlight the importance of these concerns, through the diverse range of the practitioners' career spans. These reviews have not just been in the UK, as I have wished to align the debate to European concerns. Thus, I have reviewed works in Austria (Marc Camille Chaimowicz) and work (Gedi Sibony's) in the 2010 Berlin Biennial.

In writing the thesis, I have begun by examining the most contemporary sources, noting conferences/symposia, journal articles, reviews, on-line sources, exhibition publications and press releases in relation to more canonical, academic, theoretical references. Predominantly I have focused on interpreting theoretical work, which engages post-Marxist theory, although the review of Friedrich Nietzsche's text *Uses and Abuses of History* is an exception. This theoretical focus was considered important to delineate the conceptual grounding of the work, in line with the impact of such theory on contemporary notions of commodity, community and the production of space. The research has also taken in more subject-specific research in reference to memory studies and I have made use of texts from an anthropological context, specifically Paul Connerton's writings. My use of art theory has been focused on the writings of a number of sculptors – Robert Morris and William Tucker who have published timely, engaged texts, bound to media specificity. In line with this I have limited further references to theorists writing on sculpture and site such as Rosalind Krauss.

Methodology

As stated, this thesis surveys three main factors: 1) sculptural media specificity, 2) the current dynamics of sculptural spatial production, 3) the relationships between social memory and historicity, relating to sculptural and exhibition outputs.

The validity of surveying these factors is based on them having resulted from a specific research methodology. The project has involved a synthesis of practical research, through the production of artwork, throughout the research period. I consider the outcomes of writing, curating and display of objects with parity to one another; these outcomes have developed through studio practice. A process of testing-out has been a key part of the research methodology. I have done this through exhibiting, curating, presenting in residency scenarios, interviewing other artists, publishing and importantly collaborating with other artists/practitioners. All outcomes have prompted pertinent questions, delineated in the prefaces to each thesis chapter, discussing how the practical work/outcomes have generated theoretical analysis as a result of the work being subject to the scrutiny of an audience, peer review and relevance of location. This method has constantly been aligned to further research in the field. Specifically, visiting and responding to exhibitions by relevant practitioners, survey shows (both national and international), biennials and attending conferences and symposia – of which I respond to in the thesis.

The methodology of producing the written thesis has been in response to the practical processes and outcomes I have outlined, and has been underscored through formal analysis of the aforementioned exhibitions. Beginning with description[3] and the questions such description presents. The writing has responded to experiences of exhibitions and works I have seen in person. This has been important in addressing details of the work and experiencing first-hand the spatial concerns of the works discussed. The choice of the works analysed has focused on those produced to be viewed in specific exhibition situations. Thus

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[3] Throughout the project, and implementing this methodology, I have thought about Susan Sontag's text *Against Interpretation* (1966). Sontag places the processes of interpreting artworks in a historic context. She states that the critical act of interpreting often translates, alters and/or intellectualises meaning: 'interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art' (Sontag, 2001, p.7). She further states 'ours is a culture based on excess, on overproduction; the result is the steady loss of sharpness in our sensory experience' (Sontag, 2001, p.13). Interpretation, as a type of 'restating' or searching for an 'equivalent', impoverishes the work of art and experience of it. She suggests what is needed is a 'vocabulary–a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, vocabulary–for forms' (Sontag, 2001. p.12).

the thesis aligns the practical outcomes, questions posed and textual analysis in each chapter and is a result of a considered methodology, which is a synthesis of practical and theoretical investigation, analysis and outcome.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 1: Monuments and Configuration (or, Montage Sculpture)

I review some of the questions presented from a curatorially orientated residency I undertook in 2012 in Karachi, Pakistan. I begin by thinking through the context for how sculpture may be presently observed to function. I discuss the survey exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts in London (RA), *Modern British Sculpture* (2011), and a symposium at the ICA, *The Trouble with Sculpture* (2011). Focusing in on a contemporary trope of sculptural work, of which Sacha Craddock (chair) touches on during the symposium. The analysis is from two distinct directions. Firstly, to think through the potentials and drawbacks of some fragmented and configured characteristics within contemporary work. Secondly, how notions of the monument may be progressively read onto such work. This dual approach is augmented by William Tucker's text *An Essay on Sculpture* (an essential element to the Royal Academy exhibition). I outline the potentials of sculpture within the remit of an arena of plural approach to media specificity. In so doing I propose the term or complex of 'montage' within contemporary sculpture by analysing the work of Gabriel Kuri and his 2011 exhibition, at the South London Gallery, *Before Contingency, after the Fact*. I further discuss both Rosalind Krauss' text *Voyage on the North Sea* (1999) and the current recapitulation of Brechtian theory by recent writers in relation to postmodernism. The result is to think through how such works, like Kuri's, are post-installational (citing Marcel Broodthaers' work as an analytical reference point). I look at the notion of sculpture as 'props', and the economy of sculpture in exhibition-making. In reference to notions of the avant-garde, I contextualise the term 'monument' and examine Jacques Rancière's text *The Monument and its Confidences; or Deleuze and Art's Capacity of 'Resistance'* (2010), in his book *The Dissensus* (2010). I make use of Rosalind Krauss' writings, and specifically her 2011 text *Under Blue Cup*, where she posits a number of artists who 'invent' their own medium – aligning this to issues of memory and forgetting. In reference to this, and her 1999 text *Voyage on the North* Sea, I assert how exploiting media-specific reference, in displayed artworks, can be a progressive way of extending the conventions of gallery-located exhibitions.

Chapter 2: Leverage (or, Sculptural Spatial Production)

The work I produced during a residency in China in 2010 presented a number of pertinent questions regarding the way sculpture produces space. In the second chapter I look at how the production of space relates to contemporary sculptural practice. Looking closely at Melanie Counsell's work/exhibition *Lutecia* (2011) at Works|Projects (Bristol). The work questions the sovereignty of gallery space as isolated from spatial production in general. I place this in a recent historical sculptural context, from minimalism onwards, referencing the writing of Robert Morris. This presents the question of how space is produced in a current socio/political climate. To aid the analysis of this I review Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974), alongside a number of texts by Mark Fisher, Deleuze and Guattari, and Fredric Jameson. By looking at how space is produced close to home, in the locale of the East End of London and sites of regenerations, I use the term 'leverage'; a mechanism of amplifying gains and losses, employed as a conceptual tool to discuss the process of placing/installing a sculpture. I discuss Gedi Sibony's work in the 2010 Berlin Biennial, *This is How it Will Look,* addressing how new sites of exhibition, such as biennials, frame gallery-based exhibition space.

Chapter 3: Forgetful Memory

I begin the chapter by reviewing a number of works I have produced as part of this research project, which initiate examining the relationship sculptural devices have to a current relationship to time, historicity and socio-political concerns. The final chapter assesses how object-based practices can specifically address a current cultural condition. A condition produced by: a surfeit of information produced by contemporary political economy, the temporalities of consumption of information production, the inherent forgetting of the labour process in consumption and the production of modern space. I outline how concepts of the functioning of collective memory may be a productive way to review a number of sculptural practices and review how cultural forgetting has an agency in cultural production. In a review of Marc Camille Chaimowicz's 2009 exhibition at Secession in Vienna, I cite Maurice Blanchot's term 'forgetful memory' as a way of reading how reference in Chaimowicz's work has a distinct relationship to time and historicity. I elucidate this by reviewing a contemporary relationship to time in the context of Jamesonian theory and Mark Fisher's writing. Fisher insightfully outlines the stakes of memory when he states:

'under [the current] conditions of ontological *precarity*, forgetting becomes an adaptive strategy' (Fisher, 2009, p.56). I make note of the development of the term 'hauntology' to this debate, and how this, as a culturally mobile term, may index some of the thesis' concerns. Much of the theoretical grounding for this debate makes reference to Nietzsche's text *Uses and Abuses of History* (2010), and his hypothesis, that one must 'creatively forget' as history subsumes in the production of culture. This relates to a pertinent modern cynicism or irony, postulated by Fisher. The second and final part of the chapter, in light of this context, thinks through how processes in sculpture can formally recognise cultural memory, through objects, textual, material and bodily reference. I do this by looking closely at Michael Dean's 2012 exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute, *Government*. A pertinent example to end on, in reference to the production of exhibition space, and the use of sculptural devices, but Dean also references notions of collective memory and its relationship to the 'political'.

Conclusion

I conclude that sculptural agency has, as a post-installation discourse, the ability to deal with the complexities of such postmodern concerns as part of an expanded and progressive relationship to medium. The sculptural can be an urgent and radical component part of gallery located artwork. The thesis' conclusion outlines the concerns explored, and the conceptual results posited. Drawing together the arguments and analysis throughout the three thesis chapters and aligning it to the practical works produced towards the end of the research period, underpinning my original contribution to knowledge.

Chapter 1: Monuments and Configuration (or, Montage Sculpture)

Practice – Theory: Part 1

In many ways this first chapter requires me to start at the end of the research and think about the practical outcomes of my research holistically. Most pertinently, thinking about the agency of the sculptural, this has been augmented by a curatorial practice I have undertaken during the research. This was specifically evident in 2012, when I undertook a six-week residency as part of the Vasl Artists' Collective programme in Karachi, Pakistan. This residency contributed to research on curating and residency curating from a studio-based perspective, within the framework of the wider project – the curatorial knowledge workshop. One outcome was a written text, addressing my experience of the city, and posited the curatorial conceit of producing a fictional barricade, as a curatorial device (Appendix 2). Additionally, during this residency I made a number of sculptural works, displayed in an open-studios event (Doc. 1-5). The display includes a series of works made from reinforced concrete. The works acted as commemorative blank plaques, drawing on clip-art imagery sourced from the internet, local fast-food chain logos and advertising billboards, and the art historical reference of David Smith's work *Medals of Dishonor* (1938-40). Testing out these works was a key part of collaborating[4] with Karachi-based artist Seher Naveed and resulted in arranging the display to incorporate a 35mm slide work by Naveed (Doc. 6). The collaboration came about from research we both undertook in examining local architecture in Karachi. Specifically, we made numerous trips to Iqbal Market, built on a British Christian burial site during the 1980s. The market now thrives on sales of abundant materials ranging from tombstones, buckles, sheet material and foams. Recycled foam was present in the display, used to create simple display devices, acting as plinths. The partition walls of the makeshift studio that I worked within were repurposed for the display of the work. This, alongside a screening of a video produced whilst on the residency, explored an interest in objecthood, the status of materials and in spaces of degradation and production, which are exposed to spectres of the past.

Having produced this work, I recognised I had established certain strategies of display; such as referencing materials and commodities in commercial and domestic settings and retaining an itinerancy – evident in leaning and propping of works and the repurposing of items to formalise display (in this case utilising the studios partition walls in a new configuration). This initiated thinking of these works as props; deployed within a practice, capable of

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[4] I have further outlined the process of working with Seher Naveed and how I am utilising the term 'collaboration' in Appendix 1.

incorporating a variety of mediums.

A few months' earlier, similar questions were presented when I was commissioned to produce an exhibition in collaboration[5] with the artist Katie Schwab at the Jerwood Project Space, located in the institution's London gallery's café, a non-white cube space. In this scenario I produced several reinforced-concrete beam sculptures and photographic representation of similar concrete works (Doc. 7-10). These works were produced to recede into the space, compliant with the interior architecture in a vital way. The items were accompanied by a limited-edition publication (free to take away) (Appendix 6). The outcomes of the project presented the question of how sculptural artworks may be capable of communicating ideas of cultural collectivity outside a white cube gallery space. My initial conclusion anticipated if sculpture is capable of augmenting artefactual and spatial relation, it can retain medium-specific significance and consequence in art production today. However, this may be seen as a component rather than a model, in a broad spectrum of display practices. This speculative outcome instigated the theoretical research, which this thesis chapter is based on.

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[5] See Appendix 1 for further details on this collaborative process.

Doc. 2

Doc. 7

The Trouble with Sculpture

Contemporary sculpture has a messy, complex and somewhat paradoxical heritage. Mark Prince, in a text for *Art Monthly*, postulates a current sculptural condition, where 'disembodied narratives are encouraged to supplant the art they represent because they constitute its accessibility beyond limited temporary exhibition conditions […] A paraphrasable art in which a nebulous aura of contextual justification surrounds a void of subjectivity' (Prince, 2011 p.8). This broad statement, although somewhat damning, is potentially helpful, in a taxonomic sense and suggests a capable agency, bound to the auratic effects of medium specificity. Sacha Craddock has also pinpointed a shift in sculptural practices, where a great deal of work is currently being produced using everyday materials, distinct referencing systems and a subtle formal consideration. A type of sculpture that, she states: 'use[s] found elements as if notes in a tune, the tune would collectively make a line, [there's] a notion of reading something perhaps, from left to right […] not to do with a sense of singularity […] all about the sense in sculpture of a possibility' (Craddock, 2011)[6]. These positions present a somewhat open-ended reference to sculpture as a medium-specific term that can 'expand and contracts to accommodate everyone's interests' (Prince, 2011, p.5).

In her book *Under Blue Cup* (2011), Rosalind Krauss stakes out a reading of a number of contemporary practitioners who explore medium specificity, or 'technical support' as a way of 'inventing' their own medium. This is a position she has taken against what she calls the 'kitsch of installation and the end of the white cube' (she specifically aligns this to curatorial projects such as Documenta X). Krauss states:

> '"The medium is the memory" [insisting] on the power of the medium to hold the efforts of the forebears of a specific genre in reserve for the present. Forgetting this reserve is the antagonist of memory […] The paradigm of the /medium/ could thus be mapped as memory verses forgetting (forgetting being conceptualism). On structuralism's neutral axis, the combination of not-memory and not-forgetting would be installation.' (Krauss, 2011, pp.127-128)

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[6] Joining the discussion *The Trouble with Sculpture* were the artists Martina Schmücker, Haroon Mirza, Nathaniel Mellors and Keith Wilson. With the exception of Wilson (curator of *Modern British Sculpture*), the other artists appeared to have been chosen to explore the performative, sonic and filmic (or televisual) potentials of the debate.

Krauss, by plotting the potentials of medium to the functions of memory, states by remembering medium, an artist may be connecting to one's own art-productive past – finding passage through the problematic of conceptualism and installation practice[7]. It is, however, important to state that the production of contemporary sculpture is bound to the recent history of installation practice. Krauss states, 'throughout its history, modern art paradoxically turned to treating museum galleries as installations, or settings interpellated in the artist's own work' (Krauss, 2011, p.126). Aligned to this (although with a very different take on installation practice to Krauss), Boris Groys states that 'the installation operates by means of a symbolic privatization of the public space of an exhibition' (Groys, 2009). If sculpture is to demonstrate its capabilities, after the discourse around installation it also has to do so in line with developing complexities of arts dissemination (subject to increasing curatorial instrumentalisation and the growing sites of exchange). The specific 'arena of exchange' of exhibition-based sculpture I address in this chapter is undeniably subject to such developing concerns.

In the introduction to his book *Conversation Pieces, Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Grant H. Kester outlines some of the issues sculpture may face. Through his descriptions of such dialogical projects by Suzy Lacy and the collective WochenKlausur, Kester states,

> 'The interactive character of [such projects] replace the conventional "banking" style (to borrow a phrase from the educational theorist Paulo Freire)—in which the artist deposits an expressive content into a physical object, to be withdrawn later by the viewer—with a process of dialogue and collaboration. The emphasis is on the character of this interaction, not the physical or formal integrity of a given artifact [sic] or the artist's experience producing it. The object-based artwork (with some exceptions) is produced entirely by the artist and subsequently offered to the viewer. As a result, the viewer's response has no immediate reciprocal effect on the constitution of the work. Further, the physical object remains essentially static. Dialogical projects, in contrast, unfold through a process of performative interactions.' (Kester, 2004, p.10)

This is somewhat a polemical and standardising view, however, it serves to orientate the developing contingencies of the evolving agency and circulation of art and the growing need to develop a new critical framework.

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[7] Krauss takes this position in response to the 'political moralism' she identifies in the curatorial project of Documenta X (1997).

What may the effect of such a post-plural medium specificity have on exhibition-based sculptural practice? The answer may be the usage of nuanced reference to sculptural tropes and mechanism deployed within and throughout art practice, display and discourse. It is my hope that exhibited sculpture can interface progressively with other methods, practices and projects of dispersal and dissemination in contemporary art. In this chapter I contextualise such concerns by examining sculptural specificity, in line with post-medium art production. I think through the potentials of current sculpture (of which I attribute the term 'montage' sculpture). I assess the syntax of post-installation display and the notion of the sculpture as prop – an economic device. The chapter concludes in examining sculptures reference to monumentality and its 'resistant' political capabilities.

The Potentials of Sculpture

I am immediately drawn to the conclusion that if sculpture is capable of dealing with artefactual and spatial relation to the world it can retain medium-specific significance and consequence in art production today. However this may be seen as a component part of practice, rather than a model for, in a broad spectrum of display practices. With a historic reference to the notion of medium specificity, the *Modern British Sculpture* exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts (2011) foreground a historically idiosyncratic use of the term sculpture. The curatorial team of Keith Wilson and Penelope Curtis re-presented William Tucker's text *An Essay on Sculpture* (from Studio International 1969) citing Tucker's definition as a potent outline of the term. In this text Tucker outlines a phenomenological view of sculpture's concerns, he states: 'in effect sculpture has become part of the world of artefact [sic]'; he reiterates several times the presentness, or rather 'always being there' of sculpture – not easily consigned to the shelf or light storage. He presents this as sculpture's primary capability and its primary malfunction. The object 'demands', as a thing in the world. This mirrors Robert Morris' statement in *Notes on Sculpture Part 2* (written three years earlier) where Morris states the temporal qualities of sculpture, 'only one aspect of the work [of sculpture] is immediate: the apprehension of the gestalt – the experience of the work necessarily exists in time' (Morris, 1995, p.17).

William Tucker's writings, as a modernist practitioner, may initially appear outmoded here. His text was recently annexed in modernist discourse in the Royal Academy exhibition as one page of Tucker's text was displayed in a room alongside Anthony Caro's seminal work *Early One Morning* (1962). Caro's definitive sculpture was made at a time poised at the

edge of the revelations of minimalism and conceptualism. In a recent text, responding to Eric Bainbridge's *Steel Sculptures* exhibition (Camden Arts Centre, 2012), Penelope Curtis writes of 'the Caro problem'. The problem being that modernist sculpture is seen as 'authentic', as being beautiful and having a high status in education. Curtis describes British sculpture as a tradition that is 'essentially Oedipal, in which successive sons kill successive fathers' (Curtis, 2012). The generational reaction to modernist sculpture's definitive iconographic works resulted in the irreversible shift in experiencing work in space. Michael Fried canonically outlined this in his text *Art and Objecthood* (1967). However, more recently, Grant Kester considers this in relationship to socially engaged practice. Kester states Caro's works, 'are blissfully indifferent to the viewer's physical presence or normative preconception. The authentic modernist work surrounds itself with a hermetic field that deadens or restricts the viewer's awareness of contextual conditions or determinants' (Kester, 2000, p.48). Conceptualised by Michael Fried, the modernist artwork compels and sustains 'conviction'; as an artwork's value is generated only in comparison to another artwork. Tucker does not share this view; he states in *An Essay on Sculpture*, 'the world of objects [sculpture belongs to] has been created by man and could not long survive without him' (Tucker, 1969). Tucker foregrounds the privilege of objecthood and 'alibis' of use,[8] he historically identifies the ability of the ready-made to reveal how sculpture can take form and content from objects in the world – progressing into art that 'disown[s] the monumental […] an object among objects, privileged by its unique configuration' (Tucker, 1969). Tucker's writing can, firstly, locate the point of rupture (in modality of sculpture) and, secondly, offer points of continual agency of 'sculptural' work. I will move on to think through current uses of configuration, composition or 'montage' but first I wish to establish a current post-medium condition context to view such sculpture.

For Rosalind Krauss the notion of medium specificity holds potential at its suspended moment of perceived obsolescence. In her text *A Voyage on the North Sea* (1999) Krauss discusses Marcel Broodthaers' 'intermedia' or post-media practice. She postulates a residue of structure is retained via his use of outmoded techniques; this is in Krauss' terms an 'internal lining'. This acts as a 'redemptive' centre to his post-media output. The term redemptive is used in reference to Walter Benjamin's definition of redemption as the 'dialectic after-image of a social role' (Krauss, 2000, p.41). This positive potential is presented at the birth of a new modality and, at the point of obsolescence. Broodthaers' use

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[8] This phrase is taken from Neil Cummings' introduction to the book *Reading Things* (Cummings, 1993, p.28).

of outmoded or antiquated forms of production displays an engagement within the space of redemptive potential of a specific medium within a plural modality.

Can this redemptive or retrieving quality still be seen in the expanded sculptural process of work today? I would argue most definitely yes. Some current sculptural works assign economies,[9] self-generated by display, through configuration. I do not see this as a place of refuge within a singular technocratic point but its capitulation of other developments (specifically moving image within contemporary art). This can be seen as a component of a durational aesthetic, conditional to reading of art within exhibition scenarios. To do this some contemporary sculpture uses the technique of 'montage'.

Montage Sculpture and the Sculptural

It may seem initially odd to align the word montage, which relates to the temporal and filmic, to sculpture. I employ the term 'montage' to address the objecthood of an assembled sculpture and its outer capabilities; the way that one work is composed and configured to other works or items within any given display space or exhibition. Montage, as a constructive principle[10] implies composition, which may be a process of adjustment of items temporally and spatially. This is opposed to 'arrangement', which is predetermined and spatial. I defer to Mel Bochner's useful definition: '"Composition" usually means the adjustment of the parts, i.e. their size, shape, color [sic], or placement, to arrive at the finished work, whose exact nature is not known beforehand. "Arrangement" implies the fixed nature of the parts and a preconceived notion of the whole' (Bochner, 1967, p.94).

Montage in sculpture may be described as a two-fold configuration. Found and made components are combined together – rendered as a readable whole. This work is then placed in an exhibition space, to be read, aligned to other works, objects, artefacts, statements,

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[9] As a definition of economics I defer to Evan Calder Williams, who has stated: 'economics manages resources, through a set of relations dependent upon the material abstraction that is *value*. Politics manages subjects and their needs, through a set of representations dependent upon the material abstraction that is *citizenship*. One can't think politics without economics and vice versa, although there are periods of time in which one seems more determinant, in the first and last instance, than the other' (Calder Williams, 2011).

[10] Montage as a principle has been discussed by Susan Buck-Morss in reference to Walter Benjamin's conception of montage within the city. She states Benjamin's literary montage 'juxtaposed elements were not randomly arranged but cohered around a central idea, [this] was the true ur-phenomenon of the principle of montage as a *constructive* principle' (Buck-Morss, 1989, p.74). This is opposed to a media specific concern.

actions, moving image or sound. A singular reading of the object is augmented by a referent one, allowing several values or economic fungible systems to be active. The potentials are played out in a given exhibition space as opposed to a photographic or filmic space. Montage also has reference to structuring time and memory (which gains importance later in this thesis). Roger Shattuck has posited the term in reference to Marcel Proust's usage of a variety of writing styles to 'transcend successive time and create a work of simultaneous time'[11]. Shattuck states 'montage vividly conveys the sensation of intermittency or jump that remains in any grasp we have of life and the tendency of what we see and what we feel to resist any prolonged order or linear sequence of time' (Shattuck, 1964, p. 34.).

I also wish to stipulate differentiation between montage sculpture and the installation. By installation I refer to the display mechanism, demonstrated in Marcel Broodthaers' work, where there is a shift from opaque to transparent boundaries within the display of objects as an artwork[12]. This notion of installation has however greatly impacted on the syntax of placement and overall display, or the exhibition qualities within much montage work. As Tucker indicated through the great shift of modernist methodologies, sculpture attained the status of the fraternity of objects supported by configuration (Tucker, 1969). It is the particularities of the form of configuration I wish to address here, a good example of this is the work of the Mexican artist Gabriel Kuri I consider in more detail.

Kuri's solo exhibition, *Before Contingency After the Fact* (2011), made use of all the available gallery space at the South London Gallery. The main gallery space was displayed somewhat like an additional antechamber or entrance. A cluster of works to the left of the sizable room appeared as a type of encampment: including an exaggerated clump of clothes precariously hung from a peg, other items propped against the wall and floor-bound pieces.

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[11] Shattuck also sites Sergei Eisenstein; who commented 'montage is conflict'. I make reference to this as later in this chapter I discuss Russian avant-garde theory.

[12] In Krauss' words, the 'eagle principle' has two distinct effects: 'On the one hand […] folded into the hybrid or intermedia condition of the rebus, in which not only language and image but high and low and any other oppositional pairing one can think of will freely mix. But on the other hand, this particular combination is not entirely random. It is specific to the site in which it occurs' (Krauss, 2000, p.12). Krauss here outlines a dualistic semiotic code of liquidity, based within the collection and combination of objects within a given site. Krauss goes on to state, 'for the eagle principle, which simultaneously implodes the idea of an aesthetic medium and turns everything equally into a readymade that collapses the difference between the aesthetic and the commodified' (Krauss, 1999, p.20). This asserts the subordination of classification or material trajectory to an installed space where art objects are subjected to a micro and manifold cultural modality. This is quite different from Boris Groys' understanding of the structuring of installation. Superficially, Groys has a more prosaic view, the notion of installation as a container or frame 'material par excellence' (Groys, 2009).

Some of which were comically oversized renditions of cut-up credit cards and unused and spent matches (Fig. 4). To the right of the exhibition space was a sequence of three works placed at even intervals throughout the space. Firstly, a found wooden transport pallet, with a number of panes of glass, sheets of poured concrete and plates of grubby resin, encapsulating once floating cigarette butts, these were protected by removers' transit felt, slotted into the pallet weighed down by large rock (Fig. 5). The second work in the sequence was a composition of three items: a cleaved triangular section of a metal refuse disposal skip; mimicking this, a fabricated beige metal unit sat flush alongside; and inflated between the angles of its halves, a condom – perhaps a pun on the board game Trivial Pursuit (Fig. 6). The final work in the selection was made up of another fabricated blue metal unit, placed on a blanket on the floor, its title securing its pie-chart reference, stating *Untitled (¾ Blue)*. Behind this, at the far end of the gallery, framing the door to the outside space beyond the main gallery was a large (full-room height) curtain, made from a nylon fabric (usually used to screen scaffolding whilst building is in progress). This curtain was a very close approximation of a theatrical curtain, its hem, peeled back, inviting the viewer to pass through (Fig. 7). The display in the room could be read as a whole (approaching an installation space). The artist, through an accurate choreography of placement, presented a procedure of viewing. However, the works were individually titled, using 'untitled' and description in parentheses. The notion of an opaque formal frame implemented by the term 'installation' was here somewhat more transparent. The gallery's outdoor space, a connecting courtyard between the main gallery and the Clore Studio, contained a work fabricated from accurately cut steel, colourfully painted, like oversized street furniture, it again seemed to take Microsoft-like pie charts as a prompt[13] (Fig. 8). The final space of the exhibition, although small, was however the main event. Staged as a fictional, concise polling/voting booth, but actually a site for the categorisation of a number of found and made objects, such as used coloured slivers of soap, ad-hoc wedges to keep doors open and shells. There was a foreboding in the room as the artist had stockpiled bottled water, hinting at the potential use of the space as a refuge or shelter (Fig. 9).

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[13] Kuri often makes explicit reference to accounting and economics, evidenced in many of his works to date and in the South London Gallery exhibition – specifically his use of forms, which refer to pie charts and systems of accountancy of objects. During and in-discussion with the artist at the gallery, Kuri stressed his interest in 'hard' and 'soft' materials and hard and soft facts. His interest in this may help in reviewing the taxonomy of reference within more sculpture of which the maker often establishes an economy.
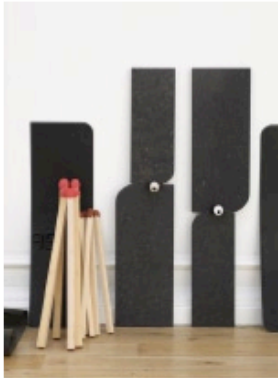
Fig. 4

Fig. 5
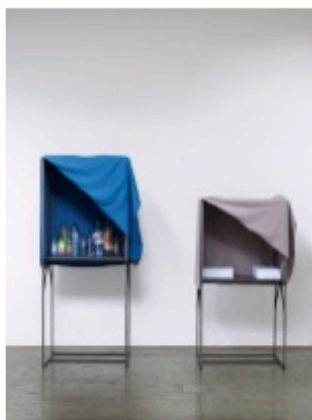

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Sally O'Reilly, reviewing Kuri's exhibition, states 'the syntax of standing, leaning and lying objects becomes more weirdly articulate by way of a wider but more confounding vocabulary [a] wry acknowledgement of something in the wrong place, of intimacy amid industry, softness beside hardness' (O'Reilly, 2011). It is the notion of something in the 'wrong place', as a primary sculptural device, I wish to focus on. Here it may also be pertinent to stress the analytical formal reading of sculpture, of which I defer to Rosalind Krauss' definition. She states, 'This analysis involves relating internal structure to surface, decoding the shapes made visible by edges and planes, or responding to the composition of mass and void' (Krauss, 2000, p.80). These formal concerns of weight, density, scale and corporality are often best explored in exhibition-based work via various foils. Kuri's use of comical scale shift and references to use-value are contrived as so. The sculptural may also pertain to the way sculpture is contingent on the physical laws of nature along with any other object. William Tucker stated that sculptures can literally be made, rather than carved, or modelled and cast; sculptures have been 'literally object' obstructions,[14] with a perennial physical problem; that of being a contingent art – subject to the conditions of reality, of objecthood. The sculptural, thus pertains to these points, however, may discuss, explore, extend and divide these through temporal or consignable mechanisms ('easily shelved', 'occasional arts')[15]. Tucker's phenomenological account foregrounds a veracious and complex relationship with the object and commodity in culture. The complexity of this in relation to how objects relate to commodity and exchange is addressed by Neil Cummings in the introduction to the book *Reading Things* (1993), where he states,

> 'No contemporary writing on the object could ignore the realm of the commodity, viral in its expansion. [Now] the commodity is a universal solvent acting upon the boundary between all things […] commodity discourse attempts to close the troubling irregularity of objects in use. In this respect advertising remains constant, to regulate, and control the production of meaning at the moment of the objects appearance into the field of vision.' (Cummings, 1993, p.17)

Montage or configured sculpture may attempt to connect/re-connect the 'babble of use, the natural resting place for invention and memory […] things here seem closer to their being, worn, expressive, striped of hype and glamour [closer to] an object's real life' (Ibid). The

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[14] Ad Reinhardt has stated: sculpture is the stuff you trip over when you are backing up trying to look at a painting.
[15] Tucker stated, 'poetry, drama, painting, music, film, are essentially occasional arts, to be read, seen, performed when demand arises: otherwise easily shelved, physically out of the way, to be remembered or forgotten as subsequent needs determine' (Tucker, 1969).

sculptural may evoke such a language of objects, often explored in contemporary work in other media, in its debt to the ready-made and circuitous historic assemblages.

The notion of montage is additionally aligned to duration. Kuri's work is a good example of that which utilises a configuration of objects to acknowledge and responds to both minimalism and the 'de-materialisation' of art. Kester sites post-minimalist artists Dan Graham, Alan Piper, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Allan Kaprow and Michael Kirby as advancing the temporal readings of works. Kester foregrounds the temporal nature of aesthetic experience explicitly opposed to Michael Fried's notion of instantaneousness. This has also lead to the production of a configured sculpture of today that gains meaning through a sequential reading in exhibition space.

Syntax of Post-Installation

I have referred to Rosalind Krauss' definition of a formal reading of sculpture. To discuss the formal functions of montage sculptures use of display I also extend her reference to Viktor Shklovsky. Shklovsky, as a Russian formalist writer, is a pertinent example of avant-garde[16] theory, which may prove useful in later addressing sculpture's relationship to the political. If 'the situation in minimal art was a turning point in the thinking of sculpture as installation' (Paice, 2009, p.50), recent work presents us with a turning point in thinking of sculpture as contingent to the language of installation. Gabriel Kuri's work also acts as a good example here, as an artist that makes work in reference to the codes of contemporary display and the functioning of objects in the everyday. As Marcella Beccaria has written of Kuri's work, 'the artist's cognitive investigation removes certain aspects of reality from everyday banality, attributing them with value and significance (Beccaria, 2007, p.31). In her review of Kuri's exhibition, Sally O'Reilly makes reference to language in articulating the work. She writes: 'the syntax of standing, leaning and lying objects becomes more weirdly articulate by way of a wider but more confounding vocabulary' (O'Reilly, 2011). This echoing of a formalist vernacular seems an apposite way to address how Kuri's work is a good example of a sculpture that can be described as 'post-installation' in its display. This sculpture draws on spatial codes through placement of works, which activates the location,

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[16] In the Russian Soviet period, under the state control of Joseph Stalin, the authorities used the term 'avant-garde' with pejorative associations; to refer to any art that used complex techniques and forms accessible only to the elite, rather than being simplified for and accessible to 'the people'.

transforming the gallery into a 'fictional' space, as an installation does as a fundamental principle. What makes this work different from an installation (in an absolute sense) is that the gallery space is not closed off, or boundaried. The space of a gallery is still evident, softly site-specific in the sense that it makes reference to the space as a gallery and perhaps candid in its admittance of itself as work of art.

Boris Groys appropriately asserts installations' function as representing a control of the public or social space of the exhibition (Groys, 2009). He goes on, 'it invites the visitor to experience this space as the holistic, totalizing space of an artwork […] what becomes critical is the distinction between a marked, installation space and unmarked, public space. When Marcel Broodthaers presented his installation *Musée d'Art Moderne* [in 1970], he put up a sign next to each exhibit saying; "This is not a work of art"' (Groys, 2009). In direct contrast to this, Kuri's works retain their status as singular artworks inside a gallery space. A way of seeing this partitioning is through reference to a visibility of its (invisible) frame. Installation space is opaque, on which the gaze can rest, akin to the language of the poetry in a formalist vernacular, specifically explored by Victor Shklovsky in his seminal text *Art as Technique*.

The work of montage sculpture is dependent on the 'difficult' object, out of place, altered, transformed or added to, to defamiliarise itself enough to impede 'automatic' perception. Shklovsky states the difficult 'object' (or subject) is not important 'because as art the poem [the work] does not have to point to anywhere outside itself' (Shklovsky, 1917, p.4), as with Broodthaers' *Museum*. However what this work does is play on the object's interruption, in a perceptive ordering, using a device of defamiliarisation. The condom in Kuri's work *Untitled* (2011) is an example here. It does not just point inwards to purely formal relationships of weight, scale or density but dualistically points outwards towards a real world economy, such as a juxtaposition between how a condom may correlate to a (partial) skip; both as receptacles, their relationships to material disposability, cost of manufacture and general association as commodities. How this impacts on the exhibition of these works is key, as the objects are submitted to a scenario of other possible taxonomies, in Krauss' words 'sculptures often need each other' (Krauss, 1981, p.84). It is the syntax of configuration that creates the feeling of a whole. What has been named an installation can

be referred more specifically to as an exhibition's gestalt[17]. It is the meaning instated by the fraternity or contingency of objects within display that boundaries reading, rather than the totalising of a space as with an installation. The exhibition's entirety is then a transparent boundary, as opposed to an opaque one. The fraternity between objects is configured to create meaning, as opposed to meaning created by an entirety of which works/objects are configured – thus showing how the term montage is relevant. Krauss states: 'formalist opacity depends on the isolation of a signifier' (Krauss, 1987, p.170). This sculptural device puts to use signifiers within the objects presented, as opposed to the environment (installation). The works act and react to one another as opposed to between one another, as with *Broodthaer*s' 'Eagle Principle'.

This principle appears somewhat paralleled to the Brechtian concept of *verfremdungseffekt*, the distancing or alienation effect. Developed in the 1920s and 1930s in response to the advancing cultural technologies, Brecht's concept of the alienation effect was that as a member of an audience you are formally isolated; remaining objective and not overly identified with the actors. Brecht was interested in asking how theatre could compete with the insurgence of film and radio. Brecht stated it can't, but it can debate with them, and it does this via montage. If montage is a process or technique of selecting, editing, and piecing together separate sections of film to form a continuous whole, certain properties are active, in Walter Benjamin's words, 'the superimposed element disrupts the context in which it is inserted'. This disruption or interruption is key, for Brecht the alienation effect retranslates the methods of montage transferring them from a technological process to a human process. This is aligned to Tucker's statement: 'the world of objects [sculpture belongs to] has been created by man and could not long survive without him' (Tucker, 1969). In his essay *What is Epic Theatre?* (1939) Benjamin further states the Brechtian concept as 'instead of identifying with the characters, the audience should be […] astonished at the circumstances under which they function' (Benjamin, 1999, p.147). This can be relevant to the use of composed objects and materials within works of montage sculpture, where the commodification values/circumstances are folded into the form and content of such a work. I would however not go so far as to say montage sculpture engenders any of the Marxist principles crucial to the Brechtian conceit.

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[17] Kuri's work is an example here, in that the exhibition has an overall effect through choreographing the placement of the work, however each work retains its autonomy.

These obliquely didactic montage processes at work within sculpture presents (when used effectively) a similar interruption as the 'alienation effect'. They draw on the space of display, material codes of commodity and arteface, the site/gallery and make reference to formalist tropes in a generational cycle of sculpture. Krauss sees the formal sculptural reference as a place of 'refuge' – the 'redemptive possibilities encoded at the birth of a given technical support', that acts 'like a raking light shining at a strange angle over a surface' (Krauss, 2000, p.46). Can we discuss this as a new type of topology[18] of the sculpture? Or put simply: the continual leaking of one medium into another throughout art production? The reading of Gabriel Kuri's work requires a mental act of association within the viewer to make connections with materials, colours, scale, form and specifically placement. These associations directly relate to placements in the real world alongside positioning that evoke 'traditions' or cycles in sculptural modality.

Property?

Having discussed how montage sculpture establishes its own economy whilst in an exhibition, I wish to now think through how this may be currently functional in a market economy. Mercedes Vicente has noted fungability of meaning, or an effect of 'double displacement' within Gabriel Kuri's work. She accurately uses the word 'props' to describe the economy or logic of the Kuri's work as a whole; Vicente states:

> 'There is a recurrence in the choice of objects as some seem to reappear repeatedly in Kuri's works (like stones, till receipts, roofing materials, garbage bags, or the idiom *and thanks in advance*). This incurs a double displacement, not only from the object's original contexts, but more importantly for Kuri's. The objects start to take on a certain Kuri characteristic as they re-enter in the artists' visual vocabulary. As they become his props their resonance multiplies beyond their implicit associations to take on Kuri's world of meanings built on earlier works. This strategy of repetition or reappearance of the object – with a Beckettian feel to it – has the effect of suggesting invisible, ungraspable logic threaded through his work as cognitive systems that are non-verifiable yet are accepted as possible. Thus, however diverse and random these materials may be, in this recurrence Kuri's works achieve a circumscribed cohesiveness.' (Vicente, 2007, pp.18-19)

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[18] In Hal Foster's words, from his text *The Crux of Minimalism* (1996), we are, as viewers, asked to look at post-minimalist sculpture, 'rather than scan the surface of a work for a topographical mapping of the properties of its medium, he or she is prompted to explore the perceptual consequences of a particular intervention in a given site' (Foster, 1996, p.38).

Vincente asserts that Kuri's sculptures act as props; signifiers of value as well as their logic as sculptural forms. Aligning sculpture to theatricality is not a new concept. It is widely attributed to critical writings around the origination of minimalism. Michael Fried in his text *Art and Objecthood*, originally published in *Artforum* in1967, branded Donald Judd and Robert Morris as making literalist work and minimalism as overtly theatrical in implicating the viewer in the space of the work. Work which 'depends on the beholder, is incomplete without him' (Fried, 1998, p.163). Fried stipulated how the theatricalisation of artwork, for him, 'degenerates' as it approaches theatre. Furthermore, Annette Michelson describes Morris' work as apodictic[19] – an apparatus of demonstration. Grant Kester accounts for this in plotting the linage of post-minimalist practices and the effects of 'theatricality'. He states, 'theatrical art communicates to the viewers through formal clues that make them conscious of the fact that their ostensible transcendent encounter is in fact highly conditional– that aesthetic meaning is not immanent in the physical object but created through and by their situatedness in space and time' (Kester, 2004, p.45). This conditionality pertains to how the prop may be functional in object-based practice today. This as a transgressive agency relates to the operation of objects, not only in an exhibition environment, but also in a market economy. Andrea Phillips in her paper *Prop-Objects* (delivered at the fourth Showroom Gallery annual conference 2006/7) proposes that sculptural works often have the characteristics of props, suggesting such works exhibit a 'discrete presence to the time-space of architecture, [which] echoes and plays an albeit minor part in changing accounts of the global'[20] (Phillips, 2008, p.26). Phillips also aligns the conditions of a prop have been developed by the predominance of the 'curatorial' in the 'conceptualisations of art'[21].

Traditionally the use of the term prop is twofold: firstly, as an object, the property of a character, used to aid the telling of a narrative in a theatre. Secondly, it refers to the use of an item to literally support something else. The conditions of art object referred to as a prop, thus, are symptomatic of 'ownership, support, use-value, circulation, disaggregation' (Phillips, 2008, p.27). Phillips cites the use of props in Brechtian theatre as dialectical: 'not magical or transformative objects but instead what Bertolt Brecht called gestural or quotable

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[19] Kim Paice cites Annette Michelson term in her text *Continuous Projects Altered Daily Robert Morris* (Paice, 2009, p.50). However it was originally from Michelson's Corcoran Gallery exhibition catalogue text *Robert Morris: An Aesthetics of Transgression* (1969).
[20] The global, here, is seen as an expanding global art market informed by biennales and international art fairs, along with partner funding of project and distribution of work in publically funded project and commercial sales.
[21] This may contribute to the development of the 'artist as curator', I discuss on page 47.

items intended to be identified by the viewer as just that' (Phillips, 2008, p.27) – thus retaining social convention. The prop under exhibition circumstances is expected to retain its everyday quotidian and also operate in an alternate network. In reference to Gabriel Kuri's work the example of an inflated condom placed between to metal units operates in such a way. Phillips goes on to describe the potency of such conditions from two points. Firstly, the aesthetic agency of this: as 'the prop might be used to signal a politicality that literally reifies the formless, casting it on to a location, a city, its urbanism, and beginning a new relation between props and the deregulated architectural situation' (Phillips, 2008, p.27). This is akin to what I have stated as the transparent frame post-installation exhibition space presents. Secondly, the prop has the capacity to interface with a growing global art or the circulation of art around the globe. Props represent the image of such a global art space in their own distribution; 'prop objects we observe do not seek to set up a dialectic so much as to destruct the possibilities of one in the name of the production of a heteronymous space. This is the space of the imagined-global' (Phillips, 2008, p.27). These agencies are acute, we can see the sculptural as a set of potentials, which index the generational cycles of art production, and are related to the world of objects. The notion of the prop object implicates a dualistic complex. This may be seen as an acquired potential or malfunctions of the sculptural. Montage sculpture's functioning can be seen, in Mark Prince's terms, as emptied out (nebulous), or highly conditional to current media-related modality.

The notion of sculptures as props additionally feeds into recent exhibitions by artists using curating as a sculptural device. This can be seen through a number of key exhibitions where the collection and display of objects and artworks is used to explore concerns of art and objecthood. Specifically, Simon Starling's *Never the Same River (Possible Futures, Probable Pasts)* at the Camden Arts Centre in 2010. The exhibition brought together works by 30 artists and designers, fragmenting the histories of the institution's exhibitions' 50-year output. The chosen works were reinstalled in the exact positions they previously occupied, establishing new and future relationships between the objects. Another example of this is Steven Claydon's exhibition *Strange Events Permit Themselves the Luxury of Occurring*, also at the Camden Arts Centre in 2007[22]. Claydon examined the relationship between the art object and the institutions that display them. Thus, the importance of placement, and relationships object have to one another, in exhibitions, has proved to be a current development in relation to the principles of montage sculpture practice.

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[22] These are two specific example, amongst a larger number of such exhibitions, including Marc Camille Chaimowicz's *Jean Genet…The Courtesy of Objects*, which I address in Chapter 3.

For and Against the Monument

To this point I have discussed how contemporary sculpture functions in exhibition scenarios. I wish to now take a step back and assess the status of sculpture in a more symbolic sense. William Tucker states that sculpture is a thing that persists in the world. Tucker further wrote: 'In the past the monument has been the result of man's heroic effort [...] to make a dominant object whose physical presence will, imagery apart, suppress the competing presence of ambient men and things' (Tucker, 1969). Tucker here notes the capability of traditional materials to outlive the maker and even the social conditions that created it. If much contemporary sculpture is fragmented and employs a diverse range of materials, many of which have a shorter life span than marble or stone,[23] what relationship to the monument may such sculpture have? This may be answered from two perspectives. Firstly, in reference to sculptural medium-specificity and time, sculpture can retain information from its generational past, transmitting rules to a new group. Secondly, linked to this, are sculpture's 'resistant' capabilities.

What, though, are the social characteristics of the monument? In Henri Lefebvre's book *The Urban Revolution* (1970), his first critique of the urbanisation of society, he sets out compelling arguments both for and against the monument as a social entity. Lefebvre states:

> '*Against the monument* – The monument is essentially repressive. It is the seat of an institution (the church, the state, the university). Any space that is organized around the monument is colonized and oppressed. The great monuments have been raised to glorify conquerors and the powerful.
>
> *For the monument* – It is the only conceivable or imaginable site of collective (social) life. It controls people, yes, but does so to bring them together. Beauty and monumentality go hand in hand. The monuments were transfunctional (cathedrals) and even transcultural (tombs). This is what gave them their ethical and aesthetic power. Monuments project onto the land a conception of the world […] monuments embody a sense of transcendence, a sense of being elsewhere.' (Lefebvre, 2003, pp.22-23)

Lefebvre states a paradox of monumentalisation; that it can be taken as a symbol of a potentially repressive ideology through the passage of time, yet, the monument has the ability to speak of other ways of being in society (a transcendence).

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[23] An example of this can be seen in the materials used by Gabriel Kuri, such as those in *Before Contingency After the Fact*, including condoms, fabric, and cigarette ends, as well as metal and concrete.

Monumental History/Monumental Future

The modern history of sculpture has interfaced with monumentality, most vitally in the developments of minimalism and post-minimalist work. Robert Smithson most notably scrutinised this in his text, *Entropy and the New Monuments* (1966). Smithson discusses the work of his contemporaries Robert Morris, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt and Dan Flavin, stating that minimalist sculpture engages the viewer in a new temporal relationship with sculpture. Reducing the time of reading/perceiving the work in an objective present, thus creating the potential for perceiving the work outside of a normative time. He states:

> 'Instead of causing us to remember the past like the old monuments, the new monuments [minimalist sculpture] seem to cause us to forget the future […] they are involved in a systematic reduction of time down to fractions of seconds, rather than in representing the long spaces of centuries. Both past and future are placed into an objective present […] Time becomes place minus motion. If time is a place, then innumerable places are possible.' (Smithson, 1966)

This capability of the minimalist artwork to present a spatial relationship with a sculpture under a new condition of time opens up a radical potential of the sculptural. This may be seen as a political agency of sculpture and objecthood. I will go on to discuss this potential as a type of 'resistance'.

Another, alternate view of the monument was established by the exhibition *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century,* at the New Museum in New York in 2008. The exhibition chose to associate a number of artists, who deployed the mechanisms of what I termed montage sculpture. In a number of catalogue essays, fragmentation and the history of assemblage are weighed up against certain cultural phenomena, such as development in new media technology, celebrity culture and globalisation. Massimiliano Gioni in his text *Ask the Dust* (2008) states that minimalist sculpture re-orientated the monumental from a commemorative perspective to engaging artificial materiality and thus a new temporality. He writes:

> 'Modernist sculpture explored the disappearance of the monument, but only to generate a new form of secular monumentality based on the same values of unity, integrity and solidarity that pervaded the language of commemorative sculpture […] Minimalism conquers that almost immortal purity we associate with monuments, and it does so by means of an extreme, artificial look or through the obvious dullness of industrial materials. Either way, it comes across as assertive, almost inevitable, and thus monumental.' (Gioni, 2007, p.64)

The 'inevitable' assertions of minimalist sculpture, one that took on systematically establishing an alternate temporal quality of art in exhibition settings and thus a type of monumentality, can be seen as inherited in the sculptural today. The primary inheritance, as a rejection of autonomy of an object, has resulted in a fracturing of items. This has been categorised by Laura Hoptman, who states: 'fracturing works against hierarchy' (Hoptman, 2007, p.138). Hoptman further outlines the development of the term 'unmonumental':

> 'If the term "monumental" connotes massiveness, timelessness and public significance, the neologism "un-monumental" is meant to describe a kind of sculpture that is not against these values (as in "anti-monumental") but intentionally lacks them. Most obviously, the piecemeal, jury-rigged or put-together state of these new sculptures lends a distinct sense of contingency.' (Hoptman, 2007, p.138)

The modality of contingency as a development in sculpture seems to be greatly important. Montage sculpture, such as Gabriel Kuri's, presents speculative assertions of objects use-value and formal attributes.

Here, it is important to outline the reliance of montage sculpture on the exhibition context. Rosalind Krauss' recently wrote medium generates rules that allow a boundary of intention (as one would kick off the side of a swimming pool to enable you to start swimming) (Krauss, 2011, p.66). How this may operate outside of an exhibition scenario or avant-garde critique has had a less progressive recent history. An example of this can be seen in the post-minimalist artwork, *House* (1993-1994), by Rachel Whiteread. The casting of the inside of an Edwardian terrace house presented a monument 'at one and the same time hermetic and implacable, but also able to absorb into its body all those individual feelings and memories projected onto it' (Kester, 2004, p.20)[24]. The ambiguity of this monumental language proved to be ineffectual in a social reading and resulted in the demolition of the work in 1994. In Grant Kester's terms, this proved that new ways to engaging aesthetic discourse are required, moving away from an avant-garde hierarchy. Kester states:

> 'To interact with others we require a shared language, and even our visual experience involves a kind of literacy as we learn to interpret the conversations associated with photography, cinema, painting, street signs, and so on. These systems are necessary but also dangerous. They lead us to believe that the world is a fixed and orderly place and that we occupy a privileged position of stability and coherence within it. The role of art reminds us of the illusory nature of that coherence – to show us that our

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[24] Grant Kester is here quoting James Lingwood, in Lingwood's introduction to the book *Rachel Whiteread's House* (1995, p.8).

perception, and our very identities, are shifting, unstable, and contingent. [...] *House* did exactly what a good avant-garde work of art is supposed to do; it was provocative yet indeterminate, opaque yet open to differing responses.' (Kester, 2004, p.20)

The result of such hierarchical or oblique language of sculpture engaging with post-minimalist discourse in the public sphere can be seen as somewhat of a failure and shows a reliance on the space of exhibition to function. Specifically, if montage sculpture relies on processes of defamiliarisation or acting on a type of awkwardness, how can a shared language be developed?

Retaining a contingency when working with the sculptural may be of upmost importance. Sculpture is best active as an element within diverse medium conditions. Such components may engage the history of their making and the abilities of objects to relate to the world, though a relational modality and the production of spaces is of continuing importance. Jacques Rancière extrapolates this in his text *The Monument and its Confidences: or Deleuze and Art's Capacity of 'Resistance'* (2010). Rancière sets out how art in general can be spoken of in terms of the monumental, he sees this as being historically perceived as resistant. 'Resistance' is an agency of change or political reform, yet, not a practical term, as it does not involve risk (like activism). Rancière cites Gilles Deleuze, who states: art <u>is</u> politics[25] and the resistance of art has an embedded paradox. Deleuze asserts: 'the "things" called art are no longer defined, as before, by the rules of a practice. They are defined by their belonging to a specific sensory experience […] the artist must, intentionally, make a work capable of emancipating itself' (Rancière, 2010, p.179), a setting free from the powers of the 'inhuman'. The inhuman here may be read as nature, this may simply be the language of matter, such as stones, which have an inert capacity to pass through time. A 'setting free' is done at the risk of its meaning being taken up or captured by another ideological position. Deleuze's position is based on his belief that new works of art are utopic, in as much as, new stories generate new meaning and therefore new ways of peopling the earth. Rancière, opposed to Deleuze, cites Jean-François Lyotard's notion that art (as monument) becomes a testimony 'of the impassable alienation of the human and one of the catastrophe that arises from misrecognizing that alienation' (Rancière, 2010, p.182). Collective emancipation is, thus, a by-product of a free mind and capable of generating hierarchical or totalitarian thought. 'Resistance', as a word, actually designates the intimate and paradoxical links

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[25] This may be best rephrased as the 'political' – to clarify this I defer to Jean-Luc Nancy's brief definition: 'The political […] may serve to designate not the organization of society but the disposition of community' (Nancy, 1986, p.68).

between an idea of art and an idea of politics. The problem, as Rancière sees it, is to maintain the 'tensions' of art and politics – to a productive end. The fragmentation of art practices can possibly be seen as an open-ended discourse of how art, as monument, may maintain such a 'tension' and speculate on change – or a type of 'resistance'. I postulate that sculpture can continue to hold the tensions of the 'political' as the fungible systems activated by sculpture are inherently relational. Objects can persist (in Tucker's terms), as things of the world. This is in relation to a generational heritage of medium-specificity has fundamentally established sculpture as contingent. This flux in meaning (highlighted by the modalities of 'prop-objects' and the syntax of post-installation display) can develop as a progressive language of objects capable of maintaining productive tension, as artworks and as objects in the world. However this is bound to the production of space, in a general economy and exhibition setting. Of which I will address in the next thesis chapter.

From the Radical Object to Spatial Modality

Gabriel Kuri's work is an obvious example of the functioning of how an 'object among objects, [is] privileged by its unique configuration' (Tucker, 1969) and has prompted Jessica Morgan to state 'it is precisely the appearance of things out of place and out of context that allows the multiple and often hidden directives of the "life of things" to emerge' (Morgan, 2008, p.35). For Victor Shklovsky the purpose of art is to force us to notice. Since perception is usually too automatic, art develops a variety of techniques to impede perception. In this chapter I have set out how montage sculpture may do this. I have discussed how sculptural agency, may be currently seen in a history of modern sculpture and in a currently plural, or post-medium age. Thinking through Gabriel Kuri's work I have also discussed the specifics of montage sculpture as a post-installation practice and how objects may function in display scenario (the syntax of post-installation). I have shown that the term 'prop' may be a useful way of thinking about sculptures as entities in various, interconnected economies and thus notion of sculpture as 'resistant'. Of which Jan Verwoert states:

> 'It is necessary to renegotiate the criteria for thinking about medium-specific work because such work incorporates a specific moment of "resistant partiality", by generating its own temporality, its own memory, and therefore an economy of experience that is significantly different from the economy of experience imposed on us through the current conditions of labour. [...] when you discuss work in space it is no longer about tasteful composition but relationality in the wider sense of relations that exist between people in physical, social and cultural space. Rosalind Krauss puts

it beautifully: "The ambition of minimalism was then to relocate the origins of sculpture's meaning to the outside, no longer modelling its structure on the privacy of psychological space, but on the public conventional nature of what might be called cultural space."' (Verwoert, 2007, pp.30-31)

Verwoert's comments confirm the necessity of accounting for the nuanced, contingent display functions of contemporary sculpture and its relationship to cultural space. I believe sculpture is capable of augmenting artefactual and spatial relation to the world by retaining medium-specific significance and this has consequence in art production today. Seeing this as a component of display practices is increasingly important. Additionally seeing this as contingent to the production of space and as a fundamental sculptural precondition.

Chapter 2: Leverage (or Sculptural Spatial Production)

Practice – Theory: Part 2

In the solo exhibition *End/Success or Wonderful Forever* (2010) (Doc. 11-17), I devised a partitioning device; localising the other objects I produced and displayed within the gallery environment, this directly responded to the sliding scales of the cultural identities the work's materials established. It presented an interest in how commodity objects reference the conditions of cultural display. I wished to explore how this alludes to the production of space within culture. Before undertaking the residency I collaboratively wrote a performative talk, presented during an event at Auto Italia South East (as part of a project I co-curated), citing Don DeLillo's novel *White Noise*.

> 'The supermarket shelves have been rearranged. It happened one day without warning. There is agitation and panic in the aisles, dismay in the faces of older shoppers. […] There is a sense of wandering now, an aimless and haunted mood, sweet-tempered people taken to the edge. They scrutinise the small print on packages wary of a second level of betrayal […] In the altered shelves, the ambient roar, in the pain and heartless fact of their decline, they try to work their way through confusion. But in the end it doesn't matter what they see or think they see.' (DeLillo, 1985, pp.325-326)

This quote, in reference to the work produced, makes reference to both the agency of objects under a contemporary cultural condition, but also how we negotiate acute affirmation of space produced under late capitalist constraints – and how potent disruption can be to these conditions.

After the project I undertook in China I was asked to curate the artist Maria Theodoraki's solo exhibition at the James Taylor Gallery in London. JT Gallery, now closed, was in a former factory, china warehouse, squat, and film location in east London. This undertaking not only offered discussion with Theodoraki on what to include in the display (resulting in a short press-release text) (Appendix 3), but how to spatially choreograph the work. My result was to produce a wall, as a partitioning device – a central locus, which the works could operate around (Doc. 18-22). These projects presented a number of questions set against exhibition-making as a sculptural process. Firstly, how the space of a sculpture interfaces with exhibition space. And, secondly, whether exhibition space, beyond white cube conditions, directly relates to cultural spatial production.

My aforementioned experiences in Pakistan (12 months later) align these concerns to the local exhibition circumstance of exhibition-making. Experiencing first-hand the cultural pressures evident in Pakistan, coupled with a more commercial-orientated art scene, it became evident that exhibition-based spatial conditions differed greatly outside of a Western European network.

The specificities of how space is produced, closer to home, have been an ongoing interest, as a subject matter in my practice. Between 2009 and 2011 I co-curated a collective project entitled *American Mountains*. This project has had public outcomes in a number of iterations. Most importantly *American Mountains* (with myself and Richard Whitby as principle producers)[26], were asked to take part in a residency programme at Grand Union gallery, in Birmingham. During a self-instigated programme of talks, screening, seminars and performances, within the *Greenway* project, I scrutinised relationships between various acts of development/regeneration – focusing on spatial production. Others in the project focused on tourism, alienation and notions of projected impending doom. The result of the residency was a self-published book, edited, printed and distributed in the gallery space. The research for my texts, *8 Years* and *8 Days* (Appendix 4), included in the publication, enabled me to contextualise and conceptualise my concerns on how space is produced and began my thinking about 'leverage' devices, which has had a great impact on this chapter's research and findings.
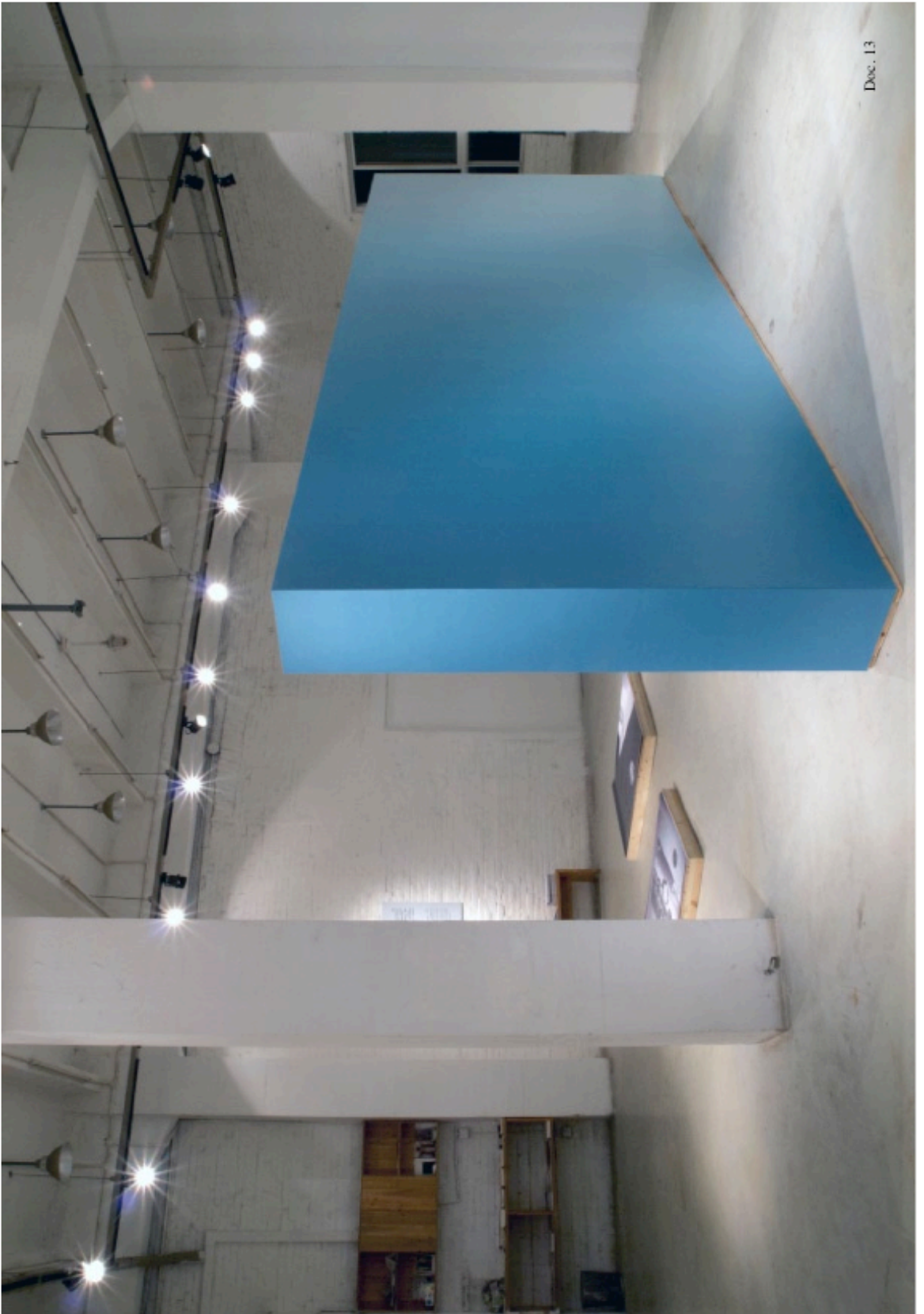

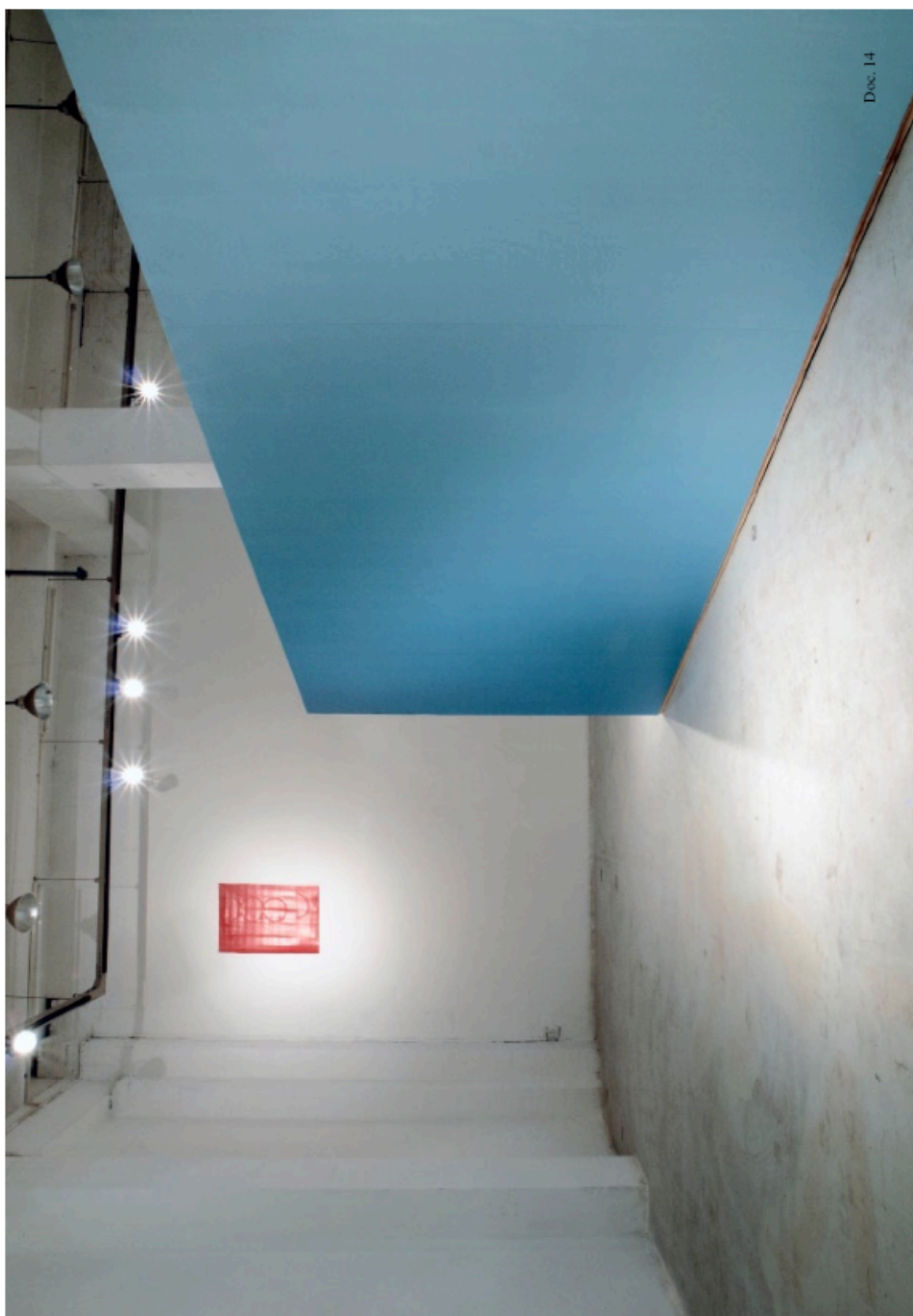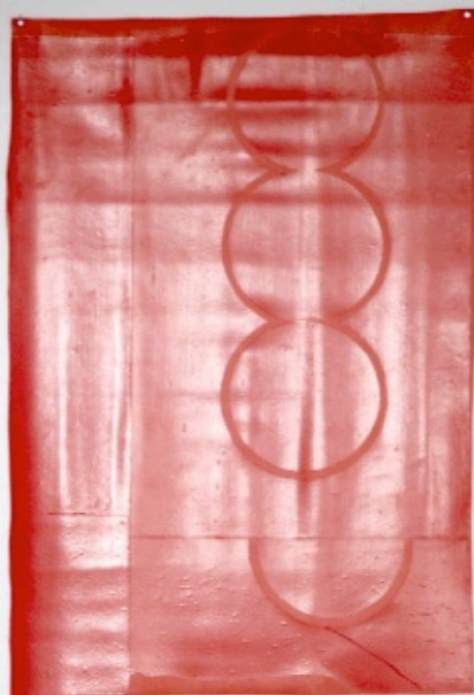[26] The specifics of working as co-producer on this project are outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.
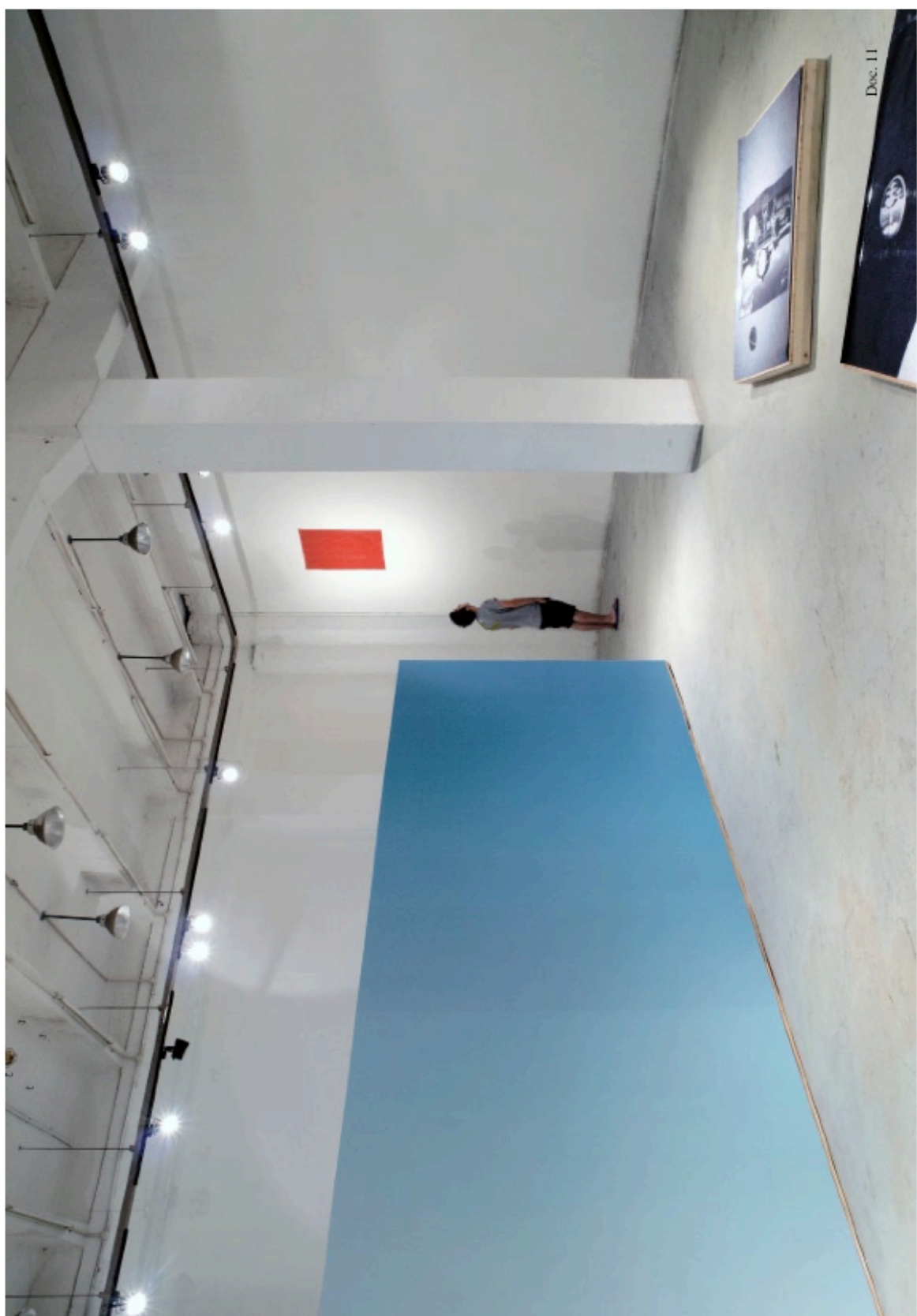
Doc. 15

A Sculpture, a Place, a Woman's Name – Plug Holes & Eye Holes

Henri Lefebvre wrote, spatial code is 'not simply a means of reading or interpreting space: rather it is a means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it' (Lefebvre, 1994, p.47) – a currently compliant post-transitory production. Melanie Counsell's practice since the late 1980s has seemed elusive, specifically in its errant formal enquiry and use of location, both in and out of galleries. However, she has consistently probed perceptions of time and materiality through the creation of architectonic sculptures and environments. In line with her ongoing thematic concerns Counsell's 2011 work *Lutecia* presented an intense set of propositions. Firstly, as the press release suggested, *Lutecia* was a 'primordial stick': a blackened wooden beam intersected the exhibition space; this beam had quadrupedal wooden supports and four raised extensions, all consistently dyed with black ink. It was a whole, to be perceived as an object (stood back from); it also was an image – it photographs well (Fig. 10, 11). The work was free-standing, yet capable of 'actual support of the gallery walls, [that] without its ostensible agency, may be at risk of toppling to the floor […] the work speaks of "domination and constraint"' (Trigg, 2011, p.29). On looking closer, two circles were painted directly on the gallery wall; this, secondly, proposed a notion of dependence. These key additions acted as propositional eye holes; are we, as spectators of the work, inside/wearing the mask or outside and being observed? Perhaps also these dots could reference plug holes in a ceramic sink poised to carry away the dirty overspill; either way we inquire, what is 'behind' the partitioned façade? One answer: literally the workings of a commercial gallery – the 'back room', where the sales, management and storage of work take place. The third proposition of the work was one of volume; the central wooden object both supports itself and intersects with the gallery's wall – as viewers we are not sure where the weight is functioning. These 'limbs' activate the elements of the structural gallery environment, with its white wall partitions, inside an ex-industrial unit. Additionally, in the exhibition were presented a cluster of coloured Perspex wall-mounted objects, to the side of the main part of the exhibition (Fig. 12, 13). These bright-coloured Perspex cases contained coloured screenprints, at times in the selection, to see through was to obscure; to see through was to cancel out the image underneath, specifically in the work *yellow yellow* – demonstrating its name (Fig. 14).
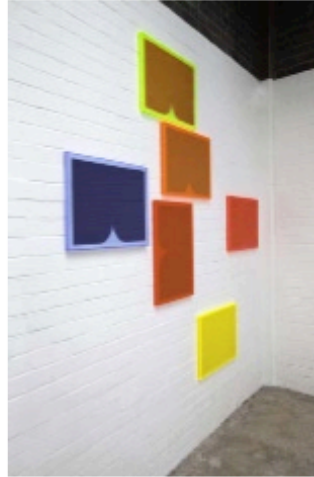
Fig. 10

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

Fig. 13

Fig. 14

These bright things, obtusely abstract, acted upon the simply stained timber form, partially presenting a mediation of the visible and invisible proposition of the main space. Counsell, by titling the work overall with the name *Lutecia*, both presents a location, a network and a singularity – a person, yet a society[27]. Importantly, the accompanying invitation card represented a blurred detail of a sex shop window – distorted by reflections. One can make out a headless mannequin wearing a bondage outfit – the lattice of PVC or faux-leather containing, or retaining, the wearer's body. This bodice neatly echoes the wooden form in the gallery; that, although it inside, as opposed to an object containing a 'body', initiates the same principles of domination and restraint[28]. The work confidently stakes claim to the physical properties of the gallery environment. Not only inhabiting the space but also suggesting a 'looking through'. This element resists a notion of commerce perhaps – exploiting complex spatial codes. To discuss only the materials that were present in the work *Lutecia* – stained wood, wall paint, prints and coloured Perspex – goes only a small way towards a description. Within this work there is a complex reciprocity of sculptural space engaged. The principle question here is: how is the term space currently employed for this work?

Lutecia as a sculpture, displayed as such in a gallery, a 'white cube', engages Brian O'Doherty's words – where, '[a] molecular shudder in the white walls becomes perceptible, there is a further inversion of context [or we may use the term setting] […] the white wall's apparent neutrality is an illusion. It stands for a community with common ideas and assumptions' (O'Doherty, 2000, p.77). Thirty-five years after having been written, this statement seems still relevant as the beginnings of a template for how space may be active in a gallery. And offers us the opportunity to examine how the complexities of the non-sovereignty of a gallery space (a macro-environment) evokes spatial codes as a wider exchange. Here, though, I wish to ascertain how the term space may be specifically aligned to sculpture before undertaking the debate within a wider remit.

This chapter contextualises the concept of spatial production and repurposes its usage within a contemporary sculptural discourse, setting out a problematic and addressing the politicised

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[27] This relates to Jean-Luc Nancy's text *The Inoperative Community*. Nancy outlines the intersubjectivity of subject-hood, encapsulated in his phrase: 'you shares me' (Nancy, 1986, p.67).
[28] This use of bondage references Robert Morris' 1974 Castelli-Sonnabend exhibition poster. Many people also see this as a catalyst for the Lynda Benglis ad in *Artforum*. The poster shows Morris naked to the waist, wearing a German Army helmet (Nazi vintage), mirrored aviator glasses, steel manacles and a spiked collar.

framework of sculptural exhibition space. This is done through examining the writings of Henri Lefebvre, Jacques Rancière, Deleuze and Guattari and Mark Fisher, repurposing the term space and reviewing how sculptural processes might operate within the complexes of current spatial production. The chapter's resulting argument employs the term 'leverage'; a mechanism of amplifying gains and losses. Leverage is an appropriated financial term, employed here as a conceptual tool to discuss the process of placing/installing a sculpture; I analysed how such production may be related to the constraints of producing work in reference to global art network.

A Spatial Problematic

To offer a summary, the spatialisation of sculpture has dramatically affected the reading and production of sculpture over the last 50 years. This is integral to the generational cycle of sculptural agency. Specifically, minimalism, site-specific, land-art, post-minimalism and relational discourses have extended the use of the term space. But, as Robert Morris asserts in his authoritative text *The Present Tense of Space* (1978), as he tours Michelangelo-designed Italian chapels, sculptural formalism has historically been in a 'precarious balance'. Between 'the "removed" and "self-contained" to that which is spatially "disposed" and "elevates the existential fact of placement of 'occupation'", thereby charging the object and space around it' (Morris, 1995, p.185).

It is however currently observable that the use of the term space within sculptural discourse is not as robustly debated as in 1978. A good example of this being the exhibition *Modern British Sculpture* at the Royal Academy of Arts in London (2011), which plotted an idiosyncratic trajectory of British sculpture, ending at the year 2000. I was struck by how, except for selling Gaston Bachelard's book *The Poetics of Space* in the gallery shop, amongst only a few other publications, the exhibition, through the work and supporting material, did not engage ideas, concepts or theories of space. This sits in direct opposition to another recent attempt at surveying the discipline, *Sculpture Show* (2010), curated by Ruth Claxton and Gavin Wade (another duo of artist/curators as with the RA exhibition). In the curators' introduction to the exhibition, at Eastside Projects in Birmingham, they note: 'each [selected] artist's work is seen as a tantalizing example of contemporary spatial, material and conceptual play that sets up new parameters for relating to the world' (Claxton and Wade, 2010). This usage at least suggests that the term is not totally redundant in a curatorial discourse.

Writing in 1991 Fredric Jameson in his seminal text, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, postulated that space can only be represented or spoken of as 'in motion'. Was he forecasting how new forms of space have been anthropologically and philosophically postulated in the subsequent two decades? In line with Jameson's 'motion', Miwon Kwon has portrayed the artist, the sculptor in transit. Kwon's notion of the 'itinerant artist', as international exhibition-maker, establishes 'the centrality of the artist as the progenitor of meaning' (Kwon, 2002, p.106), a shift from work, to the agency of artists' practice, via an inherent site-specific reference.

A 2011 retrospective of Gabriel Orozco's work at the Tate Modern in London is a suitable illustration of this motion or movement of the artist. This touring retrospective represented the large amount of sculptural gesturing Orozco has created within a nomadic art career over the past two decades. Writing in 2002, Kwon employs Thierry de Duve's statement that 'sculpture in the last twenty years [was] an attempt to reconstruct the notion of site from the standpoint of having acknowledged its disappearance' (Kwon, 2002, p.106). A disappearance, or blurred-in-motion perhaps, related to what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have explored in their writings on deterritorialisation.

The complexities of the matters of site, purposed by new codes of spatial production, are continuously evident. I am left thinking how the last ten years has presented an abundance of work that has sort to re-establish 'sites' – that are complex in their specific referencing, with subtle emphasis on form to create historicised, yet imagined locations[29]. I am, also, drawn to ask how the dynamics of subtle and sophisticated relationship to placement and display of a sculptural object, may activate spatial codes. I proposed in Chapter 1 that recent sculpture operates as a type montage agent, where composed items often engage the complexities of the space they occupy as a work and the space they are displayed within – a slippery and amorphous subject, one of reference to fungible systems.

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[29] We may specifically see Lucy Skaer's work as a good example here, namely her Chisenhale Gallery exhibition, *The Siege*, in 2008. Another example may be Manfred Pernice's three-part rolling exhibition *baldt1* (2 and 3) in England, Scotland and Belgium. Part one was exhibited at Modern Art Oxford (2010).

In taking several evolutionary steps backwards I turn to the landmark departure from representation and towards 'occupation' that minimalism implemented. As a type of foundation of these concerns, Hal Foster in his text *The Crux of Minimalism* (1996), states:

> 'Sculpture no longer stands apart, on a pedestal or as pure art, but is repositioned among objects and redefined in terms of place. In this transformation the viewer, refused the safe, sovereign space of formal art, is cast back on the here and now; and rather than scan the surface of a work for a topographical mapping of the properties of its medium, he or she is prompted to explore the perceptual consequences of a particular intervention in a given site.' (Foster, 1996, p.39)

Foster manifests the breakdown of formal space a (representative) sculpture may have historically utilised. He prioritises the present consequences of site that post-minimalist practice invokes. It is important however to be specific in reference to the term space, here, as a formal element of sculpture, rather than that of site or place. Michel de Certeau's economic definition is apposite, he states: 'place is an instantaneous configuration of positions' – with a general singular static identity. Space is 'composed of intersections of mobile elements […] actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it' (de Certeau, 2002, p.117). Foster also states that minimalism was not so much a postmodern entity, the prestige of sculpture, but the results of modernism, thus we are left with the perceptual consequences he outlines. I begin the pursuit of reinstating the term space in relation to current sculptural discourse by demarcating how sculpture may tackle a current mode of production – both aesthetic and political. How may sculpture tackle this mode of postmodernity or production? To address this question I will establish how the term space may or may-not be generally deployed outside the gallery or as a sculptural concern.

Production Values

I earlier introduced Jameson's notion of postmodern space as in-motion, and his continual linkage of the political condition that frames space as 'becoming'; or being produced. Everyday life is historically at the core of the use of the word space; Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord and Marc Augé extending the principle of space, in reference to the everyday, drawn up by Henri Lefebvre as far back as 1947 in his text *The Critique of Everyday Life*. Lefebvre's post-Marxist theory is worked through in his 1974 text *The Production of Space*. In the last 30 years an obvious rhizomatic spread of the complications of late capitalism has extended these concerns.

Referencing Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gaston Bachelard, Henri Lefebvre's phenomenological approach of the analysis of space, as a totality, is aligned to the temporal activity of production and not subordinate to a mental, a-priori philosophy. Lefebvre's initial motivation in establishing a unitary theory of space is based in his criticism of fields of enquiry (epistemology) that have only thought of space as a 'mental thing' – a mental space. To objectify production, through a social and thus political outlook, one derived from the analysis of space itself and not a philosophical or political hegemonic ideology; this was a key development and reason for analysing Lefebvre's contribution. Lefebvre critiques the Cartesian notion of subject (cogito) and Noam Chomsky's linguistic views that eliminates the collective subject and the prefacing of a central figure in creation of space. Lefebvre's critique of the fetishisation of mental space foregrounds the hegemonic[30] issues of space and power (Lefevbre, 1994, p.8). Implicit in this overview is the acknowledgement of the current mode of general production. Generalising the current mode as 'neo' or 'late' capitalist, Lefebvre claims the production of space in totality exhibits three fundamental principles. Firstly, it represents the political use of knowledge; secondly, the implications of an ideology designed to conceal this use in any given space – again this draws great attention to the capitalist juncture. Thirdly, space embodies a technological utopia – i.e. a simulation of the future in a current environment or a forecasting of further production. As a post-Marxist theorist the central purpose for his study was to critique and to not propagate this mode.

We can map Deleuze and Guattari's pathologising of the everyday to these concerns. They discuss the complex of the modern condition as *schizo*, a (metaphoric) figure who lives history; disorientated by not having the distance of a coherent historicity (Buchanan, 2005, p.17). This pathology persists, repurposed by Mark Fisher in his 2009 text *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*. Fisher discusses the pace of assimilation of commodified information and retrospective outputting which results in a state of depression, at the heart of our current spatial production. In this schema Deleuze and Guattari affirm differentiation of space is needed; namely, smooth space and striated space, 'nomad space [heterogeneous] and sedentary space [homogenous]' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p.474). However, space as primarily a social problematic, outlined in detail by Lefebvre, is at the core of the complexities of the term. It is aligned to the flux of modern theory that key subsequent

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[30] Lefebvre clarifies his usage of the word 'hegemony' to mean dominant neo-capitalist elite, rather than simply any one class.

writers have floundered at directly employing space as a unified term; this lack thus is linked to a spatial problematic.

As Lefebvre writes, primary to the spatial discourse is the radical potentials of production: '"Change life!" "Change society!" These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.59). Lefebvre discusses the stakes: in 1974, he wrote, 'space is at once result and cause, product and producer; it is also a *stake*, the locus of projects and actions deployed as part of specific strategies, and hence also of wagers on the future' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.143). Retention of this ideological grounding persists, specifically in Jacques *Rancière*'s writings on aesthetics which retains the radical potentials in production and the aesthetic feedback loop integral to political engagement, as Slavoj *Žižek* summarises: 'poetic displacements and condensations are not just secondary illustrations of an underlying ideological struggle, but the very terrain of this struggle' (Žižek, 2006, p.77). This is perhaps evident in the virtual and actual spaces and aesthetics of recent Middle-Eastern revolutions and the meta-communication in the West. Žižek goes on to state, 'the "postmodern" politics of resistance is permeated with aesthetic phenomena, from body-piercing and cross-dressing to public spectacles' (Žižek, 2006, p.79).

In an attempt to negotiate a way back to employing the term space within sculpture or exhibition display I wish to analyse the specifics of the notion of spatial production with in an exhibition scenario. Here, I return to Lefebvre's core principle to define, what, in Jameson's terms, is the continual empirical 'formal framework' space accords – spatial production within sculpture.

Why Are There Quotation Marks Around the Word 'Empty'?

First published in 1989, Robert Morris' text *Three Folds in the Fabric* outlines a view of a century's art production – housed within three distinct and interrelated paradigms. The set up to this discussion notates the forces that impinge on these distinctions, primarily the surrounding forces of the art environment, 'where "empty" space exerts a hand'[31]. Morris writes: 'narratives are shaped by subtle and pervasive networks of power relations […] One has to account for such things […] those contextual pressures of museums and galleries' architectural styles, where "empty" space exerts a hand' (Morris, 1995, p.262). There

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[31] Morris additionally uses quotation marks around the word 'silent', when discussing discourses and power structures relating to the commercialisation of art.

appears a contradiction in Morris' statement, although acknowledging contextual pressures on the reading of a work he tentatively states (through the use of unattributed quotation marks) that gallery space is empty. Is it not the case that the forces he articulates are to be considered inherent in the issues of spatial practice and production as a whole? Emptiness being a representation of space, reinforced by an ideological system, is a mental voiding process that is representative of a one-dimensional view of analysis of production. Lefebvre is unequivocal in his mapping of representation to an error of an absolute or ideological system.

> 'The notion of a space which is at first empty, but is later filled by social life and modified by it, also depends upon this hypothetical initial "purity", identified as "nature" and as a sort of ground zero of human reality. Empty space in the sense of a mental and social void which facilitates the socialization of a not-yet-social realm is actually merely a representation of space.' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.190)

Representation of space is a composite part to experience and production, and here, I wish to address the complexities of Lefebvre's triadic analysis – representation, conceived and lived values as a three-dimensional theory of experience and production. Lefebvre's core principle in the unitary theory of the production of space is routed in a social relational model, a materialist theory that places a human or practitioner at the core of production, however refuting the 'I' or an a-priori concept. Central to his notion is that space is neither empty, nor the polar opposite, a 'material'. Space doesn't exist in itself; it is produced. Even through the complexities, and differentiations proposed by subsequent writers such as Deleuze and Guattari the principle of production is still primary.

For Lefebvre the analysis of production is located according to a dual tripedic system, linguistic/dialectical and phenomenological, in the lineage of Georg Hegel, Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche, Lefebvre's dialectic position is one beyond this text's project. However, what is demonstrable is Lefebvre's theory as a relational one – recuperating the Nietzschean view of language as metaphor. Christian Schmid, in his review of *The Production of Space,* positions Lefebvre's socio-relative linguistic understanding: '[for Lefebvre] what then is language? Lefebvre answers with Nietzsche's definition of truth: "What, then is truth? A mobile army of metaphor, metonyms, anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations"' (Schmid, 2008, p.35). Lefebvre transposes this to the linkage of space and society; 'an architecture of concepts, forms and laws […] imposed on the reality of the senses' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.139). Applying a three-dimensional analysis of: spatial

practice, a representation of space and spaces of representation, Lefebvre therefore postulates the systems of activity within space correspond to that of a linguistic system[32] (Schmid, 2008, p.34).

Lefebvre, in uniting perceptual, mental, individual and social fields in production, reinforces the proposition that the term 'empty' is non-applicable to space. Simply that space is produced (via the triad) and not a dormant item, 'frame', 'form', nor 'container' – but space is a 'social morphology […] intimately bound up with function and structure' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.94). Schmid states: 'this trinity is at once individual and social; it is not only constitutive for the self-production of man but for the self-production of society. All three concepts denote active and at once individual and social processes' (Schmid, 2008, p.39). The term empty space is then an abstraction or in Lefebvre's words an error or illusion of a kind of absolute – a non-practicality. We can only assume Morris' use of quotation marks are employed to indicate intent in distancing himself from being overtly complicit in such an absolute.

In light of this, it is imperative to take care when stating a work is spatially focused, a term adopted from Robert Morris, and taken on by Boris Groys, who states in his 2009 text *The Politics of Installation*: 'installations transform the empty, neutral, public space into an individual artwork' (Groys, 2009). This insistence of the artist's sovereign will, as creator, that Groys goes on to state, annexes and slows installation-based sculptural practices' ability to react to the contemporary pressures and potentials of spatial production. Furthermore, in light of post-performative, socially engaged practices[33] that implement expanded spatial debates, the agency of sculptural work meets these discourses. The complexities of spatial production are applicable to the range of art production, which engages or activates a locale – sculpture faces these complexities. This is surely what makes Lefebvre's core principle of production valid and of current and continual importance. At this stage I wish to think

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[32] Lefebvre's phenomenological hypothesis of spatial production triangulates three reference points. These are: 1) *Perceived space* – relating to perception and materiality of components comprising things that present themselves to the senses and that constitute space. 2) *Conceived space* – mapped to the production of knowledge, conceived space is the pre-sensory thought process that frames perception. 3) *Lived space* – the world as it is experienced by human being or the sovereign, un-analytical, practical experience of existence.

[33] An example of this may be the Showroom Gallery's programme, specifically, Annette Krauss' fellowship, resulting in the exhibition *(in)visibilities* (2012). Other examples may be the Edgware Road Project (The Centre for Possible Studies), or some of the activities of no.w.here (artist-run organisation).

through how current processes in culture may augment the spatial codes and how this may be directly applied to sculptural processes.

A Frontier & Lever

Deleuze and Guattari post-Jameson have explored the notion of postmodern space as disorientatingly in-motion, stating that motion's function acts as an abstract machine – 'influencing thinking without being itself thinkable' (Buchanan, 2005, p.26). The results of this motion, this passing through, are what Mark Augé anthropologically explores in his text *Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (1995). If we can generally consider disorientation, or de-localisation, being a process of deterritorialisation, as Deleuze and Guattari set out (1987), is any part of this process implicit in effecting any type of change (or exploration/critique) of a current spatial modality? Deterritorialisation is for Deleuze and Guattari an entropic process, where reterritorialisation is not restorative but compensatory[34]. Reterritorialisation is then a vernacular (Jameson has termed home-value), which is evident throughout production in general.

Branching off the Mile End Road, in east London, economically bound to the current Olympic developments and redevelopments (framing the district)[35] are a large number of private and social housing units in development – this is where I live and work. The way these buildings manifest and propagate a current modality is distinct. The demarcation around the footprint of the site of these developments is established by the building of hoardings; made from plywood and often painted variations of red, white and blue in cheap gloss paint. The hoardings function as partition walls and act as reterritorialising structures within the city. These structures aid the insertion of an object (a building), but also an ideology, mainly through anticipation; implemented by computer generated visualisations and enigmatic slogans attached to the hoardings, and, viewing holes cut in the walls to watch the progress of the work. These processes deterritorialise, disbanding the populous – geographically and historically. The agency of the reterriorialising intent is active through the promise of the re-creation of community and culture (Fisher, 2009, p.59). However this is at the forefront of political ideology and does not replace culture, but compensates for its loss. These hoarding façades illustrate the act of leverage of these ideas into a landscape.

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[34] This also related to Jameson's notion of 'home-value' or tokens.
[35] An ongoing impact of this on local art production is outlined by Jennifer Thatcher in her text *Olympic Art*, in *Art Monthly*, September 2012.

Here, I am employing the word leverage in reference to finance, where it is used as a general term for any method used to multiply gains and losses. This implemented accumulation may be seen as a type of spatial over-coding. Relevant to this, Iain Sinclair has referred to such developments, specifically the Olympic and Westfield shopping centre developments in the area, using the art/sculptural term, of 'ready-mades' (Sinclair, 2008)[36].

These processes and structures seem unique, acting as 'frontiers' for a local production of space. I use the term frontiers approximated from Michel *de Certeau*. In his text *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), de Certeau discusses space as a receptacle for narrative. Coupled with Lefebvre's assertion of the relational coda of spatial production, de Certeau aesthetically outlines the confinement process of production.

> 'It is the partition of space that structures it […] from the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority [or the totalizing effects of capitalism] to the distinctions that localize objects. There is no spatiality that isn't organized by the determination of frontiers.' (de Certeau, 2002, p.123)

A frontier is a political (ideological) and geographical term referring to areas near or beyond a boundary. However, de Certeau postulates that frontiers are a type of void space within the reflexive position between geography and aesthetic discourse. However I wish to assert that these frontiers, these hoardings, walls, partitions, which are active in my local landscape, are far from voidal, but containing the inherent information of a specific network's ideology[37].

How may this analysis be useful in thinking about the production of space within a post-installation artwork or exhibition? The wall of a gallery is specifically a territorial entity but also as Brian O'Doherty suggested in his 1976 text *Inside the White Cube*, it offers an ideological space or frontier as well. The act of partitioning that these development sites demonstrate truly produces space and evidences a current modality much in the same way O'Doherty suggests galleries' 'white cube' walls may be considered.

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[36] I discuss this more in my text *8 Months or 8 Days* (2001) (Appendix 4).
[37] This is specifically evident in the abundant use of nationalistic colours (red, white and blue) or British racing green, coupled with displaying computer-generated idealised images of the proposed developments. I see this as a clear example of what Jameson postulates in his text *The Antinomies of Postmodernity*. Where he states the development of a culture, which at once foregrounds the immediate (the promise of new buildings) and simultaneously is excessively nostalgic, retrospective and un-original (Jameson, 2009, p.52).

> 'With postmodernism, the gallery space is no longer "neutral". The wall becomes membrane through which aesthetic and commercial values osmotically exchange. As this molecular shudder in the white walls become perceptible, there is a further inversion of context […] the white wall's apparent neutrality is an illusion. It stands for a community with common ideas and assumptions […] it is imperative for every artist to know this content and what it does to his/her work.' (O'Doherty, 2000, p.77)

O'Doherty's claim, that the white cube gallery spaces are boundaries of an accumulated understanding of art and how it can or must be seen. I am drawn to thinking how sculptural art works may be active with and against such a context. This may be thought through using the term leverage. Leverage is: application of force by a lever or an object used in the manner of a lever. This is a mechanistic advantage or a symbolic power used to influence a person or situation. In physics it is a torque; a (power) multiplier. I want to be clear that I use the word as a tool to evoke the political, and aesthetic stance of an individual or corporation on an environment – a technique of multiplying gains and losses. Far from finance this seems a physical procedure. The assertive sculptural devices that work with, and, against these current principles can be termed 'leverage' devices. In the work *Lutecia* Melanie Counsell exploits a sculptural spatiality, and the aesthetic and political contexts such a reading presents, albeit utilising a highly formal vernacular. Addressing the audience as one that participates within this production – the theatre and the audience amalgamate. The resulting work inhabits and tests the space whilst concurrently staking claim to its production through a sculpture that sits in the space, and represents architectonic bondage. Counsell's work, using physical forms, and economic means (a simple timber construction), levers its way into the space of the gallery – multiplying spatial properties. It advantageously asserts its power and presence on the situation. It implies you move around the environment, and, most importantly, as I stated at the beginning of this text, suggests a 'looking-through', thus establishing a critique of its spatial complicity. Reiterating Lefebvre's words, a spatial code is, 'not simply a means of reading or interpreting space: rather it is a means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it' (Lefebvre, 1994, p.47). Counsell's work *Lutecia*, as a sculpture, confidently acts with and upon this code, wryly suggesting it is holding up the walls.

Space and Locality

I recognise the edges of this project's analysis – these being a current British and Northern European understanding of exhibition space and sculptural medium-specificity and agency.

However, to frame this research it is important to note the current developments relating to this. I do this in light of the expanding framework of display – the developing economies of art fairs and biennials. Increasingly, these are arenas where temporary, commandeered and appropriated locations house artworks, both from diverse geographic production bases and works that rely on diverse or variant relationships to critique and methodologies of dealing with spatial production. I have touched on a notion of circulation, in Chapter 1, where I discussed sculptures as prop-objects. These objects have the capacity to interface with a growing global art or 'the circulation of art around the globe' (Phillips, 2008, p.26). In Andrea Phillips' terms, these objects potentially produce a 'heteronymous space' – an imagined global. Here, I wish to briefly assess how sculptural spatial production may interface with the locations produced by biennials. To do this I will examine a work by the artist Gedi Sibony, presented in the 2010 Berlin Biennial.

Oranienplatz 17, a building in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin, housed a large percentage of works in the 2010 Berlin Biennial – entitled *was draußen wartet – what is waiting out there*. The curatorial conceit was to question the awkward term 'reality'. On the fourth floor of the building, Gedi Sibony's work *This is How it Will Look* (2010) comprised various items: a picture frame stripped of its contents and a cut plywood form – dependent on the wall for support (Fig. 15). The central locus for the works initially looked like a forgotten biennial display booth. Consisting of three partition walls, sat at slight oblique angles to the building's symmetry, constructed in the guise of the other temporary exhibition partitioning, creating an enclosure, without any other additional artist-made items inside the specifically placed walls, acted as a framing device for a tiled star embedded in the building's floor (Fig. 16). I have shown a work's spatialisation is reliant on the 'complications' of the gallery space it is installed within. Addressing Sibony's work directly, what might be the forces impacting on his work *This is How it Will Look*? Specific considerations here may be: the framework of the biennale and its complex visitor demographic, its curatorial thesis, and the position a sculpture occupies. We can consider the economy and history of the building's location; inside the building we must consider the history and agency of the materials of its construction. In addition, the way the building has undergone renovation and how this detailing reacts on the origins: for example the light conduits, new fixtures and fittings and the 'un-finish' of the renovation. What renovation may indicate and how it impacts on the materiality of the work in question is also important to address. We can also consider the energy forces flowing into the building and the surpluses and waste leaking out.

Fig. 15

Fig. 16

Finally, let us bear in mind the city, and, its relationship to the building, biennale, the work and the viewer. The list goes on and on, however as stated, it is important to address these as elements that make up a distinct and defined space through action and interaction. However, Sibony's work is an example of the extended spatial complexities of the display environment, implicit in the form and context of a work. Sibony's work points towards an issue of transposition, or meta-production. By creating a framing device that foregrounds a building's interior architecture detail, Sibony is framing the meta-coding of biennial exhibition space alongside, if not more than, the local building's historical identity. Jan Verwoert has discussed the complexities of biennials, operating as sites that host the 'international' concerns of art display in a 'local' environment. This is not simply subjecting artworks to local concerns of site, but, additionally over-codes the spatial concerns of art display with transportative agency. Verwoert states: 'in art the collective subjectivity of the international exists in a complex state of diaspora' (Verwoert, 2007, p.218). He goes on to position the 'international', as a collective notion of economy and the generation of meaning in the production and display of art – 'curiously, the international is often perceived as the centre and source of power within the arts, when in effect the international is always needy and in want of the support by the local without which it can literally incarnate itself' (Verwoert, 2007, p.218). The result of this, Verwoert postulates, is that, rather than putting the concerns of a local site (a host city) centre stage, but the locale is subject to a temporary marginalisation – of which I term an over-coding or meta spatial production. Verwoert states:

> 'The return which the local can expect from the international for hosting these needy guests is therefore not the temporary promotion to the rank of a centre but rather the invitation to join the margins. In a sense this offer to take a ride on the margins is precisely the experience an international biennial can provide by assembling artists, work and ideas under the auspices of the local.' (Verwoert, 2007, p.219)

Such a temporary (marginal) over-coding is a complex, itinerant and amorphous generator of meaning. The processes of leverage, I set out in this chapter, are greatly complicated by such concerns. However, in line with the notion of the prop-object, and the capabilities of sculpture to interface with spatial codes, object-based practices can reinforce these issues but also have the ability to exploit these concerns. The postmodern is often characterised by binary oppositions. One of these could be seen as being called gallery/not gallery, or, inside the gallery/outside the gallery. Biennials propose themselves, often to take over a city, by

utilising specific buildings[38] as representations of a city. It may then be more productive to move beyond a binary position and think of potentials of such temporary display locations (and their new spatial codes) and the agency of the sculptural in reference to such codes.

Space to Mnemonics

The current make-up of spatial production is complex; drawing on postmodern analysis, I have outlined the problematic of the term. I believe the complexities of spatial production are extremely important to sculptural agency and object-based practices. I have discussed how the term may be applied, and how 'local' production processes can be used as an insight of how contemporary sculpture can multiply the gains and losses of its space. This 'leverage' may be seen as the ability for sculptural practice to discuss, or be relevantly in-conversation with current spatial-productive concerns located in site. The bombastic spatial processes of the 1970s (such as those of Gordon Matta-Clark and Robert Smithson), and the 'poetics' of the 1990s (Rachel Whiteread and Gregor Schneider), attractive as they were, do not seem now sufficient: that what is needed is a nuanced, inherited, complex approach – both involved, yet antagonistic to, the current spatial mode; subsuming, spatial 'complex'.

To this point I have examined how the sculptural currently augments medium-specific concerns. Yet, Fredric Jameson has outlined a notion of postmodern space as capable of subsuming time. He states:

> 'From Proust to store fronts, from urban change to global "development" – now begin to remind us that if it is so that postmodernity is characterized by some essential spatialization, then everything we have been trying to work out in terms of temporality will necessarily have passed through a spatial matrix to come to expression in the first place. If time has in effect been reduced to the most punctual violence and minimal irrevocable change of an abstract death, then we can perhaps affirm that in the postmodern time has become space anyhow.' (Jameson, 1991, p.62)

Jameson's position is that, in a postmodern era, our idea of time, being capable of expanding and contracting to accommodate political and ideological change, has collapsed into a spatial production – that is, in stasis. If time is subordinated or annexed by late capitalist spatial production, I am now drawn to question of how memory, or mnemonic

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[38] A good example of this is the 2012 Liverpool Biennial, which used the Liverpool John Moores University Copperas Hill Building, which from 1977 to 2010, was a purpose-built Royal Mail sorting office.

structures, may be examined and purposed by sculpture and display practices, to deal with these concerns.

Chapter 3: Forgetful Memory

Practice – Theory: Part 3

One of the central practical outcomes of this research project was a curatorial project presented in December 2010: *GOTTA GETTAWAY* (Doc. 23-28). The exhibition, installed and re-installed over three days, included found objects alongside artworks by artists Anna Barriball, Magali Reus and Katie Schwab. Extrapolated from an account of a house fire at Quare Project Space sometime in its domestic history, the drawing together of a collection of works and objects was indexed to a relationship of violence, either subjective or systemic in its value – outlined in the project's press release (Appendix 5). The exhibition provided me with the opportunity to observe how object-based artworks can 'react' with one another and how relationships may be altered through various placements. Neil Cummings eloquently expands on the exciting complexities regarding objecthood and commodities we daily encounter, stating:

> 'Most of our material world, like the iceberg, lies beneath the threshold of our comprehension. Things flow past and rest silently as a sediment shaping our consciousness. If our experience of time is dovetailed into the representation of the present, the object, like the pop song, can snare the fleeting moment as it falls away from memory.' (Cummings, 1993, p.14)

This curatorial project led on to working with artist Katie Schwab, undertaking the aforementioned Jerwood Visual Arts project. The project title, *MY(WE),* came about through the extensive research period, responding to the title of the dystopian science fiction novel by Yevgeny Zamyatin (1921) and its paradoxical translation: sometimes *My,* sometimes *We*. This title framed an interest in how objects index communal relationships to images and forms and resulted in me asking how objects can pull possible pasts into a present? And, how can sculpture activate collective mnemonic systems? These enquiries were further explored whilst on the residency in Pakistan. Specifically, in researching the ideological erasure of buildings and burial sites. The notion of binaries: my/we, collectivity/loneliness, demolish/build, has become an ongoing concern and resulted in two short texts: *On Collectivity and On Loneliness* (published as a Jerwood commission) (Appendix 6).

Another practical result from the project I undertook in China was evident in a commissioned image-based work for the *SisterMAG#1* publication in 2011. The work *The End (Denim Shirt Version)* (Doc. 29) is an image of an iconographic badge, photographed worn on a denim shirt. The clarity of the photographic representation highlights its existence

now, yet the image alludes to another era and possibly outmoded political gesture. This resulted in a work that enquires into how objects relate to history or more specifically collective memory – commemoration through daily perfomative actions and worn objects.
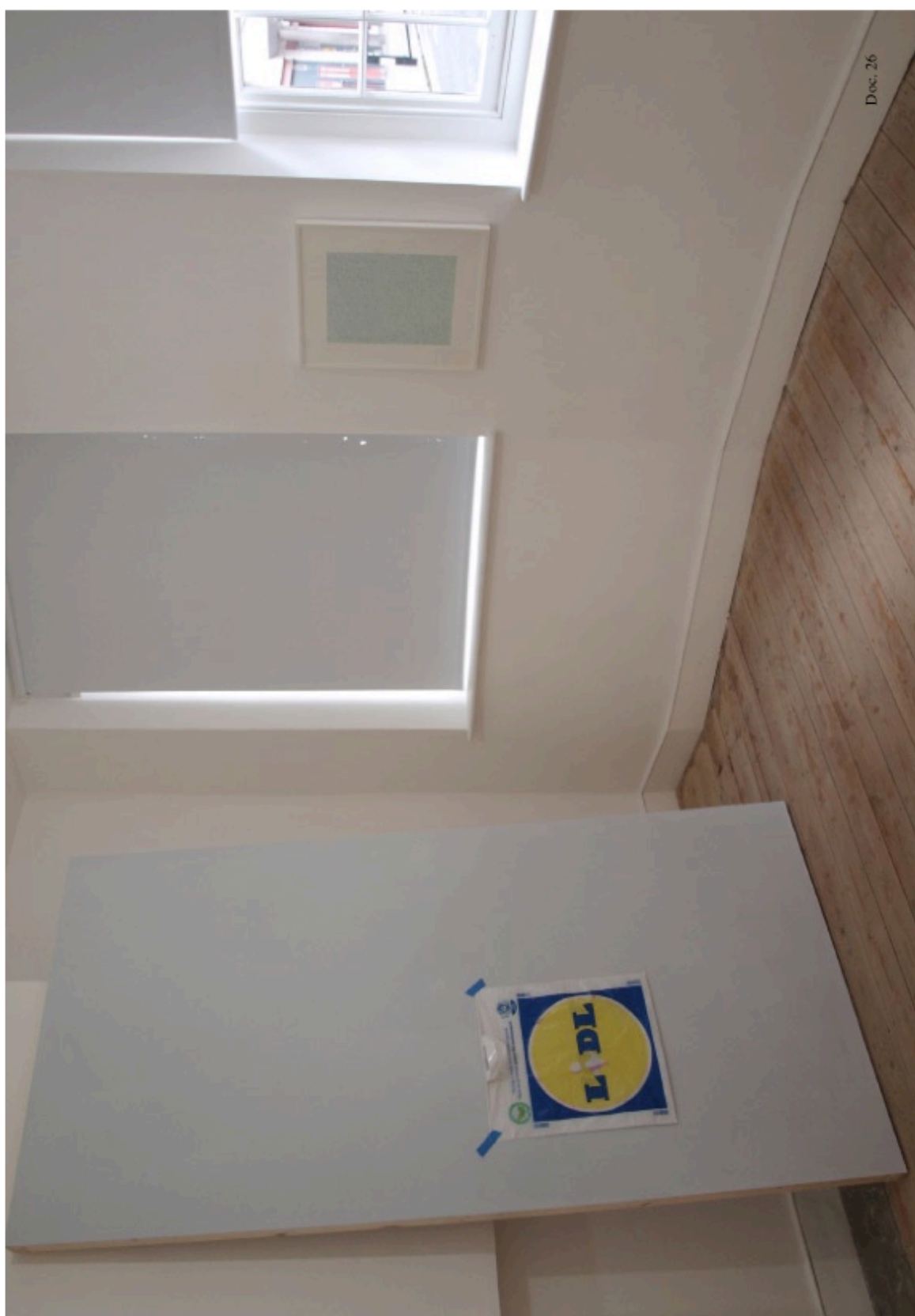
These projects build up a cumulative body of work that individually investigated and enquired into the concerns within the thesis as a whole. Specifically in the final chapter: exploring notions of time, mnemonic structures and the role of art, subject to notion of late-capitalist duress.

Doc. 28
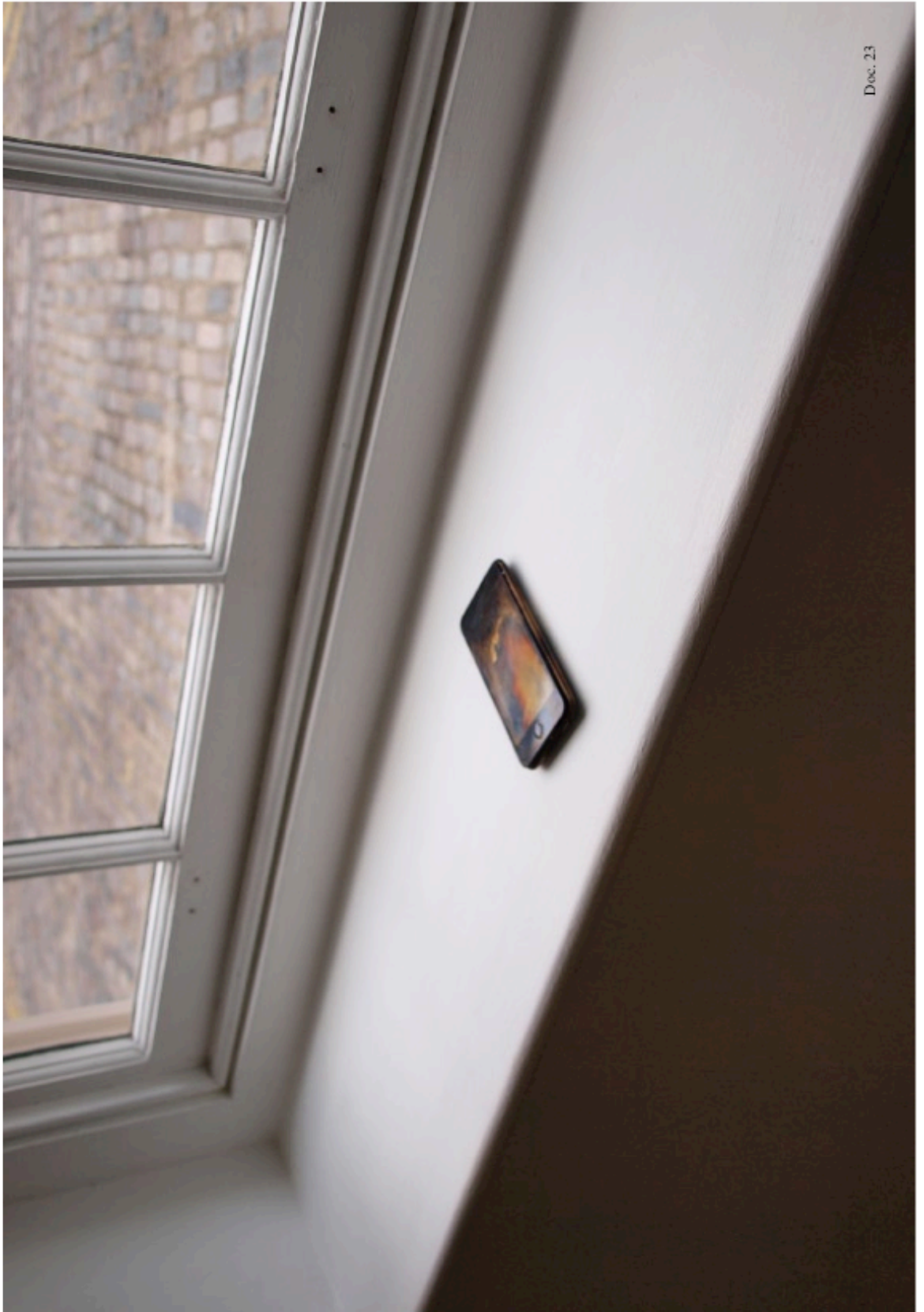
How Modernity Forgets

In the previous chapters I have discussed how contemporary sculptural production interfaces with the production of space, in line with recognising the tropes of how such sculpture relates to the plurality of media. It becomes important to position how this may relate to a notion of time. Thus, how the function of history or rather memory may be relevant to the making of such sculpture today. Memory studies have, over recent years, been a highly debated area corresponding to the notion of the 'end of history',[39] relationships to cultural trauma, media-technology developments and the dominance of a culture of *archivisation* of modern times. In his book *How Modernity Forgets* (2009) Paul Connerton politicises the current cultural condition, stating 'the inextricable mixture of art, the market and the mass media leads to a situation in which it becomes more and more difficult for those who are creative to be "forgetful"' (Connerton, 2009, p.146). Connerton further states we live in a paradoxical culture where memory and *archivisation* creates the fever of 'hypermnesia'[40] – an exceptional accurate memory in cultural terms. Yet, to examine the time structures produced by contemporary political economy, the temporalities of consumption of information production, the inherent forgetting of the labour process in consumption and the production of modern space, we must also conclude we are living in a post-mnemonic, 'forgetful' culture (Connerton, 2009, p.146).

Ideas of the politics of memory are not new, and not without previous alignment to the production of sculpture. In his essay *Sculpture, Materiality and Memory in an Age of Amnesia,* Andreas Huyssen states 'our discontents […] flow from informal and perceptual overload combined with a cultural acceleration neither our psyche nor our senses are that well equipped to handle' (Huyssen, 1998, p.34); echoing a fuller statement and question in his text *Present Pasts: Media, Politics and Amnesia* (2000), where he states, 'the faster we push into a global future that does not inspire confidence, the stronger we feel the desire to slow down, the more we turn to memory for comfort. But what comfort is to be had from memories of the twentieth century?! And what are the alternatives? (Huyssen, 2003, p.25). Huyssen's response is to suggest differentiating between types of memory and the agencies of 'individual, generational, public, cultural and, still inevitably national memory' (Huyssen, 2003, p.25-26). Determinedly stating this complex in 2000, Huyssen sets up the conditions

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[39] This is attributed to Francis Fukuyama and his book *The End of History and The Last Man* (1992).
[40] Hypermnesia as a medical terms refers to an unusually good ability to remember, found in some mental disorders and possibly in hypnosis.

for what he terms 'memory sculpture' (his essay supporting the exhibition, *Displacements*, including the work of Doris Salcedo, Rachel Whiteread and Miroslaw Balka). For Huyssen memory sculpture generationally inherited some spatially activating tropes of minimalism but 'is not centred in spatial configuration alone, but powerfully inscribes a dimension of localizable, even corporeal memory into the work' (Huyssen, 2003, p. 110). These works addressed a singular viewer and worked against articulating 'official' memory. Through process, scale, placement and recouping the often close-to-hand (salvaged and reconfigured materials), these works foreground 'lived memory'. Lived memory is always 'located in individual bodies, their experiences and their pain, even when it involves collective, political, or generational memory […] this kind of work is not energized by the notion of forgetting' (Huyssen, 2003, pp.110-111). In the preceding decade sculpture has undergone what may be termed as a fragmentation and re-configuration as previously outlined. Sculpture is often more complex in its referentiality, downplaying biography and often more speculative in its historical alignment. Here a brief example may be posited using the German artist Isa Genzken, whose work, after September 11 2001, fractured from post-minimalist singular works, which displayed utopic and dystopic aesthetic concerns, to an essentially expedient, often contradictory semi-representational configuration of materials; mixing systems of reference and scale. This was perhaps first evident in *Empire/Vampire, Who Kills Death* in 2003. This trope of fragmentation has been extremely visible in sculptural production in the last ten years and I have discussed how it relates to the issues of the pluralisation of media and sculptural agency. Sculpture has additionally been augmented in recent years by the development of work exploiting notions of the materiality of digital media and its relationship to cultural narratives – resulted in sculpture also negotiating these complex states.

A reading of Michael Dean's exhibition *Government* at the Henry Moore Institute (2012) can take on some of these ideas of information overload, media specific development and cultural (rather than biographical) memory. Three exhibition spaces at the Henry Moore Institute contained substantial concrete surfaces, leant against the walls, placed on a pervading woollen carpet. The final room displayed a flat-screen video monitor (placed on the floor) and a concrete 'cabbage', *Analogue Series (Cabbage)* (2012), approximating a skull, which accompanied the viewer whilst watching the screen. The video work *Tendance (Working Title)* (2012) effectively set up the schema for experiencing the body of work within the exhibition. The onscreen subtitled text builds on repetition and reads:

'"Tendance limit living on to an indefinite premises of stays," "This visible incidence of lying, knelt, leant, seat, sat, stood and standing the floors support with the walls limit." "Holds and shapes taken on staying upon available shapes and holds sustain association."' (Dean, 2012, p.51)

Dean's works engage and question what is known and what is to be known through action, and haptic and spatial experience highlighted in this text. Dean's work and exhibition sustaining the potency of association of physical information and suspends strong and illusive personal/physical and collective processes of remembrance. I wonder if this turn towards referencing the complexities of the viewer's reception within culture, as opposed to preceding 'memory sculptures' biographic and colloquial presentation, may be directly aligned to a more complex relationship to historical information or rather collective or cultural memory and forgetting?

Addressing these concerns in this chapter, I will begin by discussing how I purpose the term 'forgetful memory,' in reference to Maurice Blanchot's text of the same name. I explore how it may relate to the reading of art through the work of Marc Camille Chaimowicz and his 2010 exhibition at Secession in Vienna; or forgetful memory through reference. To place these ideas in a contemporary and historic context I make reference to the Nietzschean notion of creative forgetting as a response to the affliction of consumptive historical fever. I will look at how forgetting as an 'adaptive strategy'[41] may be read within the current complex of cultural and sculptural production through the work of Michael Dean in the exhibition *Government*; or forgetful memory as process.

Maurice Blanchot states 'we seize in the word forgotten the space of which it speaks' (Blanchot, 1993, p.194) – the void that augments matter, yet, embedded within forgetting itself, where, 'on the one hand, forgetting is a capacity: we are able to forget and, thanks to this, able to live, to act, to work, and to remember – to be present […] On the other hand, forgetting gets away. It escapes […] the possibility that is forgetting is a slipping outside of possibility' (Blanchot, 1993, p.195). Forgetting is an arbiter, a constructive tactic or a dissenting loss. I begin by asking how I may put to use the notion of forgetting and 'forgetful memory' and set out how I wish to employ the term.

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[41]This is Mark Fisher's phrase, used in his book *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative* (2009, p.56).

Forgetting

To discuss forgetting is to purpose and augment memory, to think about the politics of remembrance and recall. My interest in forgetting both initiated this research and has been a weighty abstraction haunting the project. However, I wish to clarify why I am purposing this word. Although forgetting has extremely strong connotation to trauma both in a psychoanalytic sense[42] and a collective historic sense (as much reference is made to the holocaust and other acts of violence on great scales in memory studies) I wish to use the term in reference to locating a contemporary cultural condition. I have already assigned the term 'discontent' to our current relationship to cultural memory, of which Huyssen has stated: 'modernity [is] the trauma that victimizes the world, that we cannot leave behind, that causes all of our symptoms?'[43] (Huyssen, 2003, p.8). Yet, more recently, such a malaise has been summarised by Mark Fisher, citing Deleuze and Guattari, in his 2009 text *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*, where he describes,

> 'Late capitalism is akin to "a motley painting of everything that ever was," [where] dreaming up and junking of social fiction is nearly as rapid as its production and disposal of commodities. In these conditions of ontological *precarity,* forgetting becomes an adaptive strategy.' (Fisher, 2009, p.56)

I am interested here in the conditions of cultural memory and how they may be purposed in the production of artwork, as opposed to forgetting as an artist's subject matter per se. I see it as analogous and elucidatory to the prescribed habit-function of culture, of which, contemporary art may address. Essentially this is aligned to the potentials of sculpture as a response, in a media specific sense. Returning to William Tucker's assertion that sculpture

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[42] I have chosen to examine these ideas within an anthropological context and not a psychoanalytical one. However, notions of forgetting can be aligned to Sigmund Freud's writings on repression. Specially, in his 1930 text *Civilization and Its Discontents* where he outlines how discontent and mental pathology is created in members of civilization through the repression of instincts – such as sexual desire and violent aggression. It is also important to note that Yves-Alain Bois in the introduction to *Formless: A User's Guide* (1997) has identified Freud's notion of repression as a component part of the rubric of modernist theory. He states, 'being "purely visual," [modernist] art is addressed to the subject as an erect being.' (Bois, 1997 p.25) He goes on to write that modernist work is conceived as a vertical section, 'art, according to this view, is a sublimatory activity that separates the perceiver from his or her body' (Ibid). This is directly opposed to the spatialisation of work I discuss throughout this text.

[43] Huyssen further states, 'If the 1980s were the decade of a happy postmodern pluralism, the 1990s seemed to be haunted by trauma as the dark underside of the neoliberal triumphalism […] the privileging of trauma formed a thick discursive network with those other master-signifiers of the 1990s, the abject and the uncanny, all of which have to do with repression, specters, and a present repetitively haunted by the past' (Huyssen, 2003, p.8). This may be evident in developments in art practices over this period.

is part of the 'world of artifacts [sic]', thus its presentness, its mass, as it exists through time (even if this is auratic and not literal), is a primary capability of contemporary sculpture. So this begs the questions of what may social or collective memory be and how it may be sustained? Huyssen, again, sets out the conditions for this issue:

> 'History in the West was quite successful in its project to anchor the even more transitory present of modernity and the notion in a multifaceted but strong narrative of historical time. Memory on the other hand, was a topic of poets and their visions of a golden age or, conversely, for their tales about the haunting of a restless past.' (Huyssen, 2003, p.2)

Huyssen sets up a binary opposition between historicity and memory. However, rather than memory and forgetting being related to a 'golden age' or classical past, I want to relate processes of memory and forgetting as a contemporary concern.

Forgetful Memory

Maurice Blanchot's text *Forgetful Memory* is in many ways out-of-time; invoking a classical lineage Huyssen suggests. Blanchot sets up 'memory as the muse' (Blanchot, 1993, p.314) of the artist/poet. As singers sing, they sing from memory, as 'no one dreams that works and songs could be created from nothing' (Blanchot, 1993, p.314). The problematic of this, for Blanchot, is the generation of new, through telling and retelling like a first time and shared speech. Collectivity, the agency of this produces 'impersonal' memory, fractured from its specific mnemonic past, a stream of information, this Blanchot calls the remote; 'memory as abyss' (Blanchot, 1993, p.315). Yet, he states forgetting is a 'primordial divinity', the very vigilance of what it actually means to remember as opposed to the remembered thing. The only true solace, to forget your forgetting, is death – the dark obverse of the poetics of remembrances. The rest is forgetting as mediation, a 'happy power', a 'marker enabling a slow advance: the arrow designating direction' (Blanchot, 1993, p.315). Blanchot ends his text with the emphatic statement: 'the poet speaks as though he were remembering, but if he remembers it is through forgetting' (Ibid). This notion of forgetting as a progressive agent is extremely important here, as to clarify I am not employing the term in reference to physiological disease or defect, but the personal habit function of processing cultural and personal experience and information. Both Blanchot's texts *Forgetful Memory* and *Forgetting, Unreason* published in *The Infinite Conversation* (1993) have orbited my research from its inception. It is however now important to specify what may be meant by

cultural memory.

Here I locate the term memory as one that comes from the inside of a person, or culture, as opposed to history, as an exteriority of generated information produced by a textual narrative. Paul Connerton[44] is quite explicit in the differentiation of the terms. He outlines memory in a cultural sense, as the traces of information, which are sustained within groups; be this through, 'recalling images of itself', 'commemorative ceremonies' or 'bodily practices', of which he writes in detail about habit function. For Connerton history or 'historical reconstruction' uses traces (of the past) as evidence to make statements about something else 'namely, about that for which it is to be taken as evidence' (Connerton, 1989, p.13). It seems somewhat damning when he goes on to state, 'historians are their own authority […] historical reconstruction is thus not dependent on social memory' (Connerton, 1989, pp.13-14)[45].

In his book *How Societies Remember* (1989), Connerton addresses the unconscious collective memory production of societies, in reference to the process of cultural production. The way societies/culture produces, recalls and interprets images of itself is extremely important. This is only too well to be seen, at the time of writing this text, with the 2012 London Olympics, the passing of the recent Diamond Jubilee and 2012 Cultural Olympiad. Yet, Connerton also asserts that the inscription processes of society or the informing and reinforcing of social convention is in continual development in reference to the body. He states:

> 'We commonly consider inscription to be the privileged form for the transmission of a society's memories, and we see the diffusion and elaboration of a society's systems of inscription as making possible an exponential development of its capacity to remember. […] The past can be kept in mind by a habitual memory sedimented in the body.' (Connerton, 1989, p.102)

I will go on to think through these concerns in two ways: firstly, through the potentials of reference and the construction of time addressing the work of Marc Camille Chaimowicz. Secondly, I will address notions of process and the body, and its reference to objects,

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[44] Paul Connerton's recent writings are understood here as essentially anthropological studies. I make frequent reference to them as, outside of an art historical vernacular, I hope they may position my arguments and examples in relationship to cultural production, as I have done through the previous chapter in reference to the production of space.
[45] What Connerton outlines as historical reconstruction could be used to detail processes in a number of recent artist practices and an interest in the slippages of historical narrative into fictional narrative. I make reference to artist such as Goshka Macuga, Carol Bove and others working with film and video, such as Ben Rivers.

language and space in the work of Michael Dean.

I have briefly outlined the complex arena of social-mnemonic agency and the historical, where the politics of cultural remembrance begins to become evident. Milan Kundera's much-quoted phrase elevates these concerns when he states 'the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting' (Kundera, 1996, p.4). Connerton, in reference to this, states 'it is precisely because personal testimony regarding the past is thought to be inherently political that the narration of remembered trauma is believed to be so important' (Connerton, 2011, p.33). I am in agreement when he postulates cultural memory is complex and requires us to dispute forgetting as a failure, and memory a virtue (Connerton, 2011, p.33). Thus, appropriating Blanchot's term 'forgetful memory', is extremely important as to locate how art practices may relate to some of these cultural-productive concerns.

Different Types of Social Forgetting

Huyssen suggests differentiation of types of memory, and their agencies, 'individual, generational, public, cultural and, still inevitably national memory' (Huyssen, 2003, p.25-26). Paul Connerton equally differentiates between types of forgetting. Distinguishing seven types of forgetting, capable of establishing, enhancing and devastating 'social bonds'. These are established by Connerton as: 1) prescriptive forgetting, 2) forgetting which is constitutive of formation of a new identity, 3) forgetting as annulment, 4) repressive erasure, 5) structural amnesia, 6) planned obsolescence, 7) humiliated silence. These seven types of forgetting have various agents; most relevantly Connerton implicates museum and gallery curators, as potential components of ruling authorities – agents of both *repressive erasure* and *prescriptive forgetting*. I review Connerton's supposition to specifically outline the potentials of differentiating various types of social remembrance and dis-remembrance. Outlining this specifically elucidates how processes of social remembrance and forgetting may be active within cultural production. I now wish to think through how these concerns may be purposed in art production using the example of Marc Camille Chaimowicz's 2010 exhibition at the Secession, in Vienna, which invoked a European, historical transcription of some of these concerns.

Forgetful Memory and Reference

I am using Marc Camille *Chaimowicz's work as an example here, to explore how artworks may interact with notions of memory. I do not consider Chaimowicz's practice explicitly sculptural, like the other exhibition examples I have discussed. However, his work does present a post-installation methodology.* Chaimowicz's practice, since the early 1970s, has exacted a distinct aesthetic milieu. His work has been disseminated through artist books, esoteric commercial design, performances and exhibitions and has often evoked metaphors used by the artist of 'breathlessness' and 'strangulation', aesthetic interiors, 'taken to excess' (Wood, 2005, p.33). A trace of this anxiety of restriction persists through recent exhibitions reflecting on artistic figures such as Jean Cocteau and Jean Genet. In Chaimowicz's three-part touring project *Jean Genet… The Courtesy of Object* the artist presented a 'fictive portrait' (Bracewell, 2011) of Genet; displaying appropriated objects, his own work and that of others (ranging from his students to Wolfgang Tillmans to Alberto Giacometti)[46]. Central to these curatorial endeavours were the complexities of interdependence of works and objects – much like I outlined, as part of the syntax of post-installation in Chapter 1. This has been stated by Catherine Wood, as 'each element in the exhibition forms an essential part of its overall choreography. Each contains within its own shape, design and function the suggestion of an entire scenario from which it has been severed, and yet each carries that fiction with it, is self-sufficiently emblematic' (Wood, 2005, p.36). Writer Michael Bracewell has condensed Chaimowicz's practice, when he stated the artist creates, 'environmental translation[s] of cultural histories and memoir: a museum of aesthetics in which the academic history of artistic style doubles as a codified romance' (Bracewell, n.d.). Chaimowicz's exhibition at Secession in Vienna (2009-10) presented an interesting initial proposition, that of the collapsing of constructed memory and fictionalisation of time, engaging a contemporary relationship to the construction of history.

The Secession gallery space was divided into a number of zones, yet an all-over aesthetic habitat of specific tonality. Using draped sheer fabric hung from the ceiling, at two points pooling on the gallery floor (where parasols were placed) aided the partitioning of the exhibition space (Fig, 17-19). Alongside these works were displayed a number of large, low, off-kilter plywood plinths, their tops presenting a series of bespoke rugs. All these items' outward appearance, alongside two of the gallery walls and a number of decorated wooden

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[46] Chaimowicz produced exhibitions at the Norwich Festival 2011, Nottingham Contemporary and Focal Point Gallery (Southend-on-Sea).

panels (propped against the walls), displayed a coherent pattern motif, reminiscent of modernist painting in pastel tones. This was summarised by Michael Bracewell when he stated the environmental experience was akin to 'inhaling talcum powder' (Bracewell, 2011). Additional to these works were a series of sculptures, in the form of bespoke furniture: high-chairs (which if one was to lay them down they would become chaises longues), a number of wooden dressing-tables with bulbous, coloured bases displayed a variety of items suggesting scenarios of use and similarly designed bookshelves with books displaying literary sources of this aesthetic domain. This presentation was not set up as a retrospective exhibition of the artist's work or an explicit curatorial project. Yet, Chaimowicz's decision to include three works by other artists touched on a museological orientation to the exhibitions intent and Chaimowicz's contextualising the architectonic environment. These works were also included to foreground the notion of 'fraternity' between artists/practitioners and the relationships between objects within an interior setting. The works were amalgamated to thematically support the other items in the exhibition. This has been a feature in Chaimowicz's work since the 1970s, of which Anette Freudenberger has noted, it is 'as if subject to a transference of information, of visual ideas and atmospheres, the works appear as though infected by one another' (Freudenberger, 2005, p. 25), be this either Chaimowicz's or others' work. A strong sense of retrospective context was also asserted in the artist's decision to include, along the far wall, at the back of the gallery, the *Viennese Triptych*, or to use its full title: *Vienna Triptych, Leaning… and Surrounded by Chorus Girls and Sentinels* (1982). The work consists of eleven panels; some made of glass, sandwiching small hand-tinted black and white photographs. The wooden panels in the work were decorated with Chaimowicz's ubiquitous design; all the panels leant against the walls. This work is extremely similar in style to the rest of the work in the display and could have been easily misread as a more recent work, although, on close inspection, the work evidenced its age through slight scuffed edges and the hues of the paint. An elusive narrative is depicted in the photographs of a male and occasional female figure, set amongst details of objects, within a domestic interior, touching on a spatio-temporal flux between two locations (London and Vienna, where the work was made in 1982 when the artist was working in the city). This work reflected another, where a series of handwritten letters operated as the two contextual edges of the exhibition – conceptually framing the other work. This series of discrete framed handwritten letters from the artist to the elusive recipient 'J' were displayed to the left as you entered the gallery. The letters contained key concerns for the artist on the spatio-temporal locale of the work, noted in this passage:

Fig. 17

Fig. 18

Fig. 19

'It is given that as we focus on any particular subject, so that subject is liable to appear and reappear – in myriad forms or as chimera – to haunt and envelope us … the conceptual distance between Wittgenstein's Vienna and, say the death of Michael Jackson is daunting–yet today's cultural overload purport to such mental juggling…' (Chaimowicz, 2009)

The artist goes on to suggest that pockets of Los Angeles are more Viennese than Vienna, due to the 'exodus of radical thinkers' (Chaimowicz, 2009). The overlapping and unfolding of being in and out of prescribed historical time (and location) suggests that Chaimowicz's references act more like memory, with its stutters and slips, complicated and enlivened by forgetting. This nuanced conception of information could be seen as combative of curatorial archival processes.

In Anette Freudenberger's text *Nuances* (2005), she writes 'instead of a comfortable atmosphere, the ambiguity of these hybrid works and their delicately balanced arrangement – as complex as a game of chess – engenders and unfamiliar feeling and peculiar sense of timelessness' (Freudenberger, 2005, p.25). However, it is precisely the explicit use of motif, re-showing old work under new conditions and incorporating work by others (from this and different eras) that demonstrates continual reference to being in time. This is most evident in discreet use of contemporary advertising and furniture construction techniques; the work implicitly makes reference to the function of time rather than being 'timeless'. Chaimowicz has spoken about a collective relationship to historical European aesthetic experience and the notion of projection or idealisation embedded at the heart of twentieth-century historicity. He has stated about his experience of Vienna, in conversation with Michael Bracewell:

'I think there was also a high degree of projection that came out of an almost psychotic misunderstanding of what Austria was. There were geographic areas associated with High Romanticism in Germany that were forbidden to me because of my paternal background […] In my case, within the family home we just could not talk about the Second World War. So I did project massively when living in Vienna in the 1980s, in a highly visual way. And when an invitation to show at Secession emerged, I guess it was the premise on which to return. […] It was intensely personal, more so than most exhibitions. But it didn't come over as biographical.' (Bracewell, 2011)

Michael Bracewell (in conversation with the artist) states this offers a precise process of

'translation' from the personal to the universal that the artist undertakes in the work[47].
Chaimowicz's work seems to act against Connerton's concept of 'planned obsolescence'.
Planned obsolescence is a type of forgetting built into the system of capitalist consumption,
with a consumptive 'shift to the provisions of services the turnover time of capital is
accelerated. The evolution of a product from its first design and development to its eventual
obsolescence – a time span referred to in marketing as the 'product life cycle' – becomes
shorter' (Connerton, 2011, p. 45). This is done in Chaimowicz's work through its
decoration, handcrafted construction and materiality, yet with signs of wear, the works
shown in multiple scenarios are never outmoded. Chaimowicz creates a space, touching on
curatorial processes, through utilising a specific, familiar, yet fictional visual vernacular,
which supersedes any 'real' design history. If this notion of idealisation enables the
forgetting or collapsing of time, created within this process (referenced within the work), the
work is not explicitly without memory. Yet, the work is also 'forgetful' of the use and/or
function of the hyper-specific renderings of the furniture and design items orchestrated as
emblematic of a specific European visual/design history. This is reflexive, the viewer is
implicated; junking any specific visual or art-historical reference and is forgetful of an
ethereal protagonist embedded in the time-space of the work. The work has forgotten its
place in history, yet pertains to cultural memory through the production of 'style', which
effaces the current mode of cultural production – casting it also as a fiction. This has an
extraordinary effect. As I left the Secession galleries, reflecting on the exhibition having
coffee with a friend who lives in the Vienna, the city's interiors and architecture collapse
into a heterogeneous space – history never more seemed so fictional and the city a stage,
(this seems to relate to the notion of over-coding in spaces produced by biennials, I address
in Chapter 2). The mnemonic state Chaimowicz invokes is both personal, yet with reference
to collective historic agencies, 'suffused with more or less clear allusions to European
cultural history' (Freudenberger, 2005, p.26). This realignment of spatio-temporality in the
artist's work runs through Chaimowicz' practice, which 'swings pendulum-like between
polarities of domesticity and nomadism – a sense of place as both psychological anchoring
point, and the embodiment of desire and imagination' (Fox, 2005, p. 28).

I reiterate the passage taken from the letters to 'J' in the Secession display where the artist
states 'subject is liable to appear and reappear' (Chaimowicz, 2009) – akin to forgetting's

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[47] Bracewell attributes this notion to Samuel Beckett, who he quotes: 'Beckett says that an artist is a person who has an inner text that he needs to translate. This idea of the translation out of the personal into the universal is precisely what you achieved with that show' (Bracewell, 2011).

'non-presence, non-absence' (Blanchot, 1993, p.194). This is a highly constructed space analogous to Blanchot's evocative statement, 'we seize in the word forgotten the space out of which it speaks, and that now refers us back to its silent, unavailable, interdicted and still latent meaning' (Blanchot, 1993, p.194). This effect is also manifest by the artist in his 1980 performance *Partial Eclipse*, as the performed text outlines, 'our conception of an idea or a wish can only be partial – at best approximations through time' (Fox, 2005. p.29). This dynamic space of reformist partial loss, or creation of memory may be purposed and used in the creation of work that engages the heterogeneity of objecthood and spatial production provides. And, can also offer a current revision to William Tucker's 'potentials of sculpture' – as an object, which 'demands,' as a thing in the world. As viewers we are so acutely educated to place work inside an art historical moment. Chaimowicz's work displays an ability to play off these conceptions and disrupts and collapses the idea of continuum – by which, an active aesthetic space of the work is produced[48].

Time ('Out of Joint')

Mark Fisher has pronounced current cultural production embodies a 'flattening sense of time' (Fisher, 2011). Fisher references Fredric Jameson's text *The Antinomies of Postmodernity* (1991) and an essential paradox at the heart of cultural production. Jameson states, 'the paradox from which we must set forth is the equivalence between an unparalleled rate of change on all the levels of social life and an unparalleled standardisation of everything – feelings along with consumer goods, language along with built space […] the persistence of the Same through absolute difference' (Jameson, 2009, pp. 57-60). Fisher has recently questioned how objects can activate alternate temporalities, extending Marc Augé's anthropological text *Non-Places* (1995), he said:

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[48] This function of the work additionally relates to a progressive notion of nostalgia. Svetlana Boym states contemporary nostalgia relates to time, more than place, and connect personal, as well as collective desire. She states: 'Nostalgia goes beyond individual psychology. At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time–the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. In a broader sense, nostalgia is rebellion against the idea of modern time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desire to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition' (Boym, 2011, p.xv). Boym's progressive reading of cultural conditionality is relevant, especially when she states: 'Fantasies of the past determined by needs of the present have direct impact on realties of the future. […] Unlike melancholia, which confines itself to the planes of individual consciousness, nostalgia is about the relationship between individual biography and the biography of groups and nations, between personal and collective memory' (Boym, 2001, p. xvi). This definition of nostalgia seem pertinent, specifically to Chaimowicz's work, and the use of the term 'forgetful memory' aligns and cross-references some of Boym's concerns of reviewing current cultural conditions and agency of nostalgia.

> 'Augé's two-fold typology of place and non-place is really not enough, we really need a third place, that can neither be the organic communal time of the anthropological place, as Augé refers to it. Nor can it be the future, generic, characterless of the non-place. There is also the Hauntological place – that which is not integrated into organic memory but is triggered by the eruption of an object that can't be digested – an anachronistic object and object that can't be subsumed into a coherent sense of the present.' (Fisher, 2011)

I make reference to this, as both Marc Camille Chaimowicz (and I will go on to discuss Michael Dean) compositing an aesthetic space through the creation and use of objects relevant to Fisher's notion, of the capability of objects to displace a current temporal modality[49]. Fisher has made reference to a compounded, schizo notion of time, proposed by Jacques Derrida. Citing Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Derrida writes '"the time is out of joint": time is *disarticulated*, dislocated, dislodged, time is run down, on the run and run down [trapue et detraque], *deranged*…' (Derrida, 2006, p.20). The term 'hauntology', proclaimed as a zeitgeist by Mark Fisher, has been developed to annex such a notion of time set out above. The term was first used by Derrida in his 1993 book *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning & the New International*. After the dissolution of communism in Eastern Europe, the word originated in Derrida's contribution to the conference 'Whither Marxism?' He opposed the opinion that Marx's theories had been overcome and liberal democracy had conquered (a position held by Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and The Last Man*, 1992). Derrida proposes that Marx's theories continue to haunt history; much like 'the spectre of communism' was described as haunting Europe in the opening of Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. Hauntology,[50] Adam Harper states, describes the 'haunting of a historicised present by spectres that cannot be "ontologised" away' (Harper, 2009). The term's appropriation develops at pace through online blogging and more mainstream press, it is most stable in its first appropriation, in reference to electronic music[51]. However, now, usage in reference to literary fiction, broadcasting and visual arts is often more imprecise. Although it is beyond this text to discuss the central thesis relevant to the term (the ghost of communism haunting neoliberal ideology), I make reference to hauntology for a specific reason. In agreement with Steven Shaviro's

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[49] This relates to Boym's notion of restorative nostalgia: '[restorative nostalgia] is not merely an individual sickness but a symptom of our age, a historical emotion […] it is not always for the *Ancien régime* or fallen empire but also for the unrealized dreams of the past and visions of the future that became obsolete' (Boym, 2001, p. xvi).
[50] There is a wit to the term hauntology, as with a French pronunciation it sounds identical to 'ontology'.
[51] Most often reference to Hauntology in music is used in discussing the work distributed by the Ghost Box record label, specifically the music of Burial and The Caretaker.

assessment of Derrida's text, where he states the relevance to Derrida's progressive and radical notion of the spectres haunting cultural production:

> 'Derrida […] (in line with Blanchot formulations) shifts his emphasis to the way that this trace is a radical non-negativity, a kind of residual, quasi-material insistence, that disrupts and ruins every movement or negation or negativity. That's what the ghost is, after all: something that is gone, or dead, but that refuses to be altogether absent; something that is not here, not now, but that continues to stain or contaminate or affect or impinge upon the here and now.' (Shaviro, 2006)

This I see in line with Connerton's pragmatic differentiation of types of cultural forgetting, in his text, *7 Types of Forgetting* (2011). Thus, by comprehending the agencies of such functions, one may be able to utilise or work though such a phenomena. And, to retain the potent metaphor of death and ghosts, makes reference to the urgent, inscribed, prescribed and sometimes officious matters of the politics of memory. The most robust conceptualisation of this comes from Jameson when he states:

> 'The eclipse of inner time (and its origin, the "intimate" time sense) means that we read our subjectivity off things outside, for which the residual, in the form of habits and practices of the other modes of production, has been tendentially eliminated, so that it might be possible to hypothesize a modification or displacement in the very function of ideology-critique itself […] a purely fungible present in which space and psyches alike can be processed and remade at will' (Jameson, 1998, p.57)

Jameson, here, talks about a schism, a severing, or dislocation of habit functions from previous or alternate modes of living. The result is a present, where space and psyche can be reimaging. The results of such a present are reimaginings of what alternate or previous practices might now be.

Increasingly hauntology is being defined as a death of the belief in a coherent view of the future. This is outlined by Huyssen in his text, writing in 2000 before the attacks on September 11: 'it is also too easy to suggest that the spectres of the past now haunting modern society in heretofore unknown force actually articulate, by way of displacement, a growing fear of the future at a time when the belief in modernity's progress is deeply shaken' (Huyssen, 2003, p.19). The relationship historicity has to notions of the future has been widely appraised in recent years, specifically through examining the status, impact and

place of science fiction and technology[52]. Revealing a dystopic notion that 'the past cannot give us what the future has failed to deliver' (Huyssen, 2003, p.19).

As mentioned in the introduction of the chapter, how history is purposed within cultural production is of extreme importance (Connerton, 2011, p.33). Relating to the conditions, which have resulted in the term hauntology being developed. The philosophical genesis of this is often plotted back to *Friedrich* Nietzsche's essay *The Uses and Abuses of History* (1847). Before thinking through how these ideas may impact on art production I will briefly review Nietzsche's text, placing some of these concerns in a further critical context.

Nietzsche's *Uses and Abuses*

Much of what Maurice Blanchot sets out in *Forgetful Memory* and what Connerton outlines as social forgetting, as annulment, can be seen as an invocation of Nietzsche's thesis in *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life*. Nietzsche fundamentally states the surfeit of historical consciousness (which he breaks down into three main methods of purposing and developing history; the *monumental, antiquarian* and *critical)* are consumptive and 'can serve to destroy a people' (Nietzsche, 2010). Directing his criticism at German scholars, educators and academics that are afflicted with this hypertrophic vice, he states one must actively forget history to combat this affliction:

> 'It is possible to live almost without remembering, indeed, to live happily, as the beast demonstrates; however, it is completely and utterly impossible to live at all without forgetting […] *there is a degree of insomnia, of rumination, of the historical sense, through which something living comes to harm and finally perishes, whether it is a person or people or a culture.*' (Nietzsche, 2010)

Reading *Uses and Abuse of History* several further points raised seem relevant here. Firstly, in Nietzsche's poetic phrasing, the narrativisation of the text presents a certain contemporaneous presence to the writing[53] and thus it is hard not to see these poetic phrases as forecasting or descriptions of the current phenomena of the pace of development in information technologies. Nietzsche questions the psychological and corporeal constraints of assimilation (a point also raised by Jameson and Connerton). Nietzsche states:

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[52] A good example here is the 2012 exhibition at Firstsite Gallery (Colchester), entitled *News From Nowhere*.
[53] Having read a number of translations of the text and I decided to use a recently revised edition (2010) translated by Ian Johnston.

> Imagine the most extreme example, a person who did not possess the power of forgetting at all, who would be condemned to see everywhere a coming into being. Such a person no longer believes in his own being, no longer believes in himself, sees everything in moving points flowing out of each other, and loses himself in this stream of becoming. (Nietzsche, 2010)

This is presciently descriptive of what Deleuze and Guattari have stated of our current condition, 'a motley painting of everything that ever was', embedded in financial, economic, media-technologies and cultural networks. However, here, I make reference to Nietzsche's notion of 'consumptive historical fever', which produces a state of irony and cynicism. He writes, 'dangerous belief in the old age of humanity takes root, the belief that we are late arrivals and epigones; through this excess an age attains the dangerous mood of irony. In 2009 Mark Fisher recounts the Nietzschean malaise and draws on the notion of 'over-saturisation of an age of history. This leads onto a dangerous mood of irony in regard to itself […] and subsequently into the even more dangerous mood of cynicism, in which 'cosmopolitan fingering, a detached spectatorialism, replaces engagement and involvement' (Fisher, 2009, p.6). Nietzsche states, 'if only the soil still supports us! And if it no longer carries us, then that is also all right. In this way they feel and present an 'ironic existence' (Nietzsche, 2010). This also relates, directly, to Jameson's reflections on the cynicism of postmodernity, specifically, in the notion of perpetual growth embedded in late capitalism. Yet, for Jameson this is also a pervasive trend in cultural production where rhetoric of change suspends spatial-temporal advance,

> '[The "end of ideology"] cynically plays on the waning of collective hope in a particularly conservative market climate. But the end of history is also the final form of the temporal paradoxes […] namely that a rhetoric of absolute change (or) "permanent revolution" in some trendy and meretricious new sense is, for the postmodern, no more satisfactory (but no less so) than the language of absolute identity and unchanging standardization cooked up by the great corporations, whose concept of innovation is best illustrated by the neologism and the logo and their equivalents in the realm of built space.' (Jameson, 1998, p.60)

This current state of stasis, where alternate notions of time are subordinated, creates an outline of late capitalist modality. Bound by this context, the intimate, spatio-temporal locale constructed in Chaimowicz's work offers an alternative to this cultural habit, specifically as his practice explores the space between the 'polarities of domesticity and nomadism' (Fox, 2005, p.28), often a disorientating position. I have plotted the philosophical genesis of these concerns from Nietzsche to current analysis. I now wish to

think through how sculptural practice may interface with this complex and may resist such concerns – I will do this through looking at the work of the artist Michael Dean.

Forgetful Memory: Process and Gesture

A hasty review of Michael Dean's work to date suggests that he produces concrete monolithic sculptures, propped against gallery walls – yet these are component parts to a practice with an elision of signifiers. Dean's work includes other items, in the form of videos, photographic works, performance and most importantly texts. Dean's texts are reproduced in unique bound editions, of which viewers of exhibitions are invited to tear pages from. These are also often performed by the artist and gallery invigilation staff, reading from selected pages of the books. This is an example of a definitive use of the solidarity and isolation of items – Dean's work forgets coherent narrative, forgets a tangible history. This methodology is not about a selective memory, but by using supporting sets of markers or signifiers the work addresses the viewer on their own terms – emptying out specific historical burden. Dean's work has its genesis in the written word, albeit a physical relationship to language. Curator of his recent exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute, Lisa Le Feuvre, states, 'like his selection of sculptural materials, the words Dean chooses for his writings are selected for their feel: what it might be to make a certain word or phrase in the mouth' (Le Feuvre, 2012, p.16). The short written 'acts' Dean produces are the starting point for a type of translation. His sculptural work is displayed in such a way where, 'in rendering the spatial and temporal dimensions of the experience apparent, Dean addresses the beholder in abstract terms, using a private experience to think about public experiences' (Pyś, 2012, p.13).

Entering Gallery 1 at the Henry Moore Institute, the notion of tactility was foregrounded by the artist, by replacing the handles of the glass doors to the gallery with four equivalent concrete units – the visitor's first encounter is to touch and use the work (Fig. 20). The 2012 exhibition *Government* spanned three galleries at the institute, containing three principal works: *Education (working title), Health (working title)* and *Home (working title)* (Fig. 21-23). These component parts of the ruling body, a precise pensive transcription of a 'body politic', 'Government' – of which the exhibition title invokes. Dean, in full focus, sets up an

equivalence of the personal and subjective as a political capability[54].

The gallery floors were covered in a thick wool carpet, an elision of a domestic reference, yet in an institutional taupe colour. The carpeting grounded the work in the gallery, acting as a gravitational pull downwards reinforced by the gallery invigilation staff, instructed to sit or 'lounge' in the galleries. The floor covering also had a totalising effect as a platform for the reading of the exhibition's gestalt. Both Gallery 1 and 2 followed a similar logic containing three large reinforced-concrete works. The works are synonymous to Dean's previous sculptures and their process is explicitly evident. The panel-like concrete works lean against the walls, their faces are faceted angular shards, where the casting evidences the use of wooden shuttering and expediently applied release agents such as Sellotape and cling film. The mottled concrete volumes initially look carbonised and represent the works' central ambivalence/paradox both referencing absolute permanence – prehistoric elemental character, yet, fully inscribes their process, temporality and modern production[55]. In Dean's practice concrete as a material is key and embodies both reference to construction and the ruin or remnant. The scale of these primary works is extremely specific as they relate to the body through an architectonic precision, reiterated in their placements. The works 'quote' the spaces of the gallery specifically, the void of doorways, acting as spatial sentinels. The works never obstructing, but attends the passage through the gallery.

I know, from having seen one of Dean's brief performances, the reading of texts he produces can be aggressive and obtuse; single words or phrases repeated through the nuanced connotations of the singular word[56]. In a performance at the ICA in 2011, a unique book had its pages torn out, individually presented to the audience as they entered. Singular pages from a book were also offered at the institute, a resounding memory of the exhibition was the process of tearing a page from a book in the show, endorsed by the visitor before me. This page, although the same as all the others, becomes a unique trophy of breaking an instinctive taboo – the defacement of a book/novel.

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[54] This claim is supported by the exhibition's press-release text which states: 'Dean is interested in how impersonal systems rapidly become personal when their direct impact rubs up against everyday experience' (2012).
[55] Dean's sculptures' surfaces are strikingly close to several works in the 2012 Gagosian exhibition of Henry Moore's work in London: *Late Large Forms*, specifically the burnished, flecked, finger-marked surface of *Two Piece Reclining Figure No. 2* (1960).
[56] This performance was at the event 'A Dying Artist,' ICA, London, 22/23 April 2011.
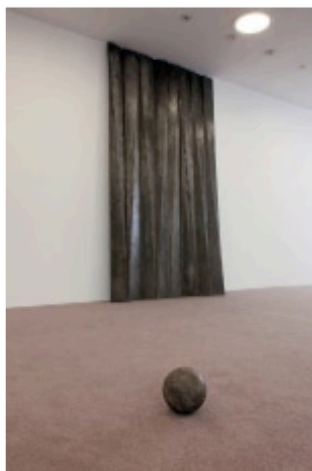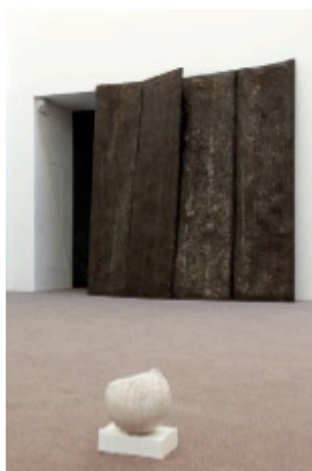
Fig. 20

Fig. 21

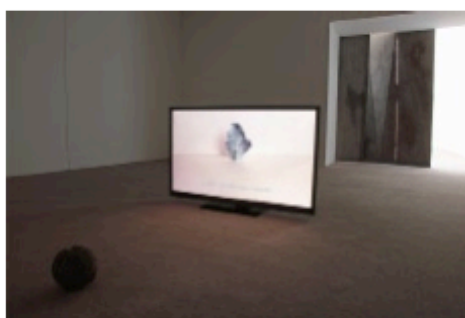Fig. 22

Fig. 23

Fig. 24

Fig. 25

At the institute, placed on top of one of these diminishing publications was a concrete work, equivalent to a skull (Fig. 24), the posed action of picking up the work was akin to Hamlet addressing the skull of Horatio: 'a fellow of infinite jest'. The work was plainly the result of pouring concrete into a plastic bag. Analogies and connections are prescient, a previous cannonball-like sphere occupied gallery one 'Analogue Series (Sphere)', and is referenced again in the final room of the exhibition, where a concrete 'cabbage' was placed on the floor in front of a flat-screen monitor. In the video work, photographed objects were reproduced as digital images, these prints then folded and placed in a MDF backdrop and filmed as changes in light occur. A subtitled text *Tendance (Working Title)* slowly blinks at the bottom of the screen (Fig. 25). The work speaks of complicity and resistance in creating a fabricated location or cell-like enclosure.

Andreas Huyssen has proclaimed the issue of our time is the attempt 'as we face the very real processes of time-space compression, to secure some continuity within time, to provide some extension of lived space within which we can breathe and move' (Huyssen, 2003, p.24). Dean's use of the haptic is a way of directly countering this – although it is not a strict return to a phenomenology, the work is both static and denotes actions, it draws on a formalised language that even written relates to speech, or the speaking of. I back up this claim with reference to Dean's written texts, as these works or 'acts' can be 'performed' by the artist, a member of the gallery staff or the viewer (as they are invited to take pages from the book away). Paul Connerton discusses how ritual language is a powerful mnemonic device in collective memory, he states: 'ritual is formalised language its utterances tend to be styled and stereotyped and to be composed of more or less invariant sequence of speech acts. The utterances are not produced by the performers but are already encoded in a canon and therefore exactly repeatable' (Connerton, 1989, p.58). Connerton goes on to state verbs are frequently found in formal language. Although Dean's work is more coded than, for instance, Richard Serra's *Verb List,* Dean's language connotes action. This is in addition to the texts often being in the form of an act from a nebulous play,[57] below is a short extract:

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[57] Additionally, I wish to reference Carl Andre's text works, which often used fragmented 'cut-up' printed words. Andre, a central figure in minimalism, began to produce these works in the 1960s.

'Enter

VOICE
   Your throat describes this.
VOICE
                         Returns your touches.
VOICE
   The back of your neck to the front of this vertical
   intention
VOICE
        Returns touches.'

(Dean, 2012, p.61)

This static formalised language begins to build a picture of Dean's interest in formal mnemonic devices. Along with his text the display of the works denotes action for the viewer. Connerton suggests that language always has the capacity to lie, yet postures, gesture and movement of the body evidence even more definitive mnemonic systems. As, to kneel, salute or sit cross-legged are all social inscribed and retained gestures of the body.

In Dean's work this is evident in the processes of bending, lifting, tearing, replacing. The bodily gestures although part of the process of production are not often the viewer's bodily gestures. In viewing sculpture it is as though the touch creates an equivalence of the work to the viewer's body. This allows the work to continue to be active, making reference to a minimalist vernacular. The most interesting example of this is the carpeting of the gallery floor, which highly suggests sitting. To sit, lounge, rest, recline, sprawl or simply view the work from a lower register suggests entering into a complex relationship with the authority of the work and the authority of you as the viewer. This is not to say that Dean's work may be described using Huyssen's description of 'memory sculpture', as Dean positions an interest in how the transference of personal equivalence may have collective potential, an example of this is the exhibition's title, *Government*. The narratives Dean orbits in the objects, display and text is akin to what Michael Bracewell stated of Marc Camille Chaimowicz' practice, where a precise process of 'translation' is evident; from the personal to the universal. Memory sculpture, as Huyssen sees it, is more colloquial in its reference and thus incites empathy. The casting process of the smaller objects, in Dean's work, exploits the sculptural potential of simulacrum, or more specifically versions or surrogate objects, such as in the aforementioned 'analogous' series. The use of concrete here is a material of longevity. However the potential 'life-span' of the work irritates the pervasive

nature of commodity objects and their planned obsolescence, of which Connerton has further commented is of current significance.

> 'A powerful source of contemporary cultural amnesia thus has to do with the nature and the life history of the material objects with which people are customarily surrounded […] from the stand point of cultural memory, it is not simply the fecundity of consumable objects, it is rather their lifespan, that is significant […] today it is we who observe the birth and death of objects.' (Connerton, 2009, p.122)

Yet, Dean's usage presents concrete as a ubiquitous yet paradoxical material. Often used in building, expedient fabrication results in lasting structures. Dean's work comments on this, as the large forms in the exhibition are made in situ, in the galleries, too big to be fabricated outside and transported in. Once the work is made a number of people raise it into position, yet the sculptures become obsolete as a commodity and are designed to be demolished after the exhibition closes. Inscribed in the surface of the work are finger marks and tracks of its human production. This may be read as an art historically reference to modernist sculpture, yet with rejection/refusal of the austerity, mythologising and mystique of such forms[58]. Having addressed some of the specifics of Dean's work I wonder how the schema of the exhibition and its title relate to collectivity as a whole. Government is a monolithic word, with its divisions of health, education and housing (titled in the work throughout the exhibition). This conjures up issues of partisan politics, the administrative machinery of control, resource management and regulatory rhetoric. In Evan Calder Williams' words, politics 'is the management of the social (i.e. the messy realm that acknowledges that there is not one person but many of them)' (Calder Williams, 2011). In Jacques Rancière's terms politics 'is commonly viewed as the practice of power or the embodiment of collective wills and interests and the enactment of collective ideas'. (Rancière, 2010, p.152). Dean's exhibition refers to community or 'the political', outlined by Jean-Luc Nancy, for whom the 'political' serves to designate not the organisation of society but the disposition of community (Nancy, 1986, p.68). This is made reference to by Lisa Le Feuvre in her text[59] in the accompanying publication for Dean's exhibition. Le Feuvre states:

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[58] When visiting the Gagosian exhibition of Henry Moore's work, *Late Forms*, I enquired how the gigantic works were transported in to the galleries, to which a gallery invigorator told me he was forbidden to give me details of. This was in extreme contrast to the process of fabrication and resulting deconstruction of Dean's work, made explicitly transparent in the press release of the exhibition *Government*.

[59] The full title of Le Feuvre's text is: *The Miracle of Objects, or 'the wind bloweth where it listeth –* making reference to the film-maker Robert Bresson, and analogies of confinement and escape in reference to Dean's work. I see this aligned to notions of 'breathlessness' and 'strangulation' (Wood, 2005, p.33) in the work of Marc Camille Chaimowicz (discussed on page 104).

'Dean is interested in how the impersonal nature of government rapidly becomes personal when its direct impact rubs against everyday experience. Health, education and housing are places where government touches the people most often, and most palpably […] "Politics" seeks consensus while the realm of "the political" celebrates the dissensual individual operating as an atom of community.' (Le Feuvre, 2012, p.22)

In light of this, Dean's work, through its formality of exhibition-based function, evidently presents an interest in mnemonic devices, which reside in language, performance and the body. Connerton concludes his text *How Societies Remember* with a statement on how 'bodily practices' are often underestimated in thinking about the transmission of social information. The function of Dean's work not only makes reference to this dissensual agency but activates 'habit functions' of such agency. There is additionally another reference to the construction of the political in Dean's practice. Through the materials, Dean's work touches on notions of mortality – explicitly evident in reference to severed heads. Mortality additionally related to dissensual agency and the inter-subjective construction of community. In his text, *The Inoperative Community* (1986), Jean-Luc Nancy postulates that, rather than constructing community around dialogues, our experience and understanding of community is constructed by the affective spectacle of the 'others' death. A sense of loss constitutes community itself (Nancy, 1986, p.65).

These references in Dean's work posit a space evident of an 'adaptive strategy' of forgetting. Forgetting abundant contemporary reference; be this to advertising, domestic and commercial objecthood or surfeit of imagery in the digital domain, which may be linked to a specific historical narrative. Dean's strategy is to invoke and instigate more bodily and ritualistic, linguistic recollection or recall. In current cultural production, with so much emphasis on information technologies, the memory place of the body can easily be forgotten, Connerton states:

'Information technology, by projecting "memory" outside persons, divests personal memory of many of its former assimilative roles; by directing the attention of those addicted to its mimes capacities of storage and material, and to a rapid succession of micro-events, it generates a culturally induced mental habit which makes it increasingly difficult to envision even the short-term past as "real".' (Connerton, 2009, p.144)

Dean's work is forgetful of specific reference to cultural iconography, yet posits a space, which activates the mnemonic habit functions of a contemporary viewer. Making use of

devices of non-gallery dissemination through performative and textual systems, which offers a specific formal and contemporary space of reception in equivalence to the political.

Dean has stated he considers 'materiality as a generous thing left behind' (Prince, 2011, p.8). This may be evident in the materiality of the forms he produces or the materiality of the texts he displays. Yet, modern culture is anything but generous in the planned obsolescence to material commodities. The signifiers in his work both locate and resist narrative and both evoke and emptying out subjection. In Richard Prince's words, 'photography, performance and text are offered as counterbalances against which sculpture can alternately hone and dissolve its autonomy. The Subjectivity which the objects formalize there remains disputed ground' (Prince, 2011, p.8). Dean's sculptural practice seems engaged in purposing this 'disputed ground' and exploring how objects can index bodily mnemonic habit-functions in a spatialised exhibition scenario.

Forgetful Memories

Andreas Huyssen notes in his text *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (2000), 'one of modernity's permanent laments concerns the loss of a better past, the memory of living in a securely circumscribed place, with the sense of stable boundaries and a place-bound culture with its regular flow of time and a core of permanent relations' (Huyssen, 2003, p.24). We have seen construction of myths to implant such feeling, as politics takes on histories, as late capitalist cultural modality sustains a 'cyclical' postmodern complex. Framing these concerns Huyssen goes on further to state:

> 'If the boom in memory were inevitably accompanied by a boom in forgetting? What if the relationship between memory and forgetting were actually being transformed under cultural pressures in which new information technologies, media politics, and fast-paced consumption are beginning to take their toll? […] could it be that the surfeit of memory in this media-saturated culture recreates such overload that the memory system itself is in constant danger of overloading, thus triggering fear of forgetting?' (Huyssen, 2003, p.17)

Using this as a context, in this chapter I have sought to outline the complex relationships between social memory and historicity, in reference to how a current notion of time relates to cultural production. These difficult concerns have been used to outline a reading of the specific function of artworks as activating a 'forgetful memory'. Forgetful memory is a reflexive process of positing, junking and reimagining relationships to cultural information.

I have looked at how this may be aligned to processes of reference, addressing the display practices of Marc Camille Chaimowicz and the specific example of his 2010 exhibition at Secession in Vienna. Where and how this is augmented in relationship to more physical processes relating to spatiality, materials, bodily gesture and language has been thought through in reference to Michael Dean's work and specifically his recent exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute.

I am aware of the predominance of the institutional exhibition in relationship to these concerns in the two examples I have used. Recalling Boris Groys' statement that the exhibition is still 'the primary space of exchange for contemporary art' (Groys, 2009). As my research has developed I have questioned this more and more, perhaps not so much in light of my research findings but the contemporaneity of the concerns – in light of developing spaces of display, such as biennial exhibitions. I am thrown back to the beginning of this thesis and consider the functioning of objecthood and spatiality, as key 'potentials' and 'malfunctions', of sculpture in a plural media environment. And, indeed many of the artists I have examined work outside of sculpture as a specific medium. In Rosalind Krauss' terms they work towards 'inventing' their own medium (Krauss, 2011, p.19) – or rather create a unique aesthetic space for the concerns of the work to function. This, I believe, is supported by 'sculptural' devices and the display of objects, which retains radical potential to insightfully question current cultural and spatial modality. Specifically, this can be seen in Marc Camille Chaimowicz's reference to himself as a 'journeyman'[60] selling his 'wares' (design items as art) in a non-art market. This is also evident in Michael Dean's use of text and performance, as a way of disseminating the activity of the work beyond the exhibition. Outside of this chapter I may re-present the way in which Melanie Counsell makes use of site-specificity, that touches on the concerns of socially engaged practices – specifically her recent Lightbox commissions for Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, where she produced the work *hh* (2011)[61].

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[60] The term 'journeyman' was used by Chaimowicz during a Q&A with the artist at Secession gallery, January 23 2010.

[61] The press release for the commission discussed the expanded nature of the work. It states: 'the exhibition deliberately extends beyond the formal gallery space to colonise the rest of the building including the lightbox, café bar, entrance lobby and even the fabric of the city beyond […] In the corner of this colourfield sits an image of the palm of a hand with two strangely sculptural tablets on it. The hand is open in offer, but we do not know what the tablets are or what they are for […] the work directly alters the experience of space. In the interior space behind, the vinyl covering the windows immerses the Theatre foyer in a purple hue completely changing the colour of the environment' (2011).

I am still energised by how space is purposed, to display a relationship to collective memory – a 'forgetful memory' that can efface and shed light on a current mode of cultural production, which makes exhibition-making (in the sculptural sense) so pragmatic. I posit it is through differentiated types of remembrance and forgetting, that the functioning of medium may be active in purposing the production of exhibition space as a progressive activity. This, not only presents the potentials for the sculptural agency of exhibition-making, but the ongoing concerns in exhibition-making as whole.

Aligning sculpture to memory has relevant historic precedence. Robert Morris notes, in reference to some of his minimalist works, produced in the late 1960s, that they actively engaged memory, through forgetting: 'some of the so called "Anti Form" pieces of 1967-69 were capable of an indeterminate set of formal "moments" without any final configuration; they worked to "forget" their form. And that strategy itself is invariably "forgotten" as the works recede in time' (Morris, 1994, p.93). He goes on to state: 'memory is delay. Memory is a fragment. Memory is of the body that passed. Memory is the trace of a wave goodbye made with a slight clenched fist' (Morris, 1994, p.94). Such notions of temporal delay, fragmentation, reference to the body and resistance, can be seen in contemporary sculptural display outputs and seem to be essential elements of its progress.

Conclusion

Context and Findings

Throughout this research project I have enquired into the status of medium specificity within recent discourses around sculpture. Reviewing how sculpture may be understood in a plural, or 'post-medium' time. Having focused on exhibition display, the key result of this review has centred on establishing a system of value, or more specifically economy, within display. Which, through the trajectory of the text, has shown that recent practices in sculpture are dynamically intertwined with these conceptions of display. I have analysed this through a reading of Gabriel Kuri's solo exhibition, *Before Contingency After the Fact* (2011), at the South London Gallery. I have defined processes of configuring work in an exhibition scenario, where objects, sculptures and works in other medium are displayed to interact with one another, establishing an internal, yet, fungible economy. Describing such work as 'montage' sculpture has helped locate the function of the work as part of a 'post-installation' discourse. An installation 'privatises' space, creating an alternate location within a gallery setting – an opaque framework. Post-installation practices make use of the aesthetic and spatial language developed and explored in installations (such as prescribing the movement through a gallery, seeing the exhibition as an entirety and making use of the architectural environment). However, such work retains a singularity to each element, acknowledging the exhibition space as just that. This is effective in generating systems of meaning between objects – a transparent framework. One of the most exciting elements of this is the potential complexity of work, produced under such circumstance. Objects can both take on meaning as art objects and retain reference to their use-value in the world at large. I have written of this value in relation to sculptures as 'prop-object', in reference to Andrea Phillips' paper (delivered in the fourth Showroom Gallery annual conference 2006/7). In this text Phillips outline how objects enter into a market economy, perhaps with exhaustive effect. However, returning to what I have termed the 'potentials' of the sculptural, I believe the inherent reference objects have to our experience of the world makes the sculptural cogent and vital.

Throughout the thesis I have frequently referred to William Tucker's text *An Essay on Sculpture* (1967) as a way of thinking about sculpture as having inherited gestures and modality in art. But, also how the sculptural relies on 'the world of objects [which] has been

created by man and could not long survive without him' (Tucker, 1969). I have cited Tucker to bridge a schism in sculptural discourse and have shown his position is dynamically opposed to other modernist theory. Specifically, that of Michael Fried's stance, in his canonical text *Art and Objecthood* (1967), where Fried states modernist sculpture compels and retains 'conviction', or value, developed only in comparison to other artworks.

These current conditions of sculptural practice lead on to a greater question that this project has presented, suggesting the need for further research. Having established the agency of some current sculptural practices (in gallery-based exhibitions) I am interested in the capability of sculpture in a wider remit. I believe there is a need to build a coherent critical discourse between what I have continually referred to as potential of sculpture and other modes of working and sites of display. This is not only in reference to changing locations of the exhibition, with the proliferation of art fairs and biennales. But also to be taken into consideration is the relationship between the sculptural and other discourses, such as dialogical practice (those engaged in dialogues with community) and filmic/videographic practice. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, in reference to how sculptural practice engages with the production of space (which I will return to shortly). Secondly, sculpture's relationship to the monument.

In chapter one, *Monuments and Configuration (or, Montage Sculpture)*, I explore how artworks, and more specifically sculptural artworks, retain a radical agency. Reviewing Jacques Rancière's text *The Monument and its Confidences, or Deleuze and Art's Capacity for 'Resistance'* (2010) has enabled me to align how art objects can sustain a 'tension' between art and the political. Or, present a type of 'resistance', as sculptural objecthood and spatiality is relational – to be understood in terms of interactions between individuals and groups. I reiterate Jan Verwoert's statement in reference to this. Verwoert discusses the need to renegotiate the principles of medium specific work. He goes on to state,

> 'This is because such work incorporates a specific moment of "resistant partiality", by generating its own temporality, its own memory, and therefore an economy of experience that is significantly different from the economy of experience imposed on us through the current conditions of labour.' (Verwoert, 2007, p.30)

This leads me on to a conception of the radical in reference to spatial production. Of which Verwoert goes on to also align to the relevance of the medium specificity or the sculptural; he writes, 'when you discuss work in space it is no longer about tasteful composition but

relationality in the wider sense of relations that exist between people in physical, social and cultural space' (Verwoert, 2007, p.31).

In the second chapter of the thesis, *Leverage (or, Sculptural Spatial Production)*, I undertook a close reading of Henri Lefevbre's 1974 text *The Production of Space,* a work that is engaged with developing a unitary account of spatial production, which is inherently politicised. As I have previously cited, Lefebvre proclaimed, '"Change life!" "Change society!" These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space' (Lefebvre, 1992, p.59). Having outlined what I believe to be a relevant dynamic theory of spatial production, I mapped this to the production of sculptural space in a gallery setting, using Melanie Counsell's work *Lutecia* (2011) as an example. I presented the idea that sculptures can act as 'leverage' devices, capable of exploring and exploiting a gallery's spatial codes.

I believe these two positions stake claim to both the sculptural potentials of a discrete monumentality (object in the world) and the space potentially produced by sculpture, and are vital readings of how object-based practices can operate today. Having said this, making further enquiry into how the placement of work interfaces with relationship of space to the body could also support a further understanding of the alliances and correlations sculpture has to other modes of practice. Additionally, the research I have undertaken into spatial production (and the finding posited) have leaked into the subject matter of my practical work and over the course of the study I have become increasingly interested in the specific circumstances of regeneration (in the built environment). Notions of power, control, ideological pressure and the weight this may bear on experience of space and place are now at the forefront of my practice.

Through looking at Michael Dean's work in the final thesis chapter (*Forgetful Memory*) I have shown how bodily relationships to space are directly linked to mnemonic function. Paul Connerton has written, 'the power of mnemonic systems […] are not points or positions in geometric space; rather they are relationships of my body towards things, relationships which are constructed through the interplay between my acting body and the world of places upon which my body acts' (Connerton, 2011, p.84). Connerton notes the linkages of objecthood, spatiality and memory function, of which, through a reading of Dean's work, I have shown position sculptural practices as effective in finding ways of exploring such concerns.

In direct reference to this, another central focus of the research has been the conceptualisation of some of the wider, cultural conditions of producing work today. From the outset, I have explored notions of unease, depression and duress in a postmodern condition. I have analysed this with continual reference to Mark Fisher's 2009 book *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*. In his text Fisher outlines a cultural 'malaise' derived in part 'from the way that capitalism subsumes and consumes all of previous history' (Fisher, 2009, p.4), citing the rubric of postmodernism theorised by Fredric Jameson. Fisher however departs from Jamesonian theory, as he states capitalist realism no longer stages a 'confrontation with modernism', partially due to the conviction that there is 'no alternative' to late capitalist ideology. Having seen these ideas as annexing the project as a whole I chose to specifically think through these concerns in relationships sculptural practice has to historicity. Contextualised by theories from the field of memory studies I have shown how thinking through cultural memory, rather than history, is an effective way to view an artwork's objecthood and display function. In reference to Connerton and Andreas Huyssen I have shown a need for differentiating between types of remembering and types of forgetting. I see forgetting, in its different modes, as an important, progressive process and as having both personal and political agency. Maurice Blanchot, having written of forgetting as a 'primordial divinity', and Mark Fisher states its potential as an 'adaptive strategy'. In each case the conditions and drives of forgetting are key consequences of this research, of which I have contextualised in reviewing Friedrich Nietzsche's *Uses and Abuses of History* written in (1874) and the recent development of the term 'hauntology'. Again researching specific agencies of forgetting in art practice have proven to have limits in the project, due to the complexity of the concerns. Thinking through other modes of art-making, alongside those of sculpture, would be an apposite way to further this study.

These findings would not have been possible without the reciprocal conditions set up between practice and theory throughout the project. The process of analysing the outcomes of the practical work and the context of the project's initiating the work has led to a great deal of questions. I have taken up these questions in writing, both creatively and theoretically; feeding back into the projects and the written component of the thesis. These points of interaction have allowed the research project to be ambitious, in both its theoretical scope and practical experimentation. The outcome of this is not only evident in the theoretical outcomes and the production of new works, but is manifest within a new understanding of the conditions that determine the critical status of my practice.

In conclusion, my original contribution to knowledge is the production of a body of work, which interrogates a theoretical and experiential examination of the potentials of 'the sculptural', as part of the plural production of art and exhibition-making. By means of practice and the outcomes of that practice the research engages the current dynamics of spatial production and radicality of sculptural objecthood. In conjunction to this the research explores concepts of cultural and political modality. The work examines the complex relationships between social memory and historicity, of which sculpture, within an exhibition environment, can vitally engage.

The final body of practical work produced during the research period suggests further steps, beyond the scope of this present thesis. Generally, as a direct extension of this research, I wish to further test out the ideas mapped out in this thesis in researching and responding to other's practices, exhibitions and most vitally, work with other practitioners and the engaging with residency opportunities. Under these circumstances, I would like to focus on exploring the concerns of the production of space in my locality and the subject of regeneration and the forces and political drives inherent in the processes. I am interested in how objects persist as frames for these phenomena or as referents to them. I wish to work towards establishing a new liminal position for the work – between binaries, as the preceding project's title *Throwing Up, Pulling Down* suggests. To do this I wish to extend the ideas I have explored in relation to post-installation display. I plan to explore the specific use of moving image and sound alongside the production and display of objects to create such a space.

Practice – Theory | Theory – Practice: Part 4

During this research project I have expanded the ways I work to incorporate the production of texts and multiples, exploring the possibilities of curatorial processes, alongside making and displaying sculpture. This has created a dynamic working process. I hope for this to continue to function, both in exhibition displays and also extend into other sites and modes of dissemination for the work. The resulting body of work speculates on further concerns of my practice, parallel to determining the findings of the research.

As part of the SPACE Studios' Permacultures residency programme (which explores the shaping of contemporary experience through technology), I proposed to explore the activation and representation of spaces produced by regeneration. The concluding practical work for this research project is presented as an initial outcome of the residency as an open-studio event in London. The display takes into account the context and concerns of experimentation, as part of a small group of residency artists.

The move towards video and sound works is an important step in my practice. In the work, *Throwing Up, Pulling Down (Bars and Tone)*, (Doc. 37-39) (Appendix 7) I explore the representation of a space that is both inherently experiential and transitory. The creation of footage and field recordings was done whilst subjecting the site to amplified sounds. These sound elements are extremely artificial, impersonal elements, which are presented to 'test' the filming locations sonic boundaries. This is also augmented by the use of artificial filters added in front of the camera lens whilst filming. The work is the first iteration of a number of video works, which explore the results of positioning the camera as one may position one's body or place an object in space and thinking of details of a site as partial objects. The exhibition of the work considers how sound can act as a link between the representation of a location (in this case, a previous experience in a building which has now been torn down) and the presentation of a new 'location', established by the artworks in a display setting (Doc. 30). I have referred to this as an echo in the work.

Making use of electronically generated tones (produced using audio equipment testing software) is a way to generate temporal events in the display. Christoph Cox in his text *Beyond Representation and Signification: Toward a Sonic Materialism* (2011) proposes an alternative theoretical framework for the analysis of the sonic arts. I am interested in how

Cox ambitiously scrutinises sounds relationship to signification and representation and the impact this may have on artistic practice in general. He states:

> 'If we proceed from sound we will be less inclined to think in terms of representation and signification, and to draw distinctions between culture and nature, human and nonhuman, mind and matter, the symbolic and the real, the textual and the physical, the meaningful and the meaningless. Instead, we might begin to treat artistic productions not as complexes of signs or representations but complexes of forces materially inflected by other forces and force-complexes. We might ask of an image or a text not what it *means* or *represents*, but what it *does*, how it *operates*, what changes it effectuates.' (Cox, 2011, p.157)

What makes Cox's speculative framework so appealing is the notion that the function and operation of elements creates an interconnectedness, which can incorporate the temporal, alongside the static. He goes on to write, 'sounds are not bound to their sources as properties. Sounds, then, are distinct individuals or particulars like objects. […] If sounds are particulars or individuals, then, they are so not as static *objects* but as temporal *events*. The hegemony of the visual treats sounds as anomalous entities that it exiles to the domain of mind-dependent qualities' (Cox, 2011, p.157). However in this work I am deploying elements of sound as present events, which are also capable of conveying previous location and, or action. This is very similar to how I would wish objects to be perceived within my work.

In addition to the audio visual work are a number of steel frames supporting prints on which are monochrome images representing a series of concrete objects (Doc. 31-33). These objects were created through improvising moulds in my studio. The works think through architectural detail (both decorative and functional). Specifically, the work relates to actualising units as 'loci' and through the shift in scale (represented in the images) the work hopes to speak of speculative architectural sites as well as components. In reference to this Paul Connerton's writings on place memory have been extremely important. In his text *Two Types of Place Memory* (2011) he outlines the difference between the mnemonic capacity of 'memorial place' and the 'locus'. Relevant to this work, he states, 'A locus is definable as a place easily grasped by the memory, such as a house, arch, corner, column, or intercolumnar space' (Connerton, 2009, p.5). Connerton registers this in reference to his assumption that

memory is dependent on a mental topography,[62] which I hope the body of work pertains to. It is also important to state I consider the prints, supported by discrete metal frames are placed in the display as sculptural works in their own right – floor standing units designating passage through, and the boundaries of the space (Doc. 35, 40).

The fabricated steel frames were devised to additionally organise and choreograph the exhibition. The standardised units are designed as capable of being altered in size for the location they are presented, thus reacting to the itinerancy of the current exhibition. These steel frames were produced to support elements of the project (xerographic prints and the projection screen) but to also dissect, interrupt and augment the display space (Doc. 36).

Exhibited alongside these works (or adjacent to them) is a more conceptual framing device. The text work *Untitled (Throwing Up, Running Down, Pulling Down)* (Doc. 34) presents a short, mannered inventory of terms. These phrases were initially generated through conversations with others, now reduced to a proto-political slogan. And, relate to the experience of being part of a housing scheme, offering temporary housing for artist in Bow (east London), which resulted in a recent eviction. The text indicates an interest in the body and disease – to be sick – to vomit – to run away – to pull, or fall down. All of these elements hope to augment the individual works and activate them in the display environment.

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[62] Connerton itemises this list in reference to the 'art of memory'. The 'art of memory' being a technique of memorising information. This was a rhetorical system devised in classical culture, reinvigorated in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The technique differed during these times. However, it generally involved an individual creating a mental topography, often with architectural elements, on to which memories are attributed in order to aid recollection.

Doc. 33

THROWING
UP

RUNNING
DOWN
PULLING
DOWN

RESIDENCY
STUDIO
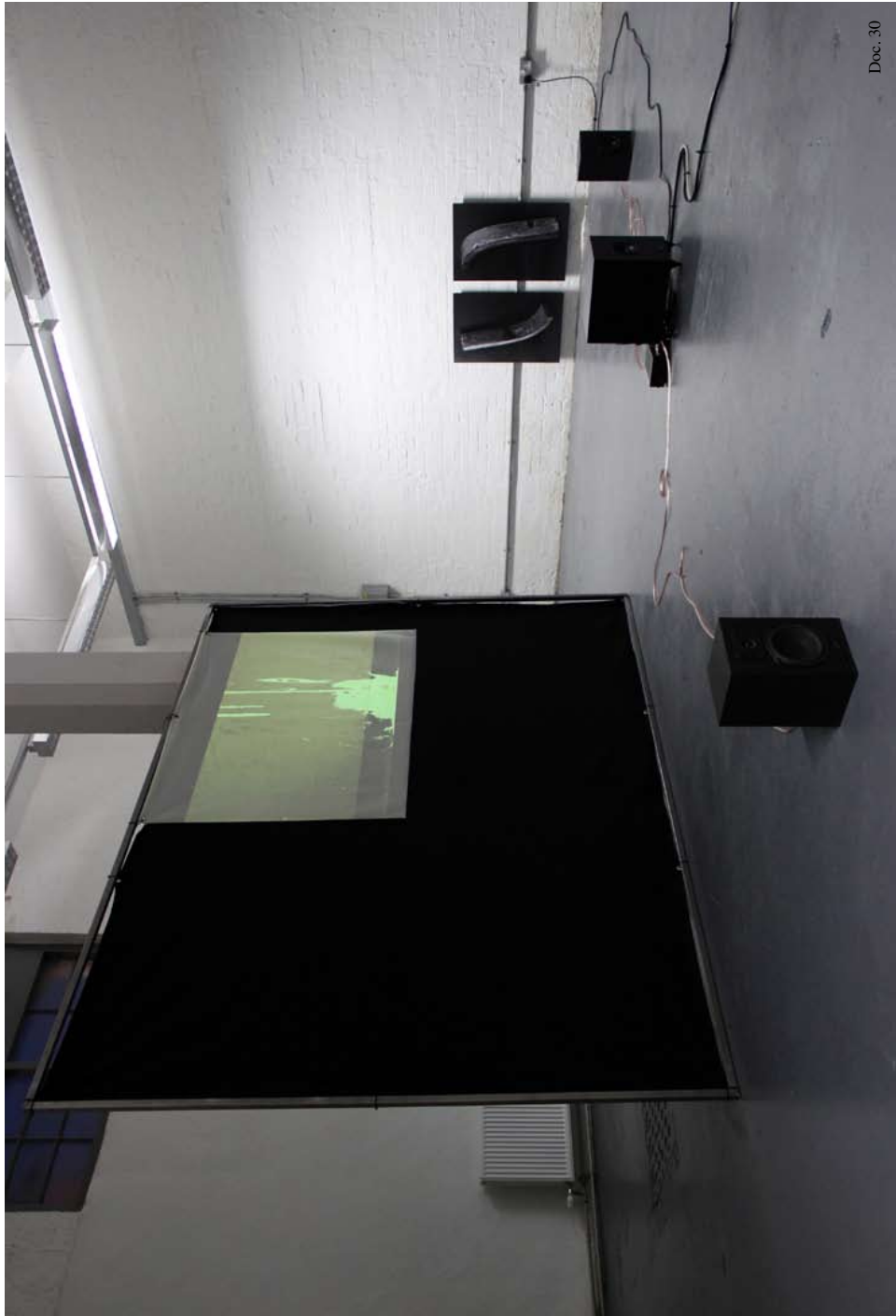
Doc. 37

Doc. 38

Doc. 39

Doc. 40

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Appendix 1

Details of collaborative practice:

Throughout the thesis I have discussed my activities as a co-producer and collaborator during the research. My role in each project, event and circumstance has shifted between opportunities. Here, I specifically outline the remit of three primary collaborations and my role within it.

1) *Vasl Artists' Collective Open Studio event, Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi, Pakistan.*

The collaborative engagement with Seher Naveed pivoted around an ongoing conversation we undertook whilst I was on the residency in Karachi. During this time we discussed relationships to regeneration, architecture and memory. We undertook several trips to Iqbal Market, built on a British Christian burial site during the 1980s, as a place to conduct these conversations, source material for my work and talk to local residents. This research is outlined in the text I produced, post-residency (Appendix 2). As a result of this I invited Seher to contribute a work to be part of the open studios event. I outlined the work I had produced, my interest in placement and interest to embed a speculative work by Seher in the display; as a result Seher undertook personal research in the university's architectural archives and sourced a number of 35mm photographic slides, detailing images of buildings, which had been destroyed/replaced in the local vicinity (Doc. 6). These images were projected on the back of a studio partition wall, as part of a display I had arranged.

2) *MY(WE), Jerwood Visual Arts Project Space, London*

Katie Schwab and I were jointly commissioned to produce a project for the Jerwood Visual Arts Project Space in late 2011. We were given six months and a small budget to develop a display of work in the project space (the gallery's café). This was a result of an ongoing discussion Katie and I had been having since I invited her to contribute to the *GOTTA GETTAWAY* project I curated in 2010 and in a published interview I did with Katie entitled *Growing Up?* discussing the relationship objects have to politics – published online by dreck.co.uk, an online commissioned project I have co-edited since 2009. During the six month of developing the *MY(WE)* project Katie and I met regularly to exchange research material (texts, images and other references). We jointly created the format for the project's display; deciding on the independent creation of a number of art works and the joint production and editing of a limited-edition free publication. This publication included autonomously produced texts and images (as a response to the research material we had jointly accumulated) and was designed by Helios Capdevila. The resulting exhibition was made up of four works, two produced independently by myself and Katie and the co-edited publication.

3) *American Mountains Project*

From 2009 to 2011 I worked closely with artist Richard Whitby as co-producer of the *American Mountains* project. This project operated as a research group of artists,

researchers and writers working towards a number of display and publishing outcomes. The dynamic of the project was not based around traditional dynamics of artist-collectives, but responded to themes in reference to output opportunities where Richard and myself acted as producers/facilitators to the group, which expanded and contracted due to the concerns. The third, final and most notable outcome of this process was *American Mountains – Greenway*, where the project (as a loose collective) was asked to contribute to a residency programme at Grand Union gallery in Birmingham. In reference to the remit of the residency (exploring ideas of regeneration) Richard and I re-invited practitioners we had previously worked with to contribute to the production of a self-published book, using the gallery space as the site of accumulation, generation and printing of the publication. Richard and I through long discussions spoke about our roles as co-producers and meta-curators and worked on collaboratively producing the title and framework of the project. Once in place, this framework enabled us to direct specific elements of the project and autonomously produce talks, events and texts for the project. Specifically, the outcomes I personally produced focused on researching spatial production, resulting in an event (including a talk by myself, screening and selected performance). I additionally published my texts, *8 Years* and *8 Days* (Appendix 4). This work I undertook directly enabled me to contextualise and conceptualise my concerns; of how space is produced and began me thinking about 'leverage' devices, which has had a great impact on this chapter's research and findings.

Appendix 2

Untitled (Barricades) [2012]

Produced for Vasl Artist's Collective Karachi, Pakistan. In response to a six-week residency (a Gasworks International Fellowship), printed in London.

Appendix 3

Press release text for Maria Theodoraki's solo exhibition *Reel Around the Fountain*, curated by Jamie George (2011).

Lower Galleries

1 Maria Theodoraki
Reel Around The Fountain

2 Stephanie Busson
A Way to a Place
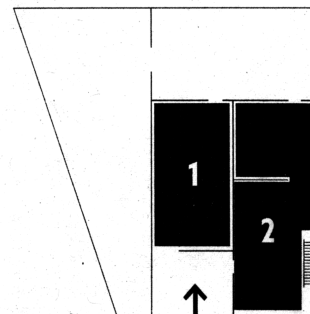
1 Maria Theodoraki
'One object (as a starting point), in the middle of four rooms, doors leading off in each direction; more objects, a partition wall and a light source accord the space. Revolving, Jamie George and I share a discussion and the decisions', Maria Theodoraki.

There are three works here, partitioned and augmented by display. I don't wish to talk about **Duchamp**, **Sherrie Levine**, dates, *Fountain*, fountains, but reeling or to reel. Losing balance, lurching, staggering - a position or movement perhaps. A recoil from the ubiquitous logic of museological display, to a state, dialogically orbiting these objects' ontology.

I am drawn to return to **Morrissey's** lyrics, the appropriated title for this collection of works; 'You can pin and mount me like a butterfly ... reel around the fountain, smack me on the patio'.

Theodoraki's work *Twigs* (2011) is a fulcrum here. Small, severed limbs index the action of transformation; the wind blows, the branch twists, the twig lacerates, the seed falls; selected, collected, scrutinised—displayed. Jamie George

2 Stephanie Busson
A Way to a Place presents seven works selected from **Edouard Levé's** *Oeuvres*, a book describing 553 artworks Levé thought of but never produced. Methodically following the author's instructions, Busson created a series of pieces exploring the notions of territory and mobility as well as the relationship between representation and exploration of the geographical space. The exhibition, which includes drawing, photography, performance and video, also investigates the issues related to authorship and collaboration in the context of contemporary art.

The exhibition brings together a series of map drawings which play with the conventional representation of space as a way to reflect on the ever changing and disparate nature of people's global perception and sense of place. The series begins with #279, a large map showing all the countries in the world superimposed which questions the notions of east and west, continents and bordering countries. In #2—a performative work involving drawing the map of the world from memory—viewers are

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Appendix 4

Foreword, 8 Years (2010), and *8 Months or 8 Days* (2011)

Three texts written for the *American Mountains – Greenway* publication, whilst on a collective residency at Grand Union in 2011.

NR

THE GREENWAY

The Greenway is a footpath and cycle-way in East London constructed on the embankment containing the Northern Outfall sewer. It may suggest here (in the mannered language of regeneration and property development) a journey, a tour, an ideology, a colour, a banner, a fable (a yellow-brick road). You enter the Greenway off the Hertford Union Canal (connected to the Grand Union Canal) at Fish Island. As you walk along the Greenway a faint smell of shit lingers in the air and a strange set of intersecting histories appear, specifically those relating to various industrial and economic revolutions. You walk past the Olympic site. Like its adolescent relation, Westfield shopping centre in Stratford, it has been termed a 'ready-made' by Iain Sinclair - ideological entities levered into place. The Greenway goes on to intersect with the Crossrail development at Pudding Mill Lane, spanning two London boroughs, ending in Beckton at a main road, a sewage works and spoil heap nicknamed the Beckton Alps, for a while a dry ski slope.

The Greenway offers us a luminous view of the forces that drive the production of a 'space'. It is a site; renovated in the mid-nineties as part of the last economic boom, it is a recreation area: a park, a walk, a cycle route, it is a precursor to the Olympics, it has been renovated, it is being renovated, it is simply the renaming (and branding) of the land above the effluent shat out by London.

Acting as the title for this section the Greenway as an entity is representative of how, embedded in the idea of space is the notion of development – and further regeneration and restoration. Often these forces are transparent: amenities (electricity, gas), sub-urban (pipe-lines), military space, aerospace, bureaucratic, dialogic, technocratic, mnemonic, cultural (televisual – communication). It is the attendant productive, and linguistic agency of these transparent forces that are explored in the works presented in this first chapter. Let us not think of utopias or dystopias but space (with revolutionary potential) in the present tense.

Jamie George

GW

8 Years
Jamie George

It was an interesting start to an excursion – the taxi driver not knowing where to drop me. He hesitantly gesticulated towards a side road, as he picked up his next fare and drove away. The amusement park in Chongqing City, China, positioned between two recently built bridges on the banks of Changjiang River, presented itself – as a website tentatively suggested – as "closed…?" Venturing through the partially open gates, I strolled around the park. The park could be correctly described as disused with regard to its original remit. A scattering of people seeking shade, playing Majiang and sleeping on out-door furniture demonstrate its current alternate use. The rust on most of the rides indicates that their time of moving has passed. The rumour was that the now-defunct rollercoaster was active eight years ago – yet no one really knows when it ceased to run.

With over thirty-one million inhabitants, one would think (if we use Thorpe Park or Alton Towers as a schematic British example) that Chongqing's peo-ple would request the provision of an amusement park's (operational) rides. Via this particular site, the city becomes an oneiric location, its unbelievable development statistics lose significance, in the same way as the landscape loses its clarity in the heat haze and smog. I am sure that in the UK a site such as this would have long been renovated, re-developed, re-staged or at least closed.

In stark contrast, the East Bank further down the Changjiang River has un-dergone significant development in recent years. I lose count of the high-rise tower blocks as I scan this insurgent colony. At a guess there are in excess of one hundred buildings in the first tier, situated along the water line – where, before the development eight years ago, mountains loomed. This is tough regeneration. In my head I named this the 'eight year view'.

Apart from the occasional "clean-living" expat, many of the blocks of flats re-main empty. Property investors who bought up the apartments wish to keep them 'as new'. When the time comes to sell them on it is believed they will fetch a higher price if they can be deemed unlived in. The irony, perhaps, is that the buildings are only intended to have a thirty year life span – the hasty concrete construction, inadequate cladding and plastic plumbing rapidly degrading under various environmental pressures. A local resident tells me that with this inbuilt ruination jobs will be created, materials purchased and designs outputted. A market will be kept afloat. Supported by the pride of national autonomy, it is a strange type of sustainability.

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Comparisons to regeneration projects and housing developments in London and the UK are, on the surface, polarised. The accustomed model finds developers complicit in local government, pre-sales and cross-funding, with painfully slow relocation of incumbent residents. Throughout a generous stretch of the East End of London, now lavishly ornamented with Olympic sites, the urban landscape permanently includes the badly gloss-painted panelling of the developer's designated areas – usually in some variation of red, white and blue.

With the riverside view in mind, I am drawn to list what has happened to me in the last eight years. A UK-based generalized history might note the career of a girl-band, a financial crisis, the perceived growth of terrorism, smart phones, more new shopping malls and two wars.

This is in fact not a project of comparison but an inquiry into the monolith of 'progress'. China's notion of progress is not waiting to be supplanted by Western avariciousness. These two landscapes present a radically alternate yet corresponding, homologous mode. I wonder what 'progress' might mean – a movement (as toward a goal?), an advance? What may be egregious to a British building developer's heritage-bound model, functions fluidly in the un-historicised Chinese scheme.

> History is merely an inessential mode of being, the most effective form of infidelity to ourselves. (...) History is man's aggression against himself.[1]

E. M. Cioran's words come with his pre-fix of the 'over-civilisation of the west', and further he states; "Europe has passed to a provincial destiny"[2]. If historic time is extraneous, spatial transformation (regardless of the model) becomes the agent of 'progress'. The transformation of a site becomes progress's visible location; a location of pardoned spatial complicity.

In Milan Kundera's terms the coercive properties of a social ideal of advance and no-return demonstrate the goading of Capitalism's permission; a cycle and not a vector.

> A world that rests essentially on the non-existence of return, for in this world everything is pardoned in advance and therefore everything cyclically permitted"[3].

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1. E. M. Cioran, Thinking Against Oneself, The Temptation to Exist (1956,)
2. E. M. Cioran, A LIttle Theory of Destiny, The Temptation to Exist (1956)
3. Milan Kundera, The Unbearable Lightness of Being (1984)

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American Mountains 2011

These two locations present a unity of difference. With the social alliance to developing a landscape of 'no-return' what becomes distinct is 'progress' is not a historic concern but a spatial one.

As I sat below the inactive Ferris wheel, the main visible iconographic statement of Chongqing amusement park, I am intrigued by a newly and partially built structure, a concrete building with steps leading down the bank – a bunker. Through the incongruity of the building I am drawn to think what a city may look like after eight years of 'un-use'- peaking oil production, or more war seem viable causes. A bunker maybe the most relevant structure for the next possible period: eight more years of spatial 'progress'.

September 2010

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8 Months or 8 Days
Jamie George

The Greenway park, as I see it, is akin to some sort of punctuation (parenthe-ses or an underline perhaps) in the syntax of Olympic development site in East London. The Olympic park, an interpolating growth underscoring all the surrounding housing developments. Adherent to the Olympic advance, in the last eight months a nexus of housing developments have appeared in the 'Bow Quarter', where I live and work.

As I walk through the back streets I am preoccupied by the housing develop-ers' designated areas, encased in gloss-painted plywood hoardings; interim semi-architectural, sculptural facades - planted overnight, demarcating a sites perimeter. A 'plywood scarf' rapped around the Olympic development, in Iain Sinclair's words[1]. Describing the hoardings in Bow, I would go further than an analogous item of clothing that accessories and keeps you warm, these hoard-ings contain a more retarded and avarice quality.

These structures act as 'frontiers', a term approximated from Michel de Certeau discusion of space as a reciprocal for narrative. Asserting the relational coda of spatial production, outlining the confinement process of production.

> It is the partition of space that structures it ... from the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority (or the totalizing effects of capitalism) (...) There is no spatiality that isn't organized by the determination of frontiers[2].

Frontiers; a political and geographical term referring to areas near or beyond a boundary. However, De Certeau postulates that frontiers are a type of void. These partitions and boundaries are far from voidal, containing the inherent information of a networks ideology. Specifically evident in the use of national-istic colours of red, white and blue or British racing green, coupled with pixi-lated, plastic computer-generated images of the proposed developments.

Most days I think this is a dull place, I am thinking about leaving - though I suspect there is 'no-alternative'.[3] There seems like no way to get off this island. Supermarkets, superstores, shopping centres, retail parks, I have thought for some time, act as deserted islands in the space of the British Isles. The city is a microcosm of these concerns – the barge of Tesco Metro.

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1. Iain Sinclair, The Olympics Scam (2008)
2. Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life (1984)
3. Reference to Mark Fishers, Capitalist Realism (2009)

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The extrapolated 'deserted island' analogous to space, imagined by Gilles Deleuze: "The essence of the desert island is imaginary and not actual, mythology and not geographical. At the same time, its destiny is subject to those human conditions that make mythology possible". He speculates, "we have to get back to the movement of the imagination that makes the deserted island a model, a prototype of the collective-soul"[4]. A collective soul? Perhaps at least an attempt to discuss space in the present-tense, review the constant partisan and economic projection or the amnesiacs regression.

On a local social landlord website, their fourth key aim is 'to empower each other to fulfil our potential'. This statement evokes the managerial linguistic turn experienced during my teacher training a few years ago.

Observing the spatial 'progress', I watch buildings disappear behind the hoarding facardes (Incidentally it takes about eight full working days to demolish a school - I've been counting) I think maybe we have reached our full potential.

April 2011

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4. Gilles Deleuze, The Desert Island (2002)
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Appendix 5

Press release text for the curated exhibition *GOTTA GETTAWAY* (2010), designed by Helios Capdevila, printed in London.

Appendix 6

On Collectivity & *On Loneliness* (2012)

Two texts produced with the support of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation for the exhibition *MY(WE),* at the Jerwood Project Space, London, with Katie Schwab. Designed by Helios Capdevila, printed in London.

Appendix 7

Throwing Up, Pulling Down (Bars and Tone) (2013).

DVD viewing copy of single channel HD video, dur. 7'39".