

**LYNDAL JONES**  
**DARWIN WITH TEARS**



Exhausted by the material world, lost souls gaze up at the starry void, though they believe that God is dead.

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## FOREWORD

ACCA is pleased to present this comprehensive catalogue that documents projects assembled for Lyndal Jones' *Darwin with Tears* exhibition. The exhibition and catalogue are part of ACCA's ongoing series of 'Influential Australian Artist' surveys which recognise artists who have provided a foundation for further generations and whose practice has continued to be active and evolving.

*Darwin with Tears* brought together works from many of Jones' important long term projects including *The Prediction Pieces*, *From the Darwin Translations* and *Tears for what was done*. And as part of ACCA's ongoing commitment to assisting artists to create new work, we were delighted to realise an outdoor commission for the exhibition. The raw beauty of this latest addition to the *Tears for what was done* series was a wonderful interaction with ACCA's distinctive rusty building and a draw card for visitors over the winter months.

In this catalogue several writers offer new perspectives on Jones' work and on connected areas of interest. Scott McQuire surveys the works included in *Darwin with Tears*; Professor Elizabeth Grosz speculates on artistic excess, the libido and Darwin; Emeritus Professor Margaret Plant contemplates liquids; and Claire Doherty considers Jones' most recent artistic and environmental endeavor *The Avoca Project*. Commissioning Curator Juliana Engberg introduces the ACCA exhibition and Lyndal Jones reflects upon her own practice.

ACCA is particularly grateful to the Australia Council for support of this exhibition through its Presentation and Promotion Grants program. We also acknowledge South East Water's support of the outdoor commission. Thanks also to ACCA's Associate Curator, Hannah Mathews who has brought considerable exhibition experience and smoothness to her role as Coordinating Curator. Our special thanks and congratulations to Lyndal Jones for the inspiring body of work represented here.

Kay Campbell  
Executive Director



'YOU...WILL SEE STARS...IT WILL ALL END IN TEARS...  
BANG!...'

JULIANA ENGBERG

Some of the key images of the twentieth-century exist as chalk-drawn diagrams and annotations on blackboards. These doodles of theory, speculation, social squiggles, interconnectivities, political slogans, formulae and other scratchy scatalogies are the charismatic and sometime cataclysmic mark-makings of historical mind shifters like Rudolf Steiner, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawking—and developers of the atomic bomb—to name a few.

Artist, Joseph Beuys, made blackboard mind-mapping famous as an artifact when he adapted the pedagogical tool to transfer social theories onto a form of speculative social sculpture with political potential. Like Einstein's famous blackboard, upon which he wrote his revolutionary  $E=MC^2$  theorem, which is collected and archived as a relic of historical significance, Beuys' blackboards have become revered and valued as examples of authentic, automatic artistic prophesying.

Of course some theories are best left as just that: theories. It's debatable, for instance, to suggest that the world is a better place for having converted the idea of the atom bomb into monstrous functionality.

Introducing Lyndal Jones' *Darwin with Tears* exhibition is a set of projected texts that are derived from her *The Prediction Pieces* series of 1981-91. In a post-modern gesture that intends to de-authorise the certitude of male science and social constructs, Jones uses a type of ephemeral blackboarding to throw the whole 'theory thing' up in the air. The 'Big BANG!' and 'superstring' theories, star gazing and flying dreams, horoscopes and happy endings...unhappy endings...are offered up as a kind of reinvented chaos-cosmos of proposition. Jones' post-modern twist delivers whimsical, or perhaps ironic romance to those scientific things that collide and fizzle in the night.

Logged, like a set of coordinates into her constellation of theories and thoughts, are hidden galaxies of ideas that mutually exist. Or to put it another way, that have need of mutuality to exist. For instance, the symbiotic inferred in the superstring theory that requires every 'boson' (particle that transmits a force) to have a corresponding fermion (particle that makes up matter): thus creating the concept of 'supersymmetry'.

When Jones created *The Prediction Pieces* in the early 1980s, theory was big and feminist theory, in particular, was attempting to find a place of strength and articulation amid the reign of male accounts of human history. One of the funnier outcomes of feminist writing at the time was the adoption of parenthesis—(his)tory for example—that mimicked a form of scientific formula construction and made obvious reference to history being a male narrative

overwriting the female. Jones' *The Prediction Pieces*, with its equations, cosmological diagrams, and physics annotations and calculations projected into the space of the gallery canopy, both parodies and celebrates the creative outpouring of exploding and imploding ideas that shaped the theoretical terrain of the times.

Another outcome of feminist theory was the call for a female voice. Writers such as Hélène Cixous challenged women to write their own stories, write their own bodies, rather than allow the fathers of history and literature to define them. In her ground-breaking manifesto, *Laugh of the Medusa*, Cixous impassioned:

Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies—for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement.

... The future must no longer be determined by the past. I do not deny that the effects of the past are still with us. But I refuse to strengthen them by repeating them, to confer upon them an irremovability, the equivalent of destiny, to confuse the biological and the cultural. Anticipation is imperative.

... Women's imaginary is inexhaustible, like music, painting, writing; their stream of phantasms is incredible.

It might be said that Jones heeded the cry for anticipation as a form of emancipation, and invented *The Prediction Pieces* to assert this sense of a new female imagining. Having unleashed the romance of mutuality, she then went about the project of putting women into the world and history through a new set of 'translations' or exchanges between the proper names of evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory—Darwin and Freud—written in the female voice.

In bringing together, for the first time, *From the Darwin Translations* series, the extent to which 'voice' and texts are predominant inscription devices for Jones is made clear. In this historical installation at ACCA, female voices collide and multiply, building a story of interconnecting and overlapping desire, unleashing a cacophony of Cixousian phantasms. They become a powerful collective ripple of subjectivity against the alleged objectivity of the historical proper names which have previously obscured the female narrative.

We know that Freud was much taken with Darwin and with Darwin's observational methods and theories on evolution and sexual selection. Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, his introductory thesis *The Origin of Species*, and the later *The Descent of Man* provided foundational propositions for Freud's thoughts in his own theorising; in particular, *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* and *Totem and Taboo*. Freud admired the empiricism of Darwin's research, which could be usefully crafted to support his own approach of observing patients and their evolving emotional and sexual status.

Freud's desire that the authority of a scientific approach would verify and authorise his work was much enhanced by his own ability to write with a kind of learned and romantic, yet clinical, certainty; however, the actual process of psychoanalysis between himself and patients was a more robustly polyphonous event.

In her memoir, *Tribute to Freud*, Hilda Doolittle (HD) provides a particularly wonderful account of her analysis with the father of psychoanalysis, exposing the multiple voices of father, lover, suitor and mother that Freud adopts, and which HD, in her own turn, performs to Freud. HD's account is a vivid re-voicing of Freud's male narrative that subsumed her own story—which is not to say Freud's analysis of HD is wrong, only that there was always more of an exchange of emotions and desires than his measured scientific account would have us believe.

Another male, to be re-cast, lurks in Jones' project: DH Lawrence, author of *Women in Love*, *Sons and Lovers*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Lawrence's prescient 'female' voice is given full-bodied expression by Jones' claiming of the auditory space—no longer imaginary, but imaging desire. 'He'—all of Lawrence's self-conscious protagonists (the 'lovers', the 'sons')—is recast as the 'man on the couch' in Jones' double project *Room with Finches* and *Freud's Couch*; a move which flips (as HD's does) the power base of psychological dialogues and monologues, while (Darwin's) finches enact their instinctive mating on the other side of the wall.

Let's not forget that Cixous wants the Medusa to 'laugh'. Few have commented upon Jones' humor, and yet there is a wicked sense of it in much of what she assembles. Using the appliance of semiotics, another of the theory funster things, she itemises the power tools of 'male' construction and the nature motifs of the 'female' with a considerable amount of tongue-in-cheekness. Flowers, as they always do, sign the female anatomy. Women ride horses, drift through flora, and chat chat chat. Boys have loud cars, propellers, circular saws and other phallic toys to perforate and build with so as to become desirable catches for females who 'want' to nest. Fireworks, horns blowing, and snout sounds all announce a sexual catharsis. Post-coital, we have the tears—before bedtime: after the affair is over—post-thesis—perhaps.

On a serious level, we have the *Tears for what was done* series where Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* provides another aspect of Jones' investigations into human behavior. Jones' *Crying man 1* is an endless loop of need and want that remains unresolved and unrequited. In this work, the 'man' is cast as the universal dual child/adult who seeks empathy, sympathy, comfort and protection anyway he can get it; replicating the primal relationship between infant and mother and endlessly practicing the separation anxiety that produces conflicting anger, hurt and guilt.

Back to *The Prediction Pieces* and the theories, that shifting cosmos of prediction, which have sought to clarify and improve our world. Tears are about protection, and the 'tears for what was done' are now shed for the lack of prediction and follow through that sees our world arriving at a post-orgasmic consumption phase.

Jones' newest work, commissioned for the outside of ACCA, is a lament for an earth that is at a precarious point of its evolution. There is no irony in this project—but there is anxiety as we prepare to separate from our over-consumed comfort things to encounter the necessary next evolutionary survival stage. As Jones wrote in 'The Prediction Pieces: As Time Goes By': "You...will see stars...it will all end in tears...BANG!..."

LYNDAL JONES  
DARWIN WITH TEARS

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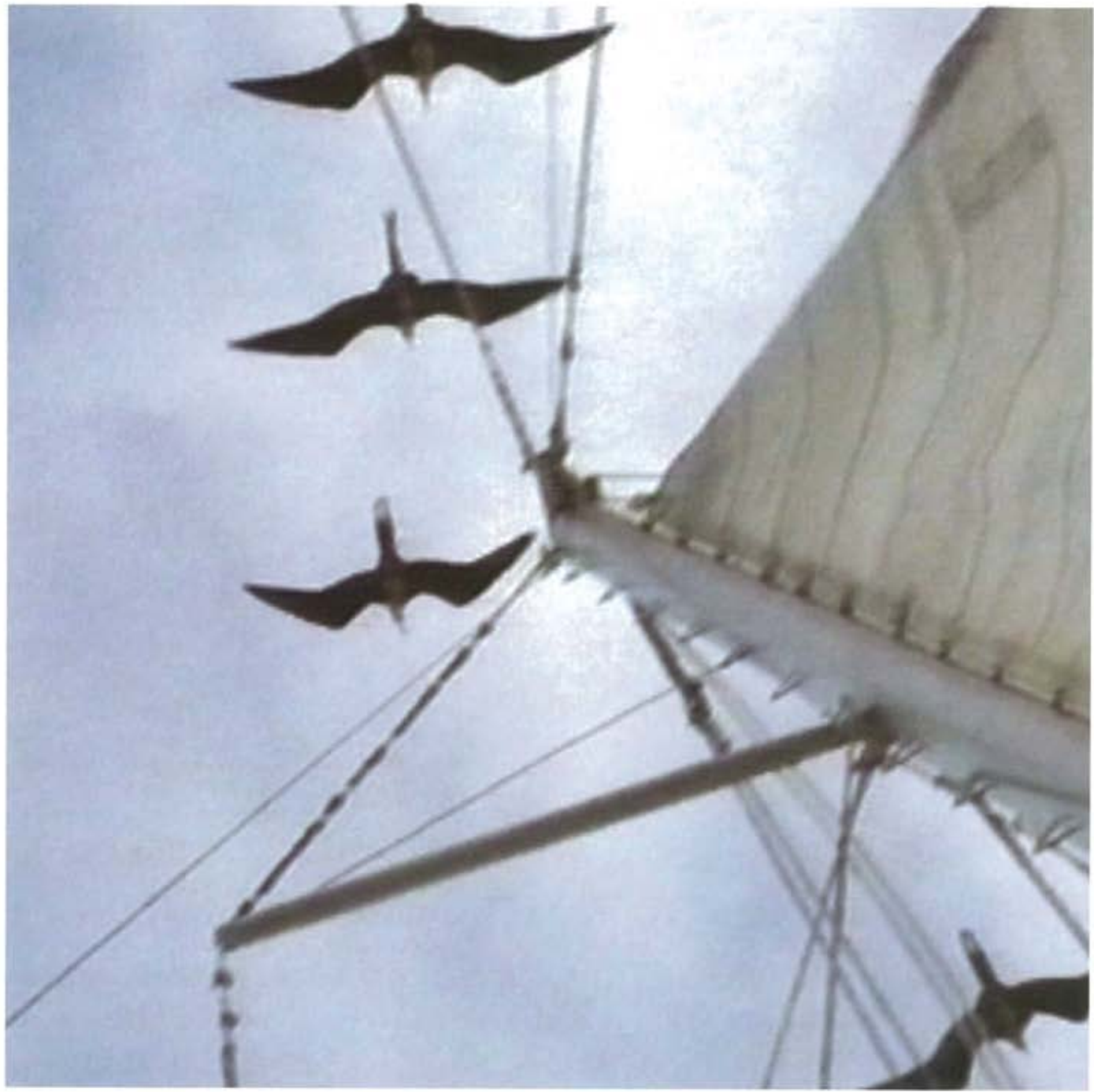
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## SOME RANDOM NOTES ON A PROCESS...

LYNDAL JONES

The year 2009 marks the bicentenary of Charles Darwin's birth and 150 years since publication of his major treatise on evolution. For me, bringing together *From the Darwin Translations*, my series of art installations based on Darwin's study of sexual selection, with later works that provide an emotional and environmental framework and analysis (*Tears for what was done* and *The Avoca Project*) is a wonderful opportunity to create a small prologue to these celebrations.

One of the delights of this exhibition is being able to see these installations *together* as a single new response to the subject. (In fact, new versions were made for four of the works, and a fifth completely new work, *1000 details from the Facts of Life*, was made from the video material from two previous works whose technologies had become outmoded.)<sup>1</sup> This has made it possible to re-think the project; to attend to certain elements that perhaps lay there quietly waiting for a new context; to draw them forward, to make a new sense of what might otherwise now be well-trodden ground of historical interest only; in fact, now, to see these large projects (always recognisably to do with a woman's voice and empowerment) as elements of an ongoing environmental concern.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1990's, concerned as I was with what seemed to me to be a repressive attitude to sexuality, I simply wanted to find another way to produce sexual images that were generated by a woman's desires. With woman as the subject, I wanted to make works with the focus on sexuality.

From *Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands*:

*I remember reading somewhere that young adult humans experience sexual desire, have an explicitly sexual thought, every three minutes. Or perhaps even more frequently. Perhaps it is actually as often as every 30 seconds.*

*What about someone who is 30, or 40 or 60 or 80?*

*I remember reading somewhere that many women learn to orgasm by developing sexual stories, sexual fantasies that they then employ as they make love.*

From *Freud's Couch*:

*You see I want to talk about sex but I don't know how to start.*

*Actually that's not quite true either. I want to just straight out talk sex, talk dirty.*

*Not to shock you. I would hardly think that was possible. Was it?*

*Well, perhaps to turn you on. I'd like to be able to do that.*

These works were not to join the writings of many feminists as a further analysis of the patriarchal voice; they were to be unapologetically a woman's exploration of sexual intensity.

From *Demonstrations and Details*:

*Today I woke, and with the same struggle with the cold and metal of it, put on my armour.*

*It is cold. The metal is cold against my skin. And heavy of course.*

*But with the comfort of custom. And the comfort of the breastplate over my heart. And the knowledge too, that I look strong. At least I look strong.*

*Beneath the metal shell there is also the private beauty of the green shift. Sea green. It goes well with my skin.*

It wasn't actually the vast phalanx of philosophers' writings on this subject that were of immediate interest to me but the artists and writers who had also set out to find a woman's erotic voice without compromise. There were Anais Nin's short stories, *Delta of Venus* and *Little Birds*; *The Story of O* by Pauline Reage and *The Lover* by Marguerite Duras. There was Nancy Friday's important anthology *Women on Top* that surveyed the breadth of western women's fantasies for the first time; the films and performances of Carolee Schneeman; the sociological performances of Annie Sprinkle; Anne Rice's and Angela Carter's sado-masochistic novels; *Working Hot*, the poetic novel by Kathleen Mary Fallon; the painting projects by South African artist Marlene Dumas; the drawings of US artist Sue Williams; the painting installation *T.I.T.S.* by Maria Konic and her defiant billboard *BITCH*; the sly ongoing postcard project by Australian performance artist Barbara Campbell; and, later, the film *Romance* by Catherine Breillat. These were the images and language of erotica—all produced brazenly and without apology through the voices of women.

It made sense that extension of the empowerment of women should come through a description of our fantasy worlds. And where better than through engaging with works of art might we play with asserting a whole range of sexual roles? In looking at/listening to these works, now, I believe this applies equally in 2008.

On another tangent, Gillian Beer's writings on Darwin had always been important to this project. It was she who first clarified for me the central issue in the ongoing mis-readings of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. As she wrote in *Darwin's Plots*:

One of the persistent impulses in interpreting evolutionary theory has been to domesticate it, to colonise it with human meaning, to bring man back to the centre of its intent.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of making the works, this reminded me to seek ways to shift the content away from a continual focus on the human. (It didn't work of course. It is only possible to see the plant and animal world in an artwork through human eyes—i.e. to 'interpret' them. However, in seeing this exhibition, I can say that plants, animals and humans are at least equally present.)

Beer continued on the same page:

Evolutionary theory emphasised extinction and annihilation equally with transformation...this was one of its most disturbing elements...

In light of the now acknowledged international crisis of climate change with its accompanying very real threat of 'extinction and annihilation' of many species, it is fitting that Darwin's work be re-assessed for the prescience of his ideas: we urgently need to grasp the implications of his proposition that we are not the centre at all.

Within this shifting context, it is also timely to reconstruct and represent this series of artworks based on Darwin's work on sexual selection (from a woman's late twentieth-century viewpoint) now supported by works on the politics of emotion (*Tears for what was done*) and framed by *The Avoca Project* ([www.avocaproject.org](http://www.avocaproject.org))—a new series on art and place and climate change.

However, I also note the tendency to present in hindsight a seamlessly coherent history—one that might not actually have occurred. To avoid this 'flattening' and generalising of the history of the development of the works, I offer a small selection from papers and scripts that may serve to elucidate that development.

What follows is a collection of writings not included in this exhibition but taken from scripts or associated writings that marked different stages of the project.

.....

The following piece, found in a 1993 notebook, was written as an initial framework 'explanation' for the series. It provides a reminder of the political issues around Darwin's work at the time, and highlights the central importance of Freud in any discussion of desire.

*In the Flesh—on the evolution of sexuality...*

*At a recent seminar in London the French playwright and theorist Hélène Cixous spoke about the importance to her of writing by the light of the axe.*

*She was describing her writing as a practice that necessarily meshes danger and immediacy of style with images of violence and of passion.*

*And what were the great topics for Hélène Cixous? The concerns to be illuminated by the light of the axe as it falls?*

*Sex and death.*

*As someone who read and re-read Angelique and the King with a torch under the bedcovers when I was twelve, I can vouch for that.*

*It was clear even then that sex and death were the primary sources for endless excitations and endless readings.*

*Sex and death.*

*As I listened to Madame Cixous, I worried about the new series I had chosen to focus on for the next ten years. How would I reconcile the need for this degree of danger and passion with the work of a nineteenth-century former minister of religion who had spent most of his life in physical pain, ill with the fear that publication of his theories would destroy his reputation?*

*Charles Darwin and danger? It sounds unlikely don't you think?*

*Darwin's Theory of Evolution has always been particularly fascinating to me. Not least because it is still called a theory but it is also assumed to be true.*

*As 'theory' it has managed to retain the authenticity associated with scientific methodology. And yet its immediate broad popularity in England and throughout Europe as something closer to 'truth' meant it was also a most persuasive tool to those who used it.*

*One horrific consequence of the popularisation of Darwin's theory has been to justify the massacre of millions of people. 'Natural selection' became simply 'our selection' in the name of racial purity or ethnic cleansing.*

*That it continues to be outrageously slanted to serve genetic politics of both the left and right one hundred and thirty five years after it was first published only serves to confirm its potency.*

*The terms 'natural selection' and 'survival of the fittest' make handy slogans.*

*'But you said this theory wasn't dangerous. That all sounds pretty dangerous to me.' I hear you mutter.*



*That's true. But the dangers inherent in writing stories 'by the light of the axe' are of a totally different order to the destruction of whole peoples.*

*Of course Charles Darwin focused on sex and death.*

*That he did so with all the romance of the pigeon breeder is neither here nor there.*

*The fact that every new edition of his works sold out on the day of publication suggests that the millions who read his evolving theory glimpsed the light of the axe on their personal place in the universe.*

*So last year I searched through Darwin's archives in Cambridge for my own clues to a fascination with questions of heritage. For a glimpse of the axe falling.<sup>4</sup>*

*While there I, co-incidentally, found myself surrounded by scholars of a second theory who did not seem to share my enthusiasm for this topic. That theory? Psychoanalysis. In the shadow of their polite silence, paranoia set in.*

*First paranoia: they think I'm supporting Biological Determinism.*

*Not an altogether unreasonable paranoia since it seems that references to biology often arouse fears of the 'nature/nurture' debate that has haunted gender and other philosophical issues in recent years. The most recent being the declaration by the biologist Simon le Vay that homosexuality is genetic.*

*(There is something perverse about wanting to work in biology at this point in time when the fashion of thought is so clearly against it).*

*Second paranoia: Because I'm dealing with a 'science', they think I'm arguing for objectivity.*

*But many scientists, particularly those involved in the philosophy of biology or cosmology, argue precisely this point within their own academic community. They have no interest in science as 'objective'.*

*For whatever the reason, psychoanalysis seems little interested in evolution.*

*Of course though, it operates both ways.*

*Time Magazine recently ran a feature article on Freud in which it outlined (with some glee, I thought) the incipient death of psychoanalysis as a result of the development of highly specific mood-altering drugs like Prozac. The author saw this as the triumph of the rational over expensive guesswork.*

*Darwin and Freud.*

*Why is it that these two most influential of theorists seem to speak at such tangents to each other? Darwin and Freud.*

*It is as if the two discourses—evolution and psychoanalysis—operate, not so much in contradiction, but on two completely different planes of thought. Different languages, different modes of analysis, no connecting points.*

*And maybe that's why I turned to Cixous (perhaps more as playwright than as theorist). And to sex and death. Sex. Death. Death in sex, sex in death, death, sex.*

*For, if Evolution can be said to provide an explanatory framework for the workings of reproduction and Psychoanalysis an explanation of the sex and death drives, theories about sex and death are precisely what both have in common.*

.....

*For the Adelaide Biennial in 1994, alongside the first installation, Room with Finches, the following was performed as a speech. The series was, at this stage, more generally about issues of evolution and adaptability. The shift to focusing on Darwin's work on sexual selection began, in fact, through this writing.*

*The personal and mental life of every human being is shaped by culture not least through languages and the cultural heritages that they embody.<sup>5</sup>*

*We dance together but I am unsure, the music is Brazilian. Slide your feet, don't lift them you say. This is different, slide your feet, slide your feet. And everywhere, you are all sliding your feet and your hips and moving in real close. Is there room for a woman to do this? And now with you here, I am with increasing sureness sliding away there, just sliding away, and you know it works with this music. Perhaps too well, as you move closer damn it and I see us sliding away out the door, any minute, and how am I going to concentrate on my writing about sex if I'm off doing it and how will I explain to him then next week. So I wander off. Not sliding. What a wimp. What a wasp.*

*We discuss your ability to reside in two cultures. So how do you do the differences I ask? Do you translate? No. No?*

*I switch. I just do it in two languages, English in Toronto, Portuguese in Brazil...or from moment to moment, depending on who I'm with. And I don't kiss you when we first meet here but in Sao Paulo of course. And death, it is further away here and sex it is further away here...*



*Is this what I want, this further away space of intellectual distance? Frankly, no. It's not enough. And if not, where might that sliding reside in me?*

*There is in the background a grandmother whose name was de Ferranti. She spoke French and only afterwards English but her name, her heritage, was Italian. She was very elegant. Cosmopolitan. Your nose is Italian, she told me in French.*

*The family tree, all there in body parts assembled. The mother's fair skin, the father's small feet. You know, your grandfather was in the theatre in England. You must have got it from him. A pot-pourri of features, continually remixed with every new child. But we thought that nose was a bad Anglo-Saxon version, you all say in disbelief. No. I respond smiling proudly. It's a very fine Italian one. And then I look you over for traces...*

*Is this closer to the sex and death yet, I wonder? Is this closer?*

*Something happens. In following the travels of Charles Darwin to Chile, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, it is necessary to learn some Spanish. Without the lisp you understand.*

*Yo soy, tu eres, el es, ella son, nosotros somos, vosotros sois, ellos son, ellas son...*

*The first name however doesn't translate well into Spanish. Another name? The middle name. Ah, Margarita. After your grandmother. Of course. Yo soy Margarita de Ferranti.*

*So, Margarita de Ferranti. Who speaks Italian, of course, and also Spanish and yes, also French on occasion. Who partakes of the world differently. Who does not translate. Who slides her feet to Brazilian music when she dances. She slid, she is sliding, she will slide...*

.....

Two years later in 1995, when writing a grant application for *Spitfire 1 2 3*, the basis for the work and my understanding of my direction had become much clearer through the action of making and reflecting on the earlier works.<sup>6</sup>

*When Charles Darwin's theory of evolution is discussed it is usually associated with his theory of natural selection. With it's emphasis on the gradual change in plant and animal populations through chance advantages of particular individuals in changing environments, this is a theory of deep history – it looks back through aeons of time.*

*His work on sexual selection is less well known.*

*This theory focuses on the particulars that create attraction that in turn lead to mating. It looks at variation in constructs of beauty in different populations, at the importance of each of the senses, at behaviours involved (competition for favour, demonstration of ability to protect the resulting infant).*

*Sexual selection, then, analyses a particular moment in time.*

*My proposition is that Darwin's theory of sexual selection is as bound in cultural notions of beauty, fashion and prosaic notions of usefulness as in genetic hard-wiring. And that these, in turn, are often determined by our past individual experience or cultural inheritance.<sup>7</sup>*

*An example: Darwin himself, despite his knowledge of rules of breeding/interbreeding, married his cousin. They had seven children, a number of whom were sickly. In straightforward, evolutionary terms, Darwin made a mistake, leaving weakened gene stock.*

*However, it could be argued that, through his ideas, he has altered the history of humankind in a way few people ever have the opportunity to do genetically.*

*And it was his marriage that enabled this to happen. His wife knew him from childhood, looked after him through years of sickness, protected him from social interruption, provided him with a good dowry (thus ensuring his financial security) and apparently created an emotionally rich and comfortable home life. It was Darwin's excellent choice of a wife that provided the supportive environment that enabled his ideas to thrive.*

*Success in mating is a complex concept with a wonderfully messy interweaving of genetics, social influences and chance.*

.....

As mentioned earlier, Nancy Friday's book *The Hidden Garden* (1992) had catalogued a whole range of sexual fantasies sent to her by thousands of women<sup>8</sup> and, in response, I set out to explore sexual language and sexual fantasy from a wide range of aspects. It was great fun. As a result, within the script for *Demonstrations and Details from the Facts of Life* (now 1000 details...) the complications of the sexual moment for humans are described in a number of ways.

First, it is a straightforward issue of attraction...

*What are the signs to notice...  
Dilating pupils  
A too-long second glance*

An intimacy of tone  
Moths around a flame  
Heated skin, heated cheeks, a swollen mouth  
The betrayal that is the touch  
Anywhere  
That touch can be anywhere  
The breasts swell  
The labia swell and become red  
The nipples stand out  
As does the penis and the clitoris  
All swelling, all reddening, all reaching out  
All reaching out...

But there is also the acknowledgement of connection...

With all that detailed information about sex  
Why don't they mention the rest of it?  
With the cock in the cunt  
And the endless soft kissings on stomachs  
And the hittings together of hips  
And the squeezing of nipples  
And tongues onto clits  
And the details of sperm pushing on the coatings of eggs  
And the blood and the sweat  
And the soft moans and the callings out  
With all that, with its pushing and pushing and rhythms that  
build and release  
Where is the mention of attachment?

There is gossip...

He married his cousin you know. You'd think he'd know  
better.

There is direct talk to the viewer

Don't roll your eyes at me!

There is an example of the politics of sexuality...

She was raped.

The judge said that it was because of what she was  
wearing.

That she excited the men and they couldn't control  
themselves.

I felt incredibly sad.

You know, that same judge convicted a woman last week for  
stealing. And the department store that had laid its goods  
out to seduce and tempt was not once accused of exciting  
that woman beyond her control.

And then a more theatrical sense of the potency of the moment ...

They talk of darkness,  
Of yearning,  
Of the pain of it,  
Of the desperate, psychic need for union.  
Darkness.  
There's fever.  
And the mention of death.

There are footsteps in the snow, but whoever was there  
is now gone...

The silence is a soft one. Wind in branches...that is all...

The garden is clearly deserted.

Here the pain is as evident as the joy, making the shift into a series on explicit emotion an understandable next step. That these works are in fact a series of steps is, I hope, becoming evident through this glimpse of associated writings. This accumulation of what I regard to be propositions (as they don't provide a specific conclusion but open up a range of experiences as ideas) will be completed here by a description of *Room with Finches*, written in 2002, that makes the argument for art:

In the installation, it was clear that both the rational and the emotional could simultaneously reside in a physical material presence that is an artwork. That it is able to bypass the over-determinism of some views as it is able to include the complexity of the unmeasurable.

An example: the installation *Room with Finches* comprises a large aviary, internally lit, full of live finches. As they socialise, find partners, mate, feed, they are incredibly noisy. By walking around behind the aviary, you can watch a video projected onto the exterior rear wall of the aviary itself. The video is an image of Freud's couch. A young man can be seen (from the analyst's position only) lying down on the couch, sometimes clothed, sometimes undressed. A woman's voice can be heard, talking to her analyst of her sexual fears and fantasies.

The finch is recognised as the central icon for Darwin's theory of evolution. The 'couch' with its Persian rugs is the central scene for Freud's body of work. They are visually in 'opposition'. And yet, it is not possible to watch the birds without hearing the woman describing her fantasies and neither is it possible to watch the video without the noise of the birds intruding.

So it is possible to experience oneself as first zoologist, then analyst (to take on and inhabit often quite disparate roles); to engage, to always be implicated, to always be

complex and contradictory, to be able to both think with feeling and to feel intelligently.

Now for the question of suffering and the question of enjoyment.

Over and over over and over over and over.

<sup>1</sup> 1000 details from the Facts of Life was made from the archival video installations *Demonstrations and Details from the Facts of Life* (a multi-screen interactive work whose technology became outmoded and is too expensive to reproduce) and *1000 Years of Sexual Play* (a 'library' of VHS tapes, also now a redundant technology).

<sup>2</sup> I should have realised. In its refusal to maintain humankind at the centre, Darwin's project profoundly challenged the moral order. In doing this, he foreshadowed the much later work of Gaia theorists like James Lovelock (Thompson, 1987) that describes many possible futures completely devoid of humans.

<sup>3</sup> Beer, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> I spent two weeks in 1993 in the archive room at Cambridge University Library with access to Darwin's notebooks and other small accoutrements from his archive.

<sup>5</sup> Sheldrake, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> When the project was first undertaken, with its focus on sexual reproduction, I was concerned about the necessarily exclusively heterosexual focus of the project. But in orienting the works to Darwin's theories of sexual selection, with its associated apparently redundant extravagances in the apparatuses of attraction, a more complex sexuality could be articulated. Besides, Darwin himself broke the rules. He married his cousin.

<sup>8</sup> It is tempting to decide this is a Lamarckian position. I am, however, arguing for a complex understanding of the determinants of apparently genetic changes to be considered as possibly social ones.

<sup>9</sup> The types of sexual fantasies listed in Nancy Friday's book *Women on Top* (1991) include the following: the idea of the 'Great Seductress'; the fantasy of control; sadistic fantasies; exhibitionism; women with women; fantasies of the forbidden; excess (more sex, more men, bigger penises); oral sex; masturbation; group sex; watching two men have sex; being the man.

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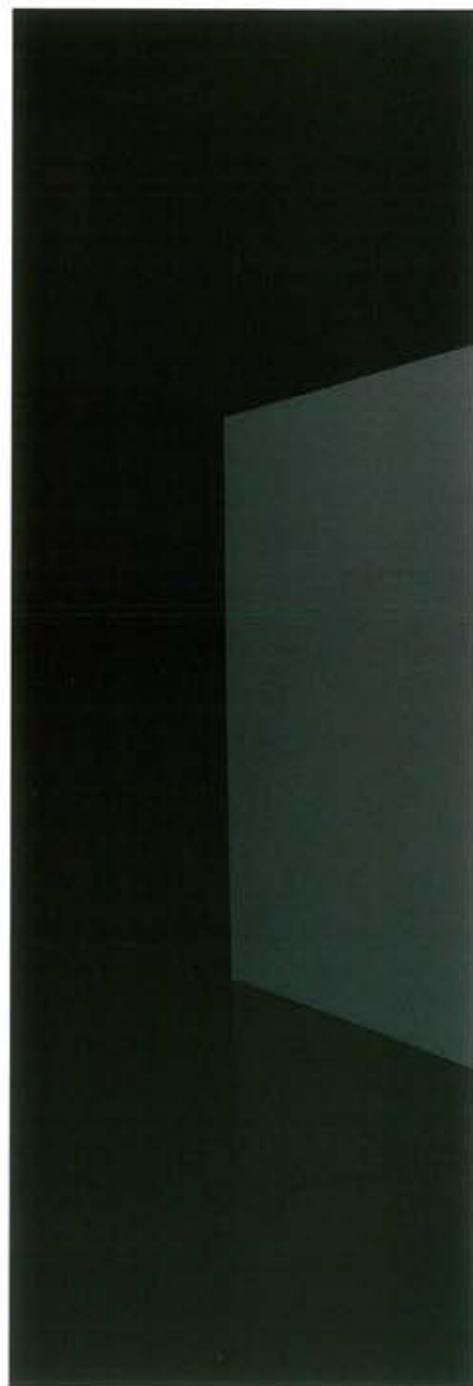
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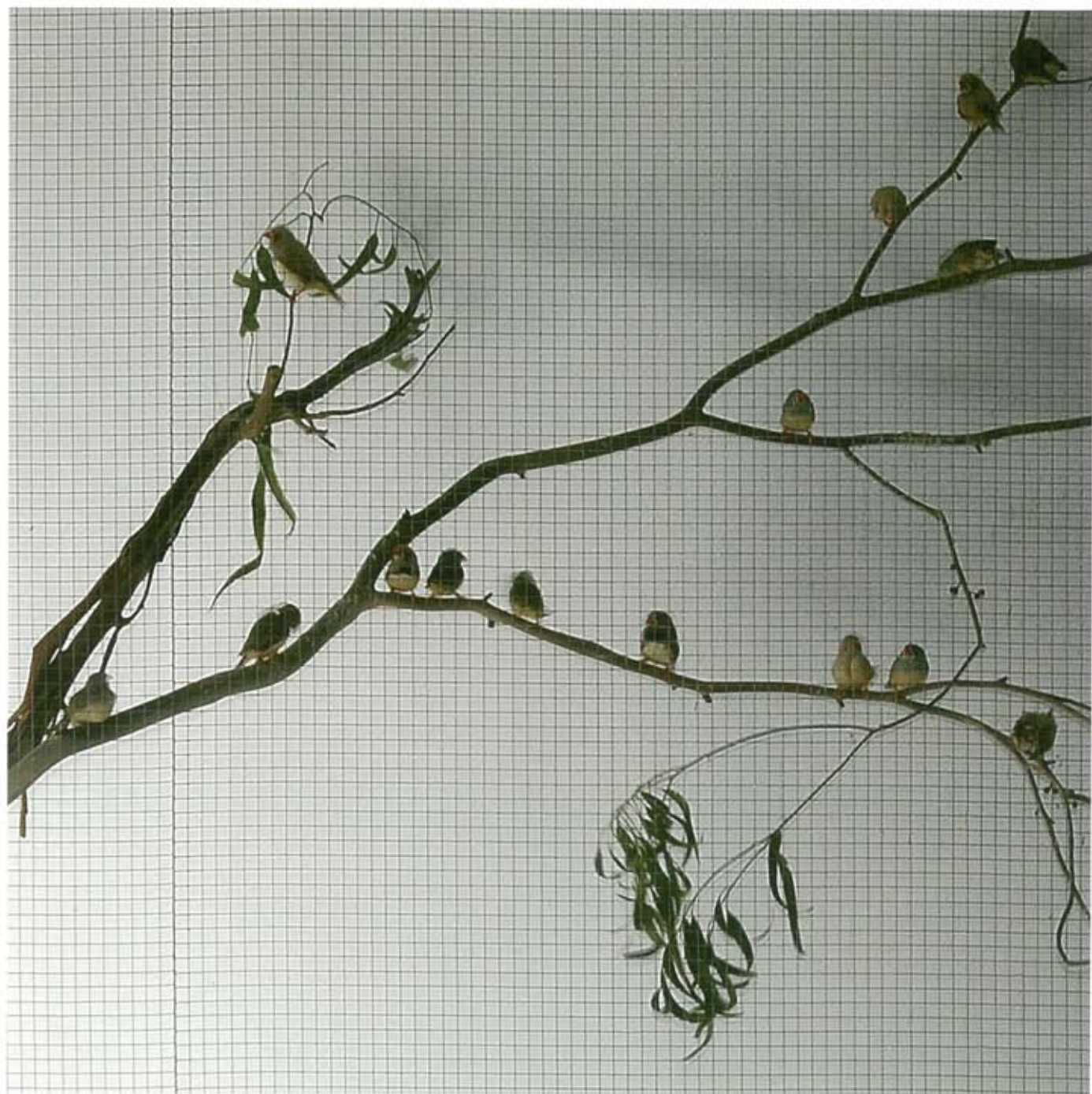
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## TONGUES UNTIED: SPEAKING SEX IN THE SPACE BETWEEN FEELING AND KNOWING

SCOTT MCQUIRE

*Do I take my shoes off?*<sup>1</sup>

The first thing you see across the darkened room is rectangular space defined by light; a visual field framed by a box-like structure—a cage, in fact, in which several dozen small birds flutter around a branch. The lighting and the truncated branch serve to emphasise the affinity of this setting with the cinematic close-up, as if this was a giant frame enlargement from a nature film. As you approach, you gradually realise that the birds, finches, are not images, but real. From the other side of the structure, a woman's voice can be heard. Walking around, you face a large video projection of one of modernity's primal scenes: Freud's couch, reconstructed as a set, or rather, a *scene*. Depicted with lingering close-ups of the sort of rich Oriental rugs that were a feature of Freud's own study, the couch is presented as a fetish. No master shot regulates this scene, and, in its absence, the elements begin to drift into new constellations. Fragmentary images evoke uncertain presences. We see a man, lying or seated, dressed and undressing, repeating certain postures and gestures, while a woman's voice recounts intimate childhood memories and mature sexual experiences. Or fantasies. The ambiguity between the two marks the work's point of suspension.

These are some of my memories of Lyndal Jones' *Room with Finches* presented at the Adelaide Festival in 1994. The installation, which included the video *Freud's Couch*, marked a new point of departure for Jones. Following her decade long series of *The Prediction Pieces* (1981-91), *From the Darwin Translations* (1993-2000) would take her around the world making and showing art for the next seven years. The work presented in Adelaide, with its explicit references to Darwin and Freud as two of the founding fathers of modern culture, flagged the conceptual terrain the series would traverse. Jones next series, *Tears for what was done* (2001-06), initiated with *Deep water/Aqua profunda* (the first video installation chosen to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale), continued her ambition to make art which engages complex social and philosophical issues. Yet Jones' art has never been didactic. Its appeal stems from its capacity to touch multiple registers simultaneously: its commitment to the sensual as much as the conceptual; to feeling as much as thinking; to reflexivity and the process of the journey rather than the moment of arrival.

*I watch. And begin to move closer.*

Categorising Jones' work according to its formal attributes has always been difficult, given its fluid combination of video,

site-specific installation and performance. Yet the formal heterogeneity of her methods should not distract attention from deeper continuities. One of the pleasures of experiencing so many pieces reassembled in one location is precisely that it sharpens awareness of the way certain phrases or images are circulated between different works; the way that certain questions—about sexual attraction, about chance and meaning, about the intersections between art and science, about identity, innocence and loss—are returned to time and again with different inflections; the way resonances are established not only within but also across different series.

While Jones has often made art which is technically demanding, she has never been driven by technology. Rather, the flexibility of 'new media' (the capacity to remix elements and to reassemble discrete components into new formations) has allowed her to realise ambitions she already held. In this sense, the deepest thread running through her art is commitment to what Umberto Eco dubbed 'the open work': art that actively admits complexity by encouraging a multiplicity of readings. Jones herself has described her stance as 'propositional'. Among other things, this approach demands a different sense of time. It requires the confidence to withdraw, to refuse the temptation to overcrowd things, to allow images and words in the space to breathe so that ephemeral juxtapositions and contingent patterns might reveal rich layers of condensed affect. It also requires respect for the capacity of audiences to relinquish the guide-rails of familiar narrative arcs and invest their time in open-ended exploration. And, finally, it requires relinquishing the fantasy of finality, of somehow arriving at a point of completion, of a finished master-work. Jones has always preferred the *series*, and it is characteristic of this sensibility that all the work for this exhibition has been *remixed* anew.

*It will all end in tears.*

In her art, Jones frequently asks us to explore the dialectic between chance and necessity. Why does one thing happen rather than another? Why did this happen here rather than there, now rather than then, to me rather than you? What if things happened differently? Contingency is both a window through which the unexpected might enter, and a means of reflecting on the poetics—and the politics—of ordering. In *Do Not Go Gently*, Jones drew on speculations by celebrity physicist Stephen Hawking about the end of the expansionary phase of the universe leading to a reversal of entropy. This rather abstract physics was reworked into a performance in which temporal enigmas were embodied in reflexive narrative structures. For Jones, as for Ricoeur, stories help to *construct* time. While her work often has a narrative dimension, Jones' stories are non-linear and complex, fragmentary and elliptical, comprising silence and the unsaid as much as positive declarations. To paraphrase Jean-Luc Godard's famous quip, these stories do have a beginning, middle and end, but not necessarily in that order.



Concern for ordering is one of the trajectories along which *The Prediction Pieces* meets *From the Darwin Translations*. At the moment when the waning of religious cosmology in the face of Enlightenment critique had created a need for explanations capable of marrying the new science—with its novel faith in observation and empirical proof—to older existential questions, Darwin's theory of evolution proposed a radically different template for thinking about time and change. Jones' series of 'translations' asks us to consider the manner in which evolution altered modern understanding of the natural world and the place of the human animal within it.

*The Father? The father? No, it's about coincidences.*

The real fecundity of evolution as a meta-narrative is the way it eventually percolates into common sense, becoming atrophied in stereotypes or reinvented in parody. Darwinism, reduced to the tag line 'survival of the fittest', reappears again and again throughout modernity, as the substrate for phenomena as disparate as eugenics, neo-liberal economics and biological justifications for gender specific social roles. For Jones, it is this penumbra, as much as Darwin's own research, which forms her point of departure. Works like *Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands* seem to begin closest to Darwin, but inevitably take us on journeys elsewhere. While the footage, shot by Jones on a visit to the Galapagos Islands in 1993, is somewhat familiar from nature docs, the lack of a 'voice from God' narrative interpreting it is not. Jones rarely uses long shots or situating shots, preferring a mosaic built out of details and fragments. What is revealed is a complex ecology of sea lions, iguanas, tortoises, blue-footed boobies, crabs and sea urchins dwelling amidst sky, earth and water. If this elemental image track seems firmly located in the domain of Nature, the audio track which overlaps it—a polyphonic narrative of a sexual encounter spoken in different tongues by several women and men—implies it is always already crossed by Culture. And with culture comes fantasy, imagination, memory and desire.

*My lover is covered in fur. Like an animal.*

Comparison of humans and animals recurs across several works in different registers. *Demonstrations & Details from the Facts of Life* and *1000 years of Sexual Play* (remixed together here for 11 screens as *1000 details from the Facts of Life*) present multiple vignettes which explore a language of bodies, but also of words. Closely observed human behaviour, such as builders at work, an urban dinner party or a country wedding are interlaced with images drawn from the animal and plant worlds, and cross-hatched with different women's stories of birth, sex, attraction and longing. *Boys in loud cars* eschews the primacy of a female narrative voice for a collective choreography of the everyday life of a group of young men. Formal repetitions of actions such as driving, getting in and getting out of cars, departing and

returning, are established in a complex cross-screen montage, suggesting the enduring social patterns—the whorls of time—in which these particular instances are embedded. The camera's close attention to the awkwardness of the boys, the way they push and jostle each other, reminds us of the restricted social language young men often have for expressing attraction, which is instead displaced into mock aggression. Yet Jones is not looking down on this world with disdain, but into it with candour and affection, respecting the boys' obvious pride in their vehicles even while she underlines the sexualisation of the car that JG Ballard dramatised so darkly in *Crash*.

On one level, these works ask us to question why 'animal' commonly designates those who are *less than human*? As Montaigne quipped, when questioning the stupidity customarily inferred to animals: 'When I play with my cat, who knows if I am not a pastime to her more than she is to me?'.<sup>2</sup> Animality is associated with loss of control, equated with violence, or perhaps—and this is Jones' most regular point of departure—sexual abandon. Comparing human and animal behaviour through her eyes, we are moved to ask: at what point does a claw become a hand, a beak become a mouth, a cry become a voice, an eye become cogniscent? What itinerary of desire leads us to want to forget so totally that we are *animals*? In suspending one of the key oppositions around which human identity is assigned, Jones opens the field to new questions. And in place of the linear temporality of eugenicist theories propagated by adherents, including Darwin's nephew Francis Galton, we are reminded instead of the Darwin who radically decentred the place that humans hold in the world. After Darwin, man could no longer elevate himself with the comforting fiction of divine origin: as Nietzsche put it with characteristic acerbity: 'This path is now forbidden, since a monkey stands at the entrance'.<sup>3</sup>

*You offered me this in the beginning.*

*The Garden of Eden* offers Jones a scene ripe for plucking. In the biblical account, Eden is the place in which man was first granted dominion over all animals. The story of the expulsion forms the matrix of one of the West's enduring narrative patterns, in which an originary plenitude is followed by a calamitous 'fall'. And, of course, Eden is the scene of a new gendering in which female fertility is re-inscribed within patriarchal logic as secondary and derived rather than originary. If departure from Paradise denotes a threshold of entry into consciousness, it also designates a new awareness of sexual difference governed by shame and a loss of innocence; the mythical moment when, in John Berger's terms, animal nakedness was transformed into cultural nudity.

If Eden didn't exist, you feel Jones might have had to invent it. And she has, in several iterations from Woolloomooloo to Kwangju. Each probes the gendering of the border between nature and culture in particular ways. Moving from the obviously fake plastic foliage used in the first installations to video footage

of luscious rainforest shot in the Tropical Conservatory at Kew Gardens in London—the nineteenth-century forerunner of new tourist attractions such as the Eden Project, a domed rainforest in Cornwall—Jones pokes her tongue at the ostensible innocence of nature. In her Eden, images of a naked woman and man fade in and out of the foliage: occasionally they reach for a pomegranate (etymologically ‘seeded apple’) or look directly at the camera, implicating viewers in an exchange of knowing looks. Is there consciousness without self-consciousness, innocence without shame? The narrative used in earlier versions is told by a woman in a matter-of-fact voice, an intimate confession describing an intense sexual experience blurring pain and pleasure, the movement from ‘shocked hurt’ to ‘hot hurt’. And, in what forms another thread linking many of these works, she dwells on the circulation of fluid elements: of the wetness of tears, of the ocean, of skin, of sweat; she speaks of wetness in her mouth and in her cunt.

*You see I want to talk about sex but I don't know how to start. Actually, that's not quite true either. I want to just straight out talk sex. Talk dirty.*

Is it still necessary to defend such an approach against charges of pornography? Perhaps only because these designations still function to paralyse sexual expression.<sup>4</sup> The salient difference between art and pornography is not about explicit content but the way the elements are mobilised. Jones' narratives frequently stress repetition, but instead of indicating endless worry about sexual difference culminating in the inevitable ‘money shot’ of the porn film, where male ejaculation seeks to prove the victory of male potency over the fear of impotence, repetition in Jones' work signifies the limitless irruption of desire. Circulating across many of these stories, by way of cultural repositories variously named Freud, Darwin and Eden, is the question of desire. What do women want? Freud famously posed the question and equally famously failed to answer it. Jones doesn't presume to answer for him—the era of universal claims is finally over—but instead offers multiple voices—tongues—each speaking their own desire, lust and carnality.

*You do look beautiful in uniform.*

*Spitfire 1 2 3* began from stories Jones first heard from her mother and aunt, both of whom married Spitfire pilots. In Darwinian terms the Spitfire pilot was one of the ‘fittest’. He was also a prototype cyborg, a man integrated into technology at a new intensity, symbolising the modern marriage between speed, death and desire. In the version displayed here, the camera remains passive, welded to the plane's movements. Rhythm is established through editing, embellished by a double audio track which varies depending on the spectator's position in the viewing space. The fields over which the plane flies are cast as the scene for uncertain encounters: on the one hand,

the sexual fantasies and experiences of women below hearing the plane pass overhead; on another, the poppy-covered killing fields of war zones from Flanders to Sarajevo and beyond; and on another, the backdrop against which the body experiences its own disappearance in weightless rotation. The openness of these intimate voices speaking English, German and Serbian coalesces into narrative lattices (one thinks of Marguerite Duras, of Chantal Akerman), forming a series of honeycomb chambers in which your own memories, feelings, and experiences begin to insinuate themselves, becoming entangled in the spaces between the stories being told, caught up in their hesitations and overlaps, lending them a peculiar emotional resonance.

*Now it's about deep kissing.*

*Portraits of two women* returns to the theme of sex and danger, but here the danger is less the threat of imminent death than the danger of paralysis, of being left, passive and waiting. Two female voices begin discussing another woman, perhaps the woman whose face we see in close-up. Are they visiting an art gallery? Who is she? Where is she? What does she wait for? These questions, which form the stuff of the quintessential modern narrative form, the detective story, are not so much answered but played with, as if they were instruments. The process unfolds in the enigmatic presence of the woman's face, lending it a compelling intimacy. As Bachelard reminds us: ‘the human face is above all an instrument of seduction’.<sup>5</sup> We are invited to consider what is being said and what is left unsaid, to match the said and the unsaid with the woman's changing expression. We are asked to *watch her*, as she counts, as the tone of the overheard narrative veers from sensual to angry and anxious. Chairs, like words and knives, are flung. Tears born from troubled depths signal anguish rather than pleasure. Counting gives way to breathing, waiting in anticipation to waiting with resignation.

What remains so striking about the spread of porn into mainstream culture is the impoverished sexual imagination it usually reveals. Jones is distinctive in her refusal to either comply with stereotypes (think Madonna's sex book) or to abandon the field entirely. Her work deftly punctures the reactive caricature of ‘feminist art’ as humorless and uninterested in pleasure. Who else has created a ‘pornographic’ work in which the penis—the mythical *phallus*—is not the centre of a climactic money-shot, but part of the ebb and flow of a tidal process, stiffening and detumescing like a clump of pink coral rising and falling in invisible water?

*Why do I always cry tears of joy?*

In his *Expression of Emotion in Humans and Animals* (1872), Darwin famously used photographs rather than drawings to reproduce typical facial expressions. You imagine he would have



loved a camera capable of reproducing moving images. The capacity for revealing telltale signs (a look, a swallow, a facial tic so momentary one might have dreamt it) opened up what Walter Benjamin aptly called the 'optical unconscious'. In Jones' hands, the 'data' gathered by the camera's eye is not mobilised to support claims to scientific truth, but to form an enigmatic mirror reflecting on ideas of 'normal' behaviour. *Crying man 1* uses a motion-tracking device so that the man's noisy lament gives way to silent anguish once a spectator approaches too close. *He Must Not Cry* shows a range of different men on the verge of tears. Some of them look straight at us—at the apparatus—and a welling sense of intrusion and shame forces us to ask: what is the nature of the prohibition against men crying? Crying in public still raises questions about personal character (recall, for instance, recent debates over whether Hillary Clinton was 'tough' enough to be President). Equally, failure to cry at an occasion like the funeral of a loved one can lead to condemnation as heartless and hardened.

If these works continue Jones' exploration of the gendering of social behaviour and emotional display, they are framed in a manner which deliberately evokes the former Howard Government's persistent refusal to apologise to the Stolen Generations. The public outpouring of emotion on February 13 2008, when an apology was belatedly made by the Federal Parliament, and tears were finally shed for some of what has been done, underlined the vital role that public grief can play in healing personal and cultural rifts.

#### *What is it about water?*

If I could begin this essay again, I would begin with water. Water seems ever-present in Jones' art: as the wetness of sex, as the liquidity of emotions, as the incarnation of non-linear logic (fluid dynamics) that links the intimate scale of bodily experience to global issues of environmental sustainability and species survival. *Marlene* is a work literally framed by the subtle movement of water. The camera remains passive. Changes in the scope and depth of the visual field are dictated by the movement of the ferries. At times, the close-up scrutiny turns their scarred hulls into abstract arrangements, like a Minor White photograph. When a second vessel enters, its handrail bisects the image, forming abstract arrangements reminiscent of colour field painting. For most of the piece, it is only the gentle swaying of the frame that indicates the liquid presence of water. Like the other woman whose portrait she twins, *Marlene* is waiting. In-between journeys.

Water is renowned as the feminine element, the element of metamorphosis, of renewal. For Paul Claudel, water is also a form of sight: 'Water is the gaze of the earth, its instrument for looking at time'.<sup>6</sup> Jones is that rare artist who is at home in the ambivalence of its constantly changing surface as well as its ever more complex depths.

<sup>1</sup> All the sub-headings are taken from works in this show.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Derrida, J, 'The animal that therefore I am (more to follow)', *Critical Inquiry*, 28, 2002, p. 375.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche, F, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> When *Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands* was broadcast on ABC radio in 1995, Senator Richard Alston (then Shadow Minister for the Arts) was inspired by a report on *Today Tonight* to describe it as 'an obscenely worded sex therapy tape'.

<sup>5</sup> Bachelard, G, *Water and Dreams*, Dallas: Pegasus Foundation, 1983, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in *Water and Dreams*, p. 31.















## ART AND THE ANIMAL

ELIZABETH GROSZ

The animal defines what is most beautiful and artful within the human. Art is of the animal. It comes not from something uniquely human—reason, recognition, intelligence, or sensibility—nor from any of man's higher accomplishments—a special inclination to the aesthetic or the ethical, to beauty or goodness—but from something excessive in the world, from what is unable to be predicted, from the animal. What is most artistic in us is also the most bestial. Art comes from that excess; in the world, in objects, in living things, which enables them to be more than they are, to give more than themselves, their material properties and possible uses, than is readily given in them. Art is the consequence of that excess, that energy or force, that puts life at risk for the sake of intensification, for the sake of sensation itself—not simply for pleasure or for sexuality, as psychoanalysis might suggest—but for what can be magnified, intensified, for what is more, what is perhaps too much, but through which creation, risk, innovation are undertaken for their own sake.

Psychoanalysis has the relations between art and sexuality at least half-right. Art is connected to sexual energies and impulses: they both come from a common impulse for more; what Nietzsche called the will to power. But for psychoanalysis, sexuality transforms itself into art only through representation and the transformation of organ-pleasure into material production: art is the expression of a sublimated sexual impulse, a desexualization of libido.<sup>1</sup> This capacity for displacement, for transferring sexual intensity or libido into desexualised or sublimated creative activities is, for Freud, a uniquely human capacity; the result of the untethering of the drive from a seasonally regulated cyclical sexuality.<sup>2</sup> It is only the sexual drive, not sexual *instincts* that can be deflected into non-sexual aims.<sup>3</sup>

It is not exactly true that art is a consequence of the excesses that sexuality or the sexual drive poses, for it may be that sexuality itself needs to function artistically to be adequately sexual, adequately creative; that sexuality (considered neither drive nor instinct, but the alignment of bodies and their practices and activities of bodily intensification) itself needs to harness excessiveness and invention to function at all.

There is a connection, a convoluted and oblique relation, between Freudian theory and the understanding of sexual selection developed in evolutionary theory, especially Darwin's own writings: that is, the attraction to and possible attainment of sexual (though not necessarily copulative) partners<sup>4</sup>—human and otherwise—and the forces and energies of artistic production and consumption. Art is of the animal to the extent that creation, the attainment of new goals not directly defined through the useful, is at its core.

For Darwin, as opposed to his Spencerian and neo-Darwinian successors who functionalise his work, and who reduce sexual selection to some secretly complex version of natural selection,<sup>5</sup> the living being is 'artistic' to the extent that its body or products have within them something that attracts, appeals, or entices, not only members of the opposite sex, but also members of the same sex and members of different species. This attraction invariably involves some intensification of the body's organs, extremities, covering, head: some magnification and alteration of morphological features according to sexually bifurcated characteristics. Sexual difference, rather than reproductive relations, structures morphological change. Sexual selection does not invariably have a heterosexual object (indeed it is not uncommon for the object of courtship to be of the same sex, or of a different species, or even an inanimate object!). But it does involve some evolutionary transformation of the body according to its status as male or female, some perceptible change in color, in the use of organs, surfaces and extremities, in the development of techniques of display, in skills and abilities that differentiate an organism from those creatures morphologically similar to it with which it competes while attracting the attention or interest of those morphologically dissimilar to it which it attempts to attract. This calling to attention, this making of one's own body into a multi-sensory spectacle involves intensification. Not only are the organs on display engorged, intensified, puffed up, but the organs which perceive them—ears, eyes, nose, skin—are also filled with intensity, resonating with colors, sounds, shapes, rhythms.<sup>6</sup>

This may be why Darwin claims some species of salmon, trout, perch and stickleback change their color during the breeding season; from drab to iridescent and back, depending on which sex they are.<sup>7</sup> This is not simply the kind of functional coloring that acts as camouflage to protect fish from predation. Konrad Lorenz has suggested that this spectacular coloring may act as a form of aggression; the vivid and unambiguous defence of territory. For Lorenz, like other Neo-Darwinists, this excess is not in fact excessive: it is the bodily expression of something like a territorial imperative, a key element in the struggle for survival. These beautifully striking and provocative colors, shapes, organs, act, for Lorenz, as territorial markers, posters or placards of possession; markers that function to scare rivals and defend territory. They are rendered functional, all excess and redundancy eliminated.<sup>8</sup> But for Darwin himself, these markings, which he acknowledges may serve aggressive functions are *not* the conditions of territoriality but are the raw materials of sexual selection; excesses that are produced and explored for no reason other than their possibilities for intensification.<sup>9</sup>

Many battles between rivalrous males fought apparently over territory are, in fact, undertaken, in Darwin's opinion, primarily to attract the attention of females who may otherwise remain indifferent to male display. In the case of battling birds, the territorial struggle is, in many cases, primarily theatrical,



staged, a performance of the body at its most splendid and appealing, rather than a real battle with its attendant risks and dangers.<sup>10</sup> Ornamental display occurs in the most successful and aggressive males, and even those males who are most successful at fending off predators and rivals are not always guaranteed to attract the attention of a possible partner. Although beauty of all kinds displays itself, this beauty puts the creature in some kind of potential danger: it has a cost.<sup>11</sup> Nor can the defense of territory in itself be identified with sexual success. Sexual selection imperils as much as it attracts. Territory is only produced when something, some property or quality, can be detached from its origin or its predictable function within a regime of natural selection, and be made to have a life of its own; to resonate, just for itself. Territory is artistic, the consequence of love not war, of seduction not defense, of sexual selection not natural selection.

Art is of the animal to the extent that art is fundamentally bound up with the two features that characterise all of animal existence: the force of sexual selection (that is, the vibratory power of seduction—attention, attraction, performance, courtship); and the force of territorialisation (the loosening of qualities from the milieu in which they originate and function through the construction of a boundary or frame within which these qualities can exist in different form). Are animals artistic? Certainly, if by that we understand that they intensify sensation (including the sensations of their human observers), that they enjoy this intensification and that it entails a provisional stability such as the constitution of a territory implies. This animal-intensification is artistic even if it is not yet composed, not yet art (it is refrain-like); and further, it provides the marks, the emblems, the very qualities by which a composed art becomes possible. Art is of the animal precisely to the degree that sexuality is artistic.

Art, the excessive composition of material elements that are always more than material, is the major—perhaps the only—way in which living beings deal with and enjoy the intensities that are not contained within but are extracted from the natural world, chaos. Art is where intensity is most at home, where matter is most attenuated without being nullified. (Perhaps, we can understand matter in art as matter at its most dilated, matter as it most closely approximates mind, diastole or proliferation rather than systole and compression [as is usual], and where becoming is most directly in force). Art is where life most readily transforms itself, the zone of indetermination through which all becomings must pass. In this sense, art is not the antithesis of politics but politics continued by other means.<sup>12</sup>

Art is not a self-contained activity in the sense that it is disconnected from the ways in which the natural and social worlds function. Art, however, is not a window onto these worlds, a mode of their representation or exploration: it does not take the place of social or political analysis or philosophical speculation. Rather, it is where intensities proliferate them-

selves, where forces are expressed for their own sake, where sensation lives and experiments, where the future is affectively and perceptually anticipated. Art is where properties and qualities—sounds, rhythms, harmonies in music; colors, forms, relations of surface/depth and visibility/invisibility in painting; planes, volumes, and voids in architecture, and so on—take on the task of representing the future, of preceding and summoning up sensations to come, a people to come, worlds or universes to come. Art is intensely political, not in the sense that it is a collective or community activity (which it may be, but usually is not) but in the sense that it elaborates the possibilities of new, more, sensations than those we know.

Bare survival seems rare in even the most harsh climate and conditions: the more difficult the region, the more ingenuity and artisticness is involved in the production of qualities. The Thorny Mountain Devil Lizard of the Western Desert in central Australia is capable of survival in even the driest of climates because it is able to live on water generated only by condensation; yet it does so much more than survive. Not only does it produce the most vivid and striking colors and color-changes, it has also perfected the theatrical arts of stillness and speed. It survives in the most forbidding of conditions, inspiring totemic identifications; serving for many Aboriginal peoples, and through them, perhaps 'Europeans', as an emblem, a Dreaming, of many of their own struggles and triumphs, both daily and historically. It is because there is an animal-becoming, a Devil-becoming, in the co-existence of traditional groups and the thorny lizards in a common terrain—where each fights in its own way in the same conditions—that human subjects become inscribed with animal-becomings; the movements, gestures and habits of animal existence (which is not confined to the visual arts but occurs above all in dance and music) and that animals, even lizards, become endowed with human wishes and skills, wisdom, fortitude, cunning, calm, envy, gratitude.

It is this excess, both of harnessable forces, and of unleashed qualities, that enables both art and sex to erupt, at the same evolutionary moment, as a glorification of intensity, as the production and elaboration of intensity for its own sake. While there is a becoming-artistic of the animal world, the emergence of art proper, the eruption of sensation in and for itself is made possible only by this prior animal-becoming, with its own peculiar perhaps even unknowable sexual rituals and pleasures. It is because of the beauty of the Thorny Mountain Devil Lizard, its peculiar epidermal geography, its characteristic ways of moving, its color intensifications, that it serves to spur on human art making, which does not so much seek to imitate or represent it as to partake in some of those features and characteristics that allure and attract.

Art is the process of making sensations live, of giving an autonomous existence to expressive qualities and material forms and through them affecting and being affected by life in its other modalities. As songbirds are themselves captivated by

a tune sung by its most skilful and melodious rival, and fish are attracted to the most striking colors and movements, even if these are not their own, so these qualities—melody, sonorous expression, color, visual expression—are transferable; the human borrows them from a conscious or long forgotten treasury of earthly and animal excess.

But art is not simply the expression, recognition or celebration of an animal past, a pre-historical allegiance with the forces that make one; it is not memorialisation, the confirmation of a shared past; it is above all the transformation of the materials from the past into resources for the future, the sensations not available now but to be unleashed in the future on a people now ready to perceive and be affected by them.

<sup>1</sup> I have outlined Freud's account of art and the special relation he posits between repressed homosexuality and creative sublimation in Grosz, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> For Freud, sublimation is the capacity for exchanging a sexual for a desexualised aim which consists in the sexual trend abandoning its aim of obtaining a component or a reproductive pleasure and taking on another which is related genetically to the abandoned one but is itself no longer sexual and must be described as social. We call this process 'sublimation,' in accordance with the general estimate that places social aims higher than sexual ones, which are at bottom self-interested. Sublimation is, incidentally, only a special case in which sexual trends are attached to other, non-sexual, ones. (Freud, 1917: 345)

<sup>3</sup> "The sexual instinct...is probably more strongly developed in man than in most of the higher animals; it is certainly more constant, since it has almost entirely overcome the periodicity to which it is tied in animals. It places extraordinarily large amounts of force at the disposal of civilised activity, and it does this in virtue of its especially marked characteristic of being able to displace its aim without materially diminishing in intensity. This capacity to exchange its originally sexual aim for another one, which is no longer sexual but which is psychically related to the first aim, is called the capacity for sublimation. In contrast to this displaceability, in which its value for civilisation lies, the sexual instinct may also exhibit a particularly obstinate fixation which renders it unserviceable and which sometimes causes it to degenerate into what are described as abnormalities." (Freud, 1908: 187)

<sup>4</sup> For Darwin it is quite clear that not all members of any species need to reproduce. There is a high biological tolerance for a percentage of each group not reproducing with no particular detriment for that group, and some advantages:

[Selection has been applied to the family, and not to the individual, for the sake of gaining serviceable ends. Hence we may conclude that slight modification of structure or of instinct, correlated with the sterile condition of certain members of the community, have proved advantageous; consequently the fertile males and females have flourished, and transmitted to their fertile offspring a tendency to produce sterile members with the same modification. (Darwin, 1996: 354)

<sup>5</sup> I have in mind here the works of some of the most well-known neo-Darwinists, Dennett, Dawkins, EO Wilson.

<sup>6</sup> Alphonso Lingis has spent considerable effort discussing the powerful effects of "organs to be looked at" which function well beyond the logic of natural selection: the more spectacular fishes often live at depths where either they or their predators are blind or operate through other senses than vision. This makes it clear that there is an excess, left over from or in addition to the needs of survival, a morphological capacity for intensifying bodies and functions that does not operate only or primarily in terms of an external (predatory?) observer:

The color-blind octopus *vulgaris* controls with twenty nervous systems the two to three million chromatophores, iridophores and leucophores fitted in its skin; only fifteen of these have been correlated with camouflage or emotional states. At rest in its lair, its skin invents continuous light shows. The sparkled and streaked coral fish school and scatter as a surge of life dominated by a compulsion for exhibition, spectacle, parade...The most artful blended pigments the deep has to show are inside the shells of abelones [sic], inside the bones of parrotfish, on the backs of living cones, where the very abelones [sic] and parrotfish and cones themselves shall never see them. The most ornate skins are on the nudibrachia, blind sea slugs. In the marine abysses, five or six miles below the last blue rays of the light, the fish and the crabs, almost all of them blind, illuminate their lustrous colors with their own bioluminescence, for no witness. (Lingis, 1984: 8-9)

<sup>7</sup> Darwin discusses in extensive detail the seasonal transformations in coloring in various species, ranging from birds to reptiles and fish, which intensify their appeal for the opposite sex. In the case of the stickleback, for example, a fish that can be described as "beautiful beyond description", Darwin quotes Warrington:

The back and eyes of the female are simply brown, and the belly white. The eyes of the male, on the other hand, are 'of the most splendid green, having a metallic lustre like the green feathers of some humming-birds. The throat and belly are of a bright crimson, the back of an ashy-green, and the whole fish

appears as though it were somewhat translucent and glowed with an internal incandescence." And after the breeding-season these colours all change, the throat and belly become of a pale red, the back more green, and the glowing tints subside.

That with fishes there exists some close relation between their colours and their sexual functions we can clearly see;—firstly, from the adult males of certain species being differently coloured from the females, and often much more brilliantly;—secondly, from these same males, whilst immature, resembling the mature females;—and lastly, from the males, even of those species which at all other times of the year are identical in colour with the females, often acquiring brilliant tints during the spawning-season. (Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 1981, Book II: 14-15).

- <sup>8</sup> Lorenz argues that the four great biological drives—hunger, sex, fear and aggression—must each be understood in terms of natural selection alone. Like other neo-Darwinians, he reduces sexual selection to natural selection, thereby simplifying and rendering evolution mono-directional, regulated only by the selection of randomly acquired characteristics and not by the unpredictable vagaries of taste and pleasure that sexual selection entails.

While inter-species aggression may indeed be linked to questions of species-survival, as Lorenz recognises, intra-species aggression, which no doubt imperils individual males, nevertheless seems to benefit the species to the extent that the strongest male rivals will prevail in the propagation of the next generation. Striking coloring, powerful singing abilities, various ritual behaviours—those I will suggest, following Darwin, which serve sexual selection—are, for Lorenz, substitutes for aggressive behavior and serve to perpetuate its aims. See Lorenz (1966: 14-15). Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Lorenz's reductionism (1987: 315), Bogue (2003: 57) and Genosko (2002: 48-49).

- <sup>9</sup> Darwin argues that although it is possible that the brilliant coloring of fish may serve to protect them from predators, as Lorenz and Huxley claim, it is more likely that it makes them more vulnerable to predators, which tends to affirm their function as sexual lures more than as aggressive placards or banners:

It is possible that certain fishes may have been rendered conspicuous in order to warn birds and beasts of prey (as explained when treating of caterpillars) that they were unpalatable; but it is not, I believe, known that any fish, at least any fresh-water fish, is rejected from being distasteful to fish-devouring animals. (Darwin, 1981, Book II: 17-18)

- <sup>10</sup> In the case of the bird species, *Tetrao umbellus*, the battles between males "are all a sham, performed to show themselves to the greatest advantage before the admiring females who assemble around; for I have never been able to find a maimed hero, and seldom more than a broken feather." (Darwin, 1981, Book II: 50).

- <sup>11</sup> Even well-armed males, who, it might have been thought, would have altogether depended for success on the law of battle, are in most cases highly ornamented; and their ornaments have been acquired at the expense of some loss of power. In other cases, ornaments have been acquired at the cost of increased risk from birds and beasts of prey. (Darwin, 1981, Book II: 123).

- <sup>12</sup> Deleuze suggests as much in his provocative and rather strange discussion of the work of Gérard Fromanger; that art is politics with affirmation and joy:

It is strange, the way a revolutionary acts because of what he loves in the very world he wishes to destroy. There are no revolutionaries but the joyful, and no politically and aesthetically revolutionary painting without delight. (Deleuze, in Deleuze and Foucault, 1999: 76-77)

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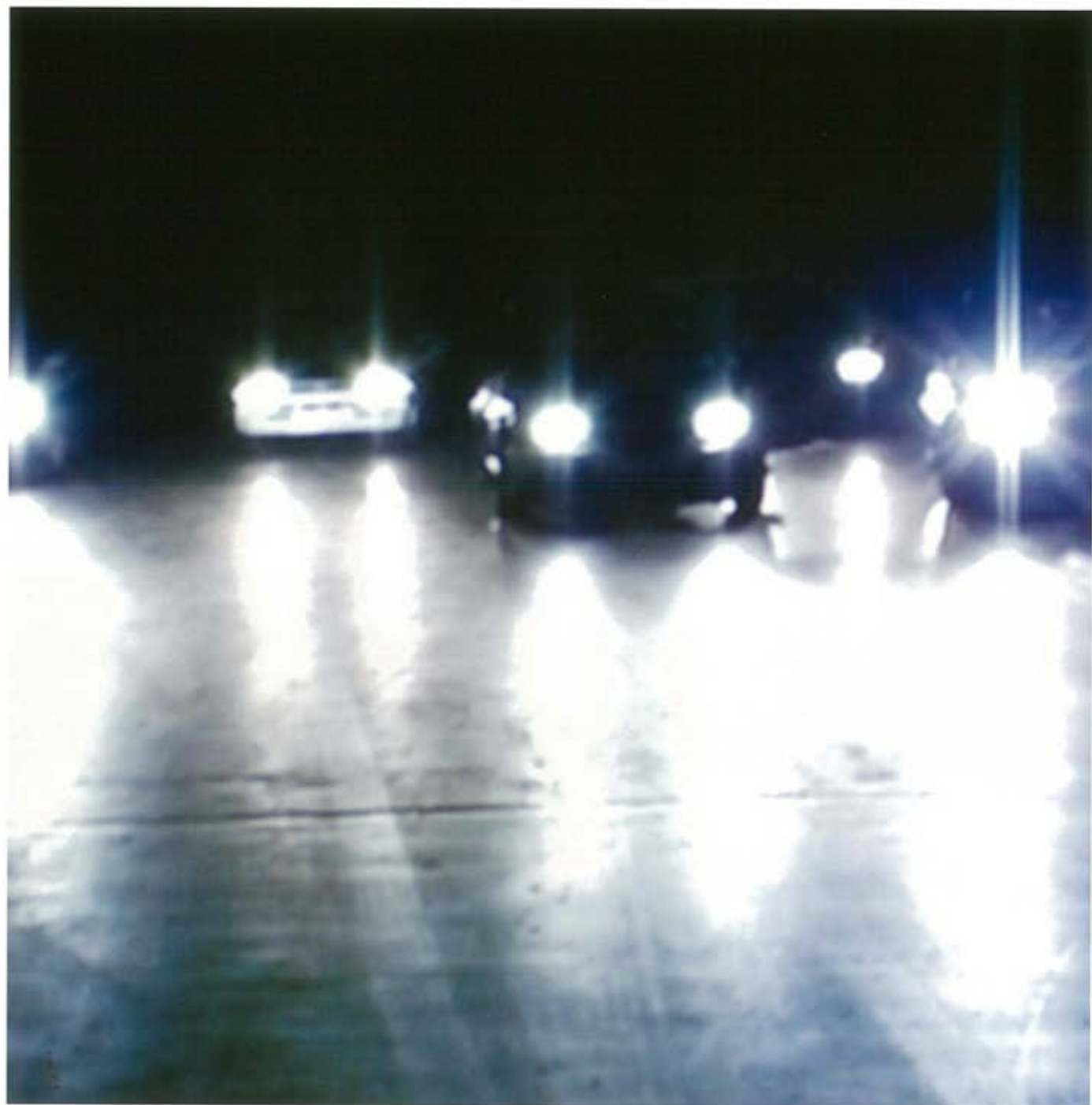










































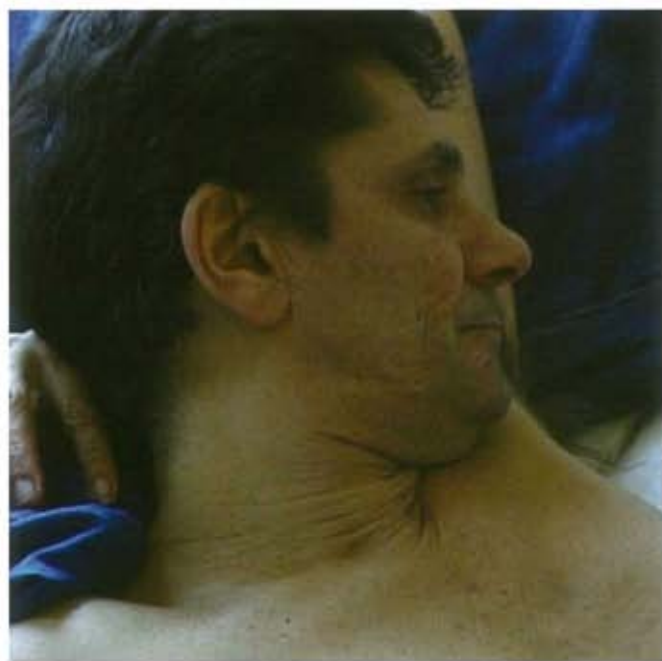


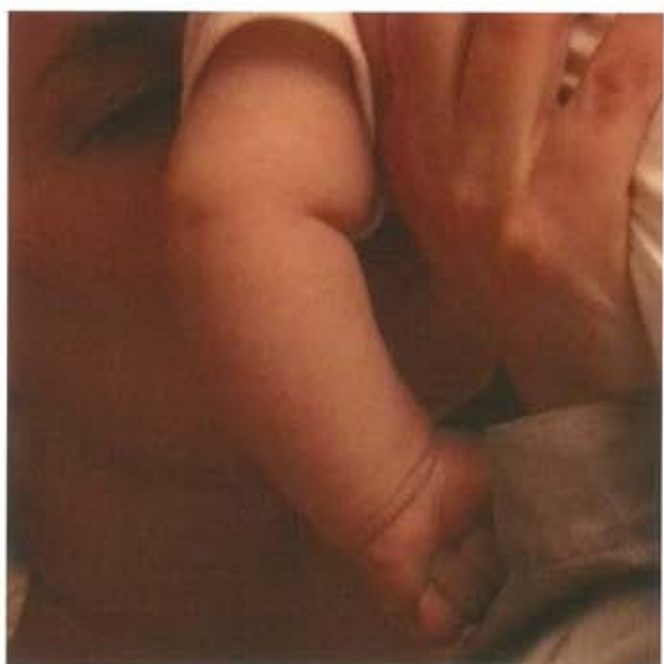
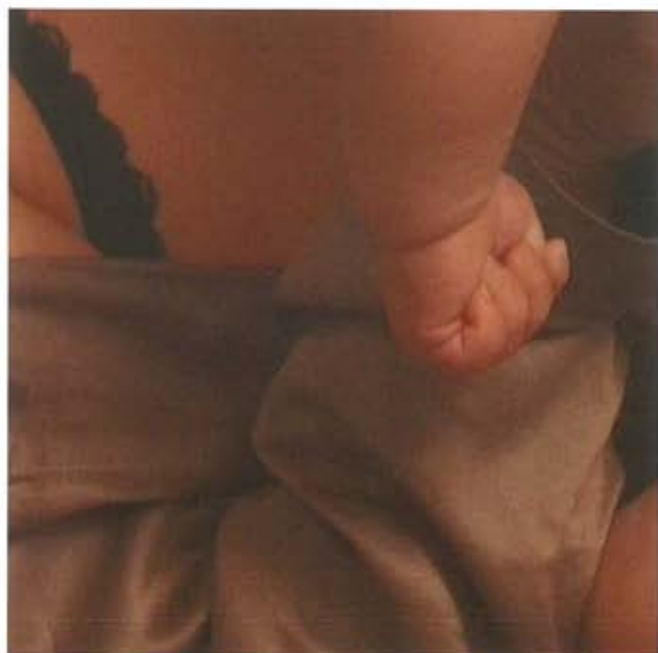




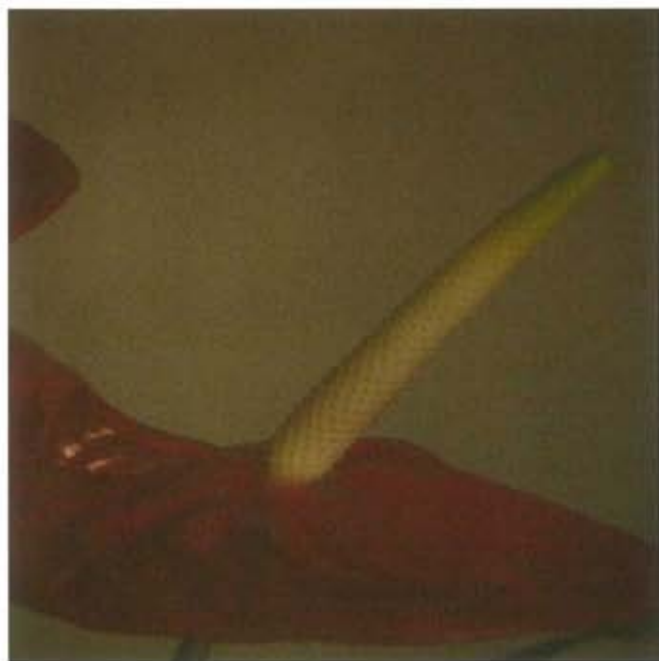




















SYDNEY/VENICE:  
'WHAT IS IT ABOUT WATER?'

MARGARET PLANT

Sydney/Venice: both water cities, with their life and definition as cities shaped by their aquatic foundation. Recently their waters have been joined by Venetian projects that aim to make Venice an international centre of discussion for *Citta d'Acqua*.<sup>1</sup> But directly, and poetically, their surfaces are both merged and juxtaposed in Lyndal Jones' *Deep water/Aqua profunda*; their two waters carry meaning, both in their depths and on their surfaces. They are elusive and charismatic, beautiful, intriguing, reflecting. And water is always dangerous. Regularly besieged now by *aqua alta*, Venice is in danger of relinquishing its treasures to the sea. The lagoon and the city, flooded so catastrophically in 1966, is in waiting. A whole city, and a civilisation, lives in defiance of the elements.

The waters of Venice's lagoon and canals have been recognised as unique since the sixth-century, when Cassiodorus wrote of the earliest settlement, houses raised up on stilts in the lagoon, and water dwellers adept in their singular environment. Sydney has been settled by white people for just over two hundred years, but its waterborne life is now well known: the swimming and sailing; the spectacle of Harbour Bridge and Opera House; the houses and apartments, often ugly red brick, or high rise, crowded together, gloating over the water, as greedy for water views as the palaces on the Grand Canal.

Perhaps Venice is too well-known, celebrated across centuries: from tales of pilgrims *en route* to the Holy Land and from merchants traveling to the East in diplomatic dispatches; from paintings by Canaletto and Guardi for the tourist market at home and abroad in the eighteenth-century; to the Romantics and Ruskin meditating on the fall of the Republic: 'In the fall of Venice think of thine', Byron advised. In the twentieth-century it was not only Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and literature, but paintings, films, opera, advertisements, and Madonna's *Like a Virgin*. The city is sated with references; Italo Calvino has Marco Polo say to Kubla Khan—in *Invisible Cities* (*Citta invisibili*)—'Everytime I describe a city I am saying something about Venice.'

Both commuter and tourist are ferried on the waters of Venice and Sydney. In both cities newspapers are read, the *Sydney Morning Herald* or *Il Gazzettino*, but most watch the water, and cameras are at the ready. These water cities have mixed life around their shores: wharves, dwellings and offices, naval

establishments—*arsenali*, industry, pleasure grounds, hotels and restaurants, marinas, quays and jetties, and pontoons for passenger travel—for the ferries and catamarans crossing Sydney Harbour, and the *fermate* for Venetian *vaporetti*. In the longest journey across Sydney Harbour, the green ferries—characteristically double-decked and double-ended—cross to Manly, which has its back to the harbour and its face to the ocean. Jetcats also make the crossing. Manly is one of the main pleasure resorts, a surf beach patrolled by lifesavers, a marine wonderland, a *Corso*: it is the *Lido* of Sydney. The trip from Circular Quay takes in all the harbour, edging out in front of the Sydney Bridge, past the Opera House and the Botanic Gardens, the fortress island—Fort Denison, the bush and cliffs along the North Shore and Taronga Park Zoo, past the marinas of Rushcutter's Bay, Rose Bay and Watson's Bay, and near to the cliffs of the heads at the entrance to the harbour and the open sea.

Like Venice—with its Lagoon, Bacino and Grand Canal—Sydney sees itself as a city of display: of carnival, water pageants and regattas. It lights up its harbour and its bridge with fireworks, adorns its waters with tall ships: ocean-going yachts sail out for the Sydney Hobart yacht race amid a flotilla of craft and crowds on the headlands on Boxing Day. Sydney hosts the annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in full pursuit of *carnevale*. Its waters have been celebrated since First Settlement. Conrad Martens painted the first *Italianate* villas built on vantage points of the harbour and Turner-esque distances of sea and sky, intent on the unique light of a water city. In the 1880s a group of painters was seduced by the Harbour and Circular Quay and by the ferries, then powered by steam and paddlewheel; Tom Roberts painted them, trailing smoke, coming into the Quay. Arthur Streeton painted Circular Quay in 1893; he thought the, 'bright coloured stone and greening-blue water—must be like Venice...'.<sup>2</sup>

Writers have described Sydney Harbour. For Kenneth Slessor whose poetry and prose carried its sights and sounds, there was an acknowledged likeness to Venice—or is the desire for Venice experienced universally, the archetypal city of waters? Sydney was, 'a kind of dispersed and vaguer Venice'; its Harbour, 'creeps between the thousand inlets like a series of grand canals, and across them glide the gondolas, the Sydney ferry boats...'. At night, 'they turn into luminous water-beetles, filling with a gliding, sliding reflected glitter that bubbles on water like phosphorous.' Above all, it is the water: 'The water is like silk, like pewter, like blood, like a leopard's skin, and occasionally merely like water. Its pigments run into themselves, from amber and aquamarine through cobalt to the deep and tranquil molasses of a summer midnight...'.<sup>3</sup>

But it is not that ferries are like gondolas: they are like vaporettos, sturdy, work-a-day boats crowded at prow and stern with spectators, ploughing across the waters in the summer season, or in fog with radar turning and horns sounding. With them come water sounds of embarkation and disembarkation from the floating platoons that are their stations, points of departure already in gentle motion, in anticipation of the journey. Attendants of ferries and vaporetti, in working gloves, and with enviable command, the same in both hemispheres, handle the thick ropes that hook moorings, and then expertly reclaim them as the boats depart.

Water cities have their particular music. The sounds of Venice, its acoustic properties, are long fabled. Not only its musical tradition: the home of opera long before La Fenice, and of contrapuntal music echoing around the five domes of San Marco, and the vernacular songs of the water, the *barcarolle* and the cries of the gondolier (for Venice is a rowing city). Even before cars, Wagner in residence in Venice in 1858, composing the second act of *Tristan und Isolde*, came for the silence, and was moved to write about the haunting call of the gondolier.

In the Venice Biennale of 1999, Bill Fontana's soundscape—*Acoustical Visions of Venice*—was broadcast from the Punta della Dogana; the cries of seagulls, the plash of the gondola oars, the bash of the vaporetto as it pulled in, the clinking of metals on moored boats, the sound of people unadulterated by conventional traffic and amplified by the tunnels of buildings on either side of canals, and by the water itself, constantly lapping and slapping at the proverbial walls of marble and the *fondamente* edged with Istrian stone.

The music of Venetian-born composer Luigi Nono sounds across Venetian music of the twentieth-century, picking up its rich *mélange*: the bells from the many *campanile*, the water vessels, motor and oar, and all the mix of human voices and feet. In the last years of his life—he died in 1990—he spoke of the spatial music of San Marco as Giovanni Gabrieli composed it, and of the 'multi-universe' of Venetian sounds beyond San Marco. Nono listened to music as if it were colour, hearing, 'the stones or the skies of Venice... (the) rapport between undulation and vibration.' The toll of bells and the movement of water sound in his late composition for piano and magnetic tape, *...sofferte onde serene...* (it might be translated as *...suffering serene waves...*)<sup>4</sup>.

Journeys across water are rites of passage, as in birth when the baby journeys forth from the amniotic fluids, to the terminal crossing of the River of Lethe, the last ferry trip. The symbolic of the waters on which human beings venture foster analogies

that are sexual, sliding, giving fluidity, instability, the threat of drowning as loss of control, or surrender to immersion to that dangerous oceanic feeling. In a water city, life and death are in constant proximity, like calm and storm, and the rise and fall of tides. Kenneth Slessor wrote in water metaphors in his poem *Sleep*:

I shall bear you down my estuary,  
Carry you and ferry you to burial mysteriously,  
Take you and receive you,  
Consume you, engulf you,  
In the huge cave, my belly, lave you  
With huger waves continually.

(And Slessor remembers the paradigmatic traveler in *Marco Polo*: 'He's gone; and with him, flowers and birds...And old Venetians too, have died...').<sup>5</sup>

Depth of water lies below the surfaces that move perpetually, mirroring or turning abstract, in the forms of colour and light. Captured in *Deep water/Aqua profunda*, the water sequences mimic the constitution of life and action as aqueous, shifting, reflecting and destroying reflections; they flow with the facility and mobility of human emotion, memory, intercourse, of passages from one shore to another, of waiting, and departure, carried on surfaces that run to unknown depths. The meetings of waters of a swimming pool in Melbourne with its warning to a clientele in English and Italian (both hemispheres are relevant), and the Manly ferry—for Australians the most recognisable of ferries—and the *vaporetto* of Venice ply through global waters, though each is distinctive.

One of the best known writings about Sydney and its ferries is Slessor's *Five Bells*, a poem written in 1939 about one of the poet's friends on the way to a party on the North Shore who disappeared from a ferry and drowned, pulled down by the bottles of liquor in the pockets of his overcoat. His body was never recovered. A mural painted by John Olsen in the 1970s for the Sydney Opera House gives visual form to the poem: a blue panorama; bells, buoys islands inscribed on the spread blue surface; creatures waiting in its depths with tentacles ready; the mask face of the drowned man, and all the tumult of a city winding and intertwining around its edges.<sup>6</sup> Slessor wrote:

Deep and dissolving verticals of light  
Ferry the falls of moonshine down...  
Night and water  
Pour to one rip of darkness, the Harbour floats  
In air...

The time that sounds with the five bells is of the time and nature of water, and different to that of land.<sup>7</sup>

Sydney Harbour, then, is not only fireworks and carnival, and a surfing culture; it has its darkside—like the suicide from 'the Gap', a traditional place for ending life, which is such a sobering episode in the novel by Christina Stead, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*: Michael 'wrapped his coat round him as he wished to wrap the deep sea round him and its sleep fathoms down. He wished to sleep, to have the water sing as now for ever in his ears...'.<sup>8</sup> In the first pages of her novel *For Love Alone*, Stead reminds us that all Australians are dwellers on an island continent, and they must be mariners (at least before air travel): 'Oh Australian, have you just come from the harbour? Is your ship in the roadstead? Men of what nation put you down—for I am sure you did not get here on foot?'<sup>9</sup> Until the coming of the railroad across the lagoon of Venice in 1846, everyone was a mariner in Venice.

Fear of water—the apprehension of being afloat, or submerged—and the seduction of water, the exhilaration that attends the desire for the journey that leaves land... Mixed with the aqueous foundation of life, we encounter the instability of all emotion, and the fear that attends the fluidity of waters, and deep feeling. The philosopher, Luce Irigaray, accused her male predecessor, Friedrich Nietzsche, creator of Zarathustra, of preferring mountains and dry land and the male territory of hardness, domination and control (although he was a lover of Venice, the city of music for him, and a place of solitudes). He is charged with fear of women in the face of their elusiveness, their emotional fluidity—their difference from the male, in short. Irigaray gives warning: 'There is no peril greater than the sea. Everything is constantly moving and remains eternally in flux. Hence with a thawing wind, bad fortune arrives...'.<sup>10</sup>

The waters of Sydney, the waters of Venice, are constantly moving: they are surfaces of seduction, and danger.

*This text was first published on the occasion of the 49th Venice Biennale in the catalogue accompanying the Deep water/Aqua profunda exhibition at the Australian Pavilion, 2001*

<sup>7</sup> Il Centro Internazionale 'Città d'Acqua' (The International Centre 'Cities on Water' Association) was founded in Venice in 1989 by the Venice City Council, the University of Ca' Foscari, the University Institute of Architecture and the Consorzio Venezia Nuova, Director: Rino Bruttomesso. The bi-monthly review *Aquapolis*, published for the International Centre 'Cities on Water', devoted the issue of July-August (vol. 1, no. 4) 1992 to 'Australia at a Turning Point', and Sydney in particular.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Streeton's comment on Circular Quay is quoted in Jane Clark & Bridget Whitelaw, *Golden Summers, Heidelberg and Beyond*, Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1985, p. 158. For the painting of Sydney Harbour by Streeton and his Contemporaries in the 1880s and 1890s see *Bohemians in the Bush: The Artists' Camps of Mosman*, Sydney: Beaver Press, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Slessor's 'A Portrait of Sydney' was first published in 1950 in Kenneth Slessor: *Poetry Essays, War Dispatches, War Diaries, Journalism, Autobiographical Material and Letters*, D Haskell (ed.), St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1991, p. 74.

<sup>10</sup> For Luigi Nono's comments (my translation) see Nono a cura di Enzo Restagno, Torino: Edizioni di Torino, 1987, pp. 255-57. '...soferte onde serene...' (composed 1976) is recorded by Deutsche Grammophon (Maurizio Pollini, piano), CD423 248-2.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth Slessor: *Selected Poems*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1993 from *One Hundred Poems*, 1944: 'Sleep', p. 106; 'Marco Polo' p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> For John Olsen's Opera House mural 'Tribute to Five Bells' see D Hart, John Olsen, Sydney: Craftsman House, 1991.

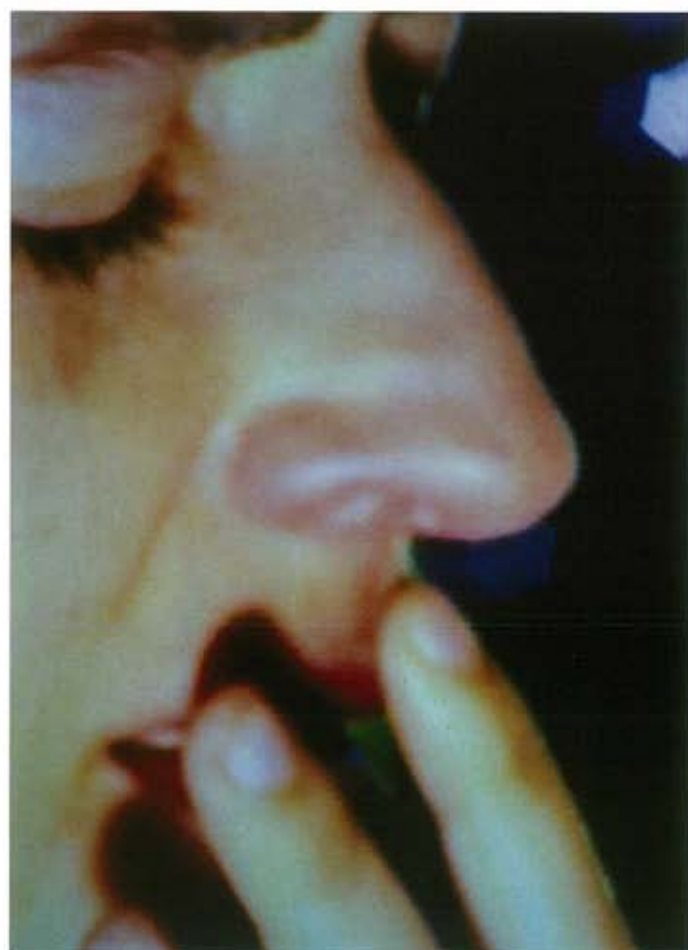
<sup>13</sup> 'Five Bells', Kenneth Slessor: *Selected Poems*, p. 121ff.

<sup>14</sup> C Stead, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, first published 1934, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1965, p. 249.

<sup>15</sup> C Stead, *For Love Alone*, first published 1954, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1965, p. 249.

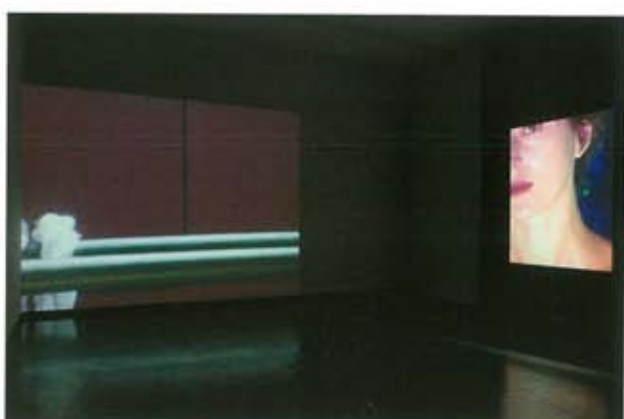
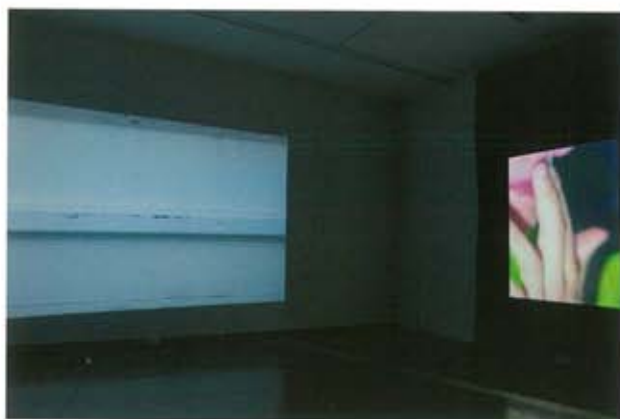
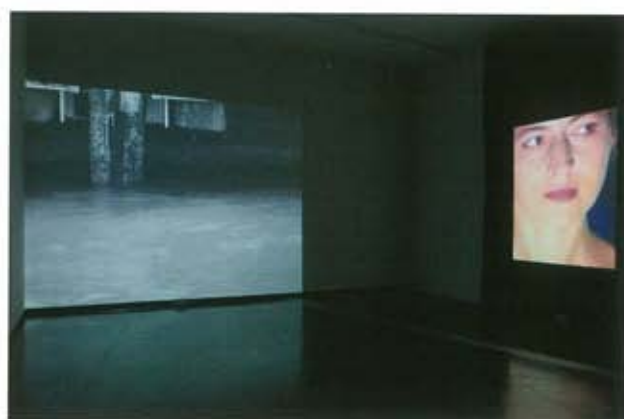
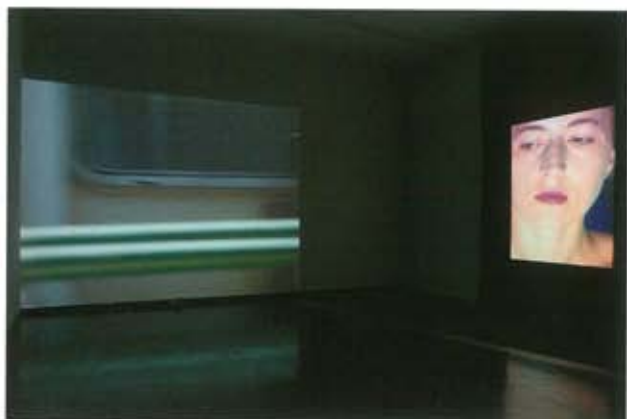
<sup>16</sup> L. Irigaray, *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.



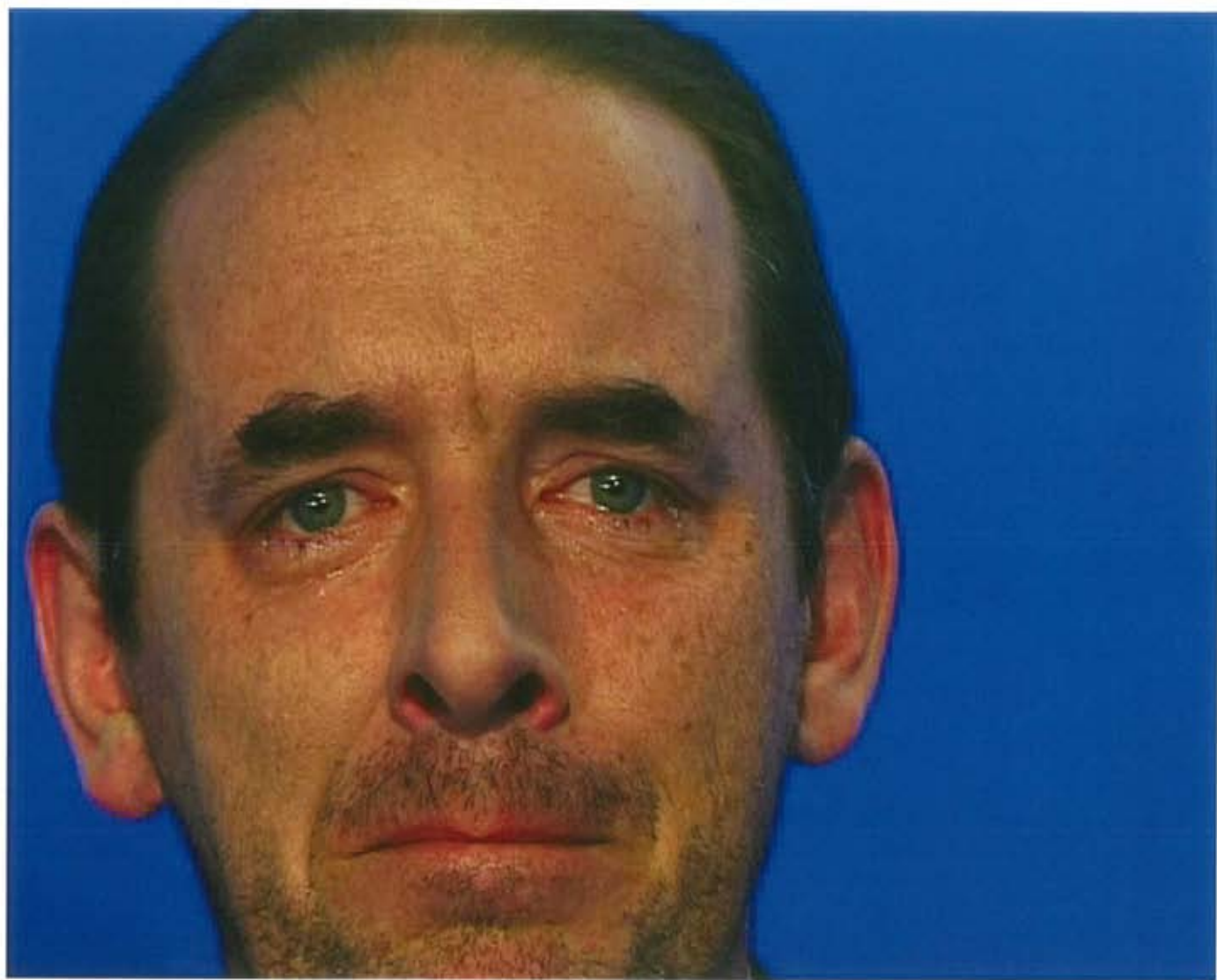




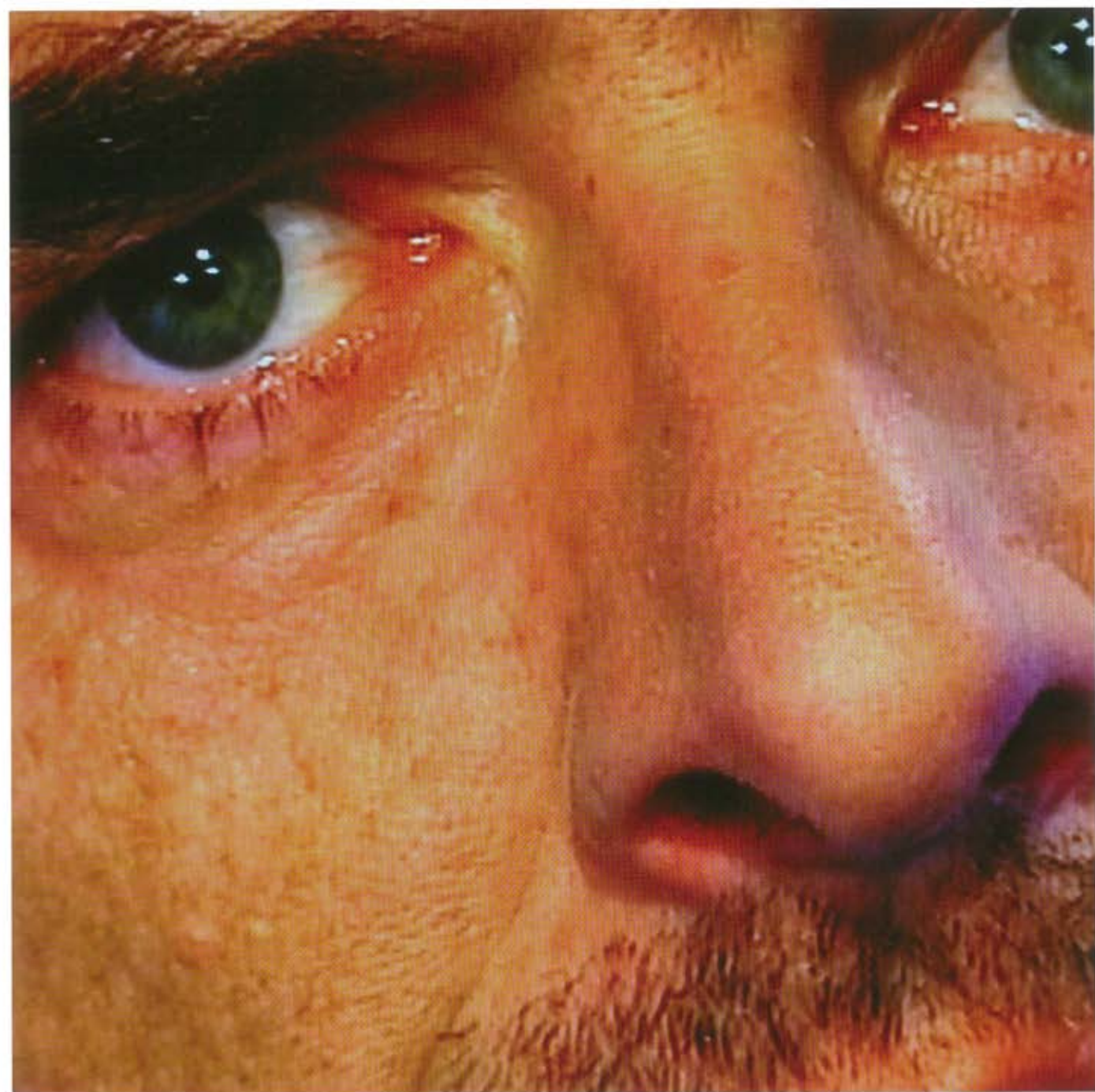
















## THINKING THROUGH AVOCA

CLAIRE DOHERTY

I have never been to the Avoca Project.

Instead I have come to know the project's house and inhabitants through a constellation of digitised archive documents, site plans, anecdotes and responses that have begun to gather around and to be produced through this cumulative project. And so, this text must be a consideration of what the Avoca Project might be beyond first-hand experience; what imaginative charge it releases from 10,000 miles away, as a durational artwork in place over time.

Initiated by Lyndal Jones in Avoca in 2004, the project's site and host is the Watford House located in a small Central Victorian Goldfields town, two hours north-west of Melbourne. This is how we first come to locate the project: by its relativity to other places, as a mapped and static location. 35.40S, 143.43E. But, almost immediately, the Avoca Project destabilises us from this anchoring point, sending us ricocheting off the map to other points of origination, both real and imagined.

The Watford House, a Victorian weatherboard building—known locally as the 'Swiss House'—was originally shipped plank by plank, joist by joist, from Europe in the mid nineteenth-century to take up residence as the town's hotel on the High Street, but was then moved on red gum tree rollers downhill to its present location on the Avoca river flood plain. *[Already my own lexicon of cinematic images serve as the visual substitutes for these journeys: from the self-build fiasco of Buster Keaton's One Week (1920) to the iconic haulage of the Quoye house across the Newfoundland ice in Lasse Hallström's film version (2001) of the Annie Proulx novel The Shipping News (1994)].*

Clearly identifiable as an immigrant by its architectural incongruity, the house is both itself a nomad and a temporary resting place for migrants. It has existed—through a process of remaking—as a dwelling, materially and socially, for over 150 years. In this sense, the acts of refurbishment on the house and its site by Lyndal Jones, local collaborators, 'project experts' and resident artists and writers can be seen, not only as restorative, but, crucially, as a facet of the house's ongoing process of being made, unmade and remade.

If we understand sculpture as a process of embodiment, of emergent forms, then the Watford House and by extension the Avoca Project, through its various guises and in its various

locations, might first be understood as a processual sculptural form, an immigrant body and accumulation of materials and histories on which and through which a new set of narratives is being played out. In its derelict state, the house may well have evoked the paradigmatic uncanny qualities of the gothic haunted or 'dead' house. *[I am visualising Victor Hugo's sketches of an empty Guernsey house for his novel Les Travailleurs de la Mer (1866)].* But in its current metamorphosis, its historical and recent pasts are being exposed, made present (rather than remaining latent or merely absent) through an ongoing process of transformation and recuperation. The Watford House has become both the subject and the medium, the object, model and platform, for a process of imagining by its resident and transient community. And so, I am imagining that an initial encounter with the Avoca Project at first-hand might well send you back and forth between the intriguing, multi-layered materiality of the house (its rotting numbered timbers, its restored veranda, its flooring and windows) and its mythic status. Gaston Bachelard describes this correlation between form and imaginative charge in his phenomenological account of intimate places. 'A house that has been experienced is not an inert box,' he suggests. 'Inhabited space transcends geometric space.'

But though the house itself might well act as a metaphor for the fate of the town, subject to the forces of industrialisation and, more recently, globalisation and climate change, the Project does not seek to become a nostalgic representation of the town of Avoca, or to recuperate an authentic moment in history. Jones is clear to conceive of this work as a dynamic collaborative model of sustainability in the present—active in a global network of interdisciplinary projects engaged with the future of our environment—as well as a physically-bound, site-specific 10-year project. The Avoca Project should not only be considered then as a temporal sculptural form, nor simply as fascinating metaphor for a series of social and environmental histories, but also as the descendant of the activist environmental projects of the '60s and early '70s which have found new resonance in more recent processual, collaborative and interdisciplinary contemporary projects world-wide.

Often characterised by the remote nature of their locations, far from the centres of contemporary urban culture, such projects have risen to recent prominence through their dispersal and documentation in survey exhibitions such as *Groundworks: Environmental Collaboration in Contemporary Art* (curated by Grant Kester at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, 2005); and publications such as *LAND, ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook* (edited by Max Andrews, RSA, London, 2006) and *Design and Landscape for People: New Approaches to Renewal* (edited by Clare Cumberland & Lucy Musgrave, Thames and

Hudson Ltd, London, 2007). Ongoing projects such as *the land* just outside Chiang Mai, Thailand, initiated by artists Rirkrit Tiravanija and Kamin Lertchaiprasert (thelandfoundation.org), and Andrea Zittel's *High Desert Test Sites* (highdeserttestsites.com) in the Southern Mojave Desert, California, began, like the Avoca Project, with the purchase of a piece of land by an artist(s). This was the catalyst for a series of collaborations and experiments, acted out upon and through the land, often involving interdisciplinary discussions and interventions.

The participatory, often cross-disciplinary processes involved in these projects is akin to that of groups such as Argentinean *Ala Plástica*, UK-based *Common Ground* and Danish group *Superflex*, whereby the artist's primary authorship is used as a visionary means to engage participants and visitors and to secure funding support. Ownership of the project invariably becomes exchanged and shared, though authorship of specific facets of the project might be clearly identified, such as particular architectural interventions, residencies or texts.

In their survey of these collaborative projects dedicated to social and environmental change, Cumberlidge and Musgrave draw out the key shared principles, suggesting that these projects in common:

- propose renewal as a continuous, open-ended process;
- take a holistic, multidimensional approach to their designated situations;
- maximise resources—material, human and economic;
- use local distinctiveness as a starting point for a vision of the future;
- engage professionals to work outside their normal sphere of practice; and
- share an awareness of symbolic value;

Within this context, the Avoca Project's sustainable credentials (such as the irrigation mechanisms and hydrophones embedded in the underground water tank by Jones and Nigel Helyer) can be viewed not merely as the outcomes of a collaborative environmental strategy, but as an integral part of the artwork as a process of imagining, as a site of possible future scenarios. The local distinctiveness of Avoca and the specific problems of the Watford House and its plot of land offer a structure (both physically and conceptually) by which collaboration can occur.

The Avoca Project, through these sculptural and social processes and through its responses to the specific environmental challenges of that location, might at first be considered as dedicated to the

production of *genius loci*, a sense of place; as exemplified by Lucy Lippard's response to the rootlessness of modern society in *The Lure of the Local Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New Press, 1997). Lippard's engagement with place as a site of authentic and rooted identity draws upon the humanistic metaphysics of geographers such as Edward Relph and Yi-Fu Tuan. Relph, for example, posited a bounded notion of place as a moral converse to the rootlessness of mobility, suggesting:

Roads, railways, airports, cutting across or imposed on the landscape rather than developing within it, are not only features of placelessness in their own right, but, by making possible the mass movement of people with all their fashions and habits, have encouraged the spread of placelessness well beyond their immediate impacts.<sup>2</sup>

At its heart, this phenomenological consideration of place evokes the belief that to be human is to be 'in place'. But this essentialist view of place hardly fits the dynamic aspirations of the Avoca Project. In Jones' vision for the Watford House there is no authentic home to which the artists, 'project experts' and visitors are seeking to retreat; furthermore, the house's particular history is persistently being 'out of place'. Rather, Jones' future vision for Avoca correlates to a more progressive idea of place, as advanced by geographers such as Doreen Massey, David Harvey and Tim Cresswell in the United Kingdom.

In her essay 'A Global Sense of Place', Massey states that,

What gives a place its specificity is not some long internalised history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus. Instead of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a larger proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself...And this in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local.<sup>3</sup>

In this sense, the Avoca Project can be understood as a constellation of particular economic, social and material relations at different points in time, but also (as Massey further develops in her 2005 publication *For Space*) as a relational space. To understand what Massey means by these relational qualities, we might consider her visit to the town of Keswick in the Lake District, England. Massey writes:



This is the event of place. It is not just that old industries will die, that new ones may take their place. Not just that Hill farmers around here may one day abandon their long struggle, nor that the lovely old greengrocers is now turned into a boutique selling tourist bric-a-brac. Nor evidently, that my sister and I and a hundred other tourists soon must leave. It is also that the hills are rising, the landscape is being eroded and deposited; the climate is shifting; the very rocks themselves continue to move on. The elements of this 'place' will be, at different times and speeds, again, dispersed.<sup>4</sup>

So the Avoca Project occurs through engagements between things in progress, people passing through, land undergoing shifts and changes, erosions, deposits, fabrications and interventions. The question that Massey leaves us with is, What aspects of place endure? It is here that we might finally begin to consider the Avoca Project as practised place, as a model of Edward Soja's 'thirdspace'.

Firstspace, Soja argues is empirically measurable and mapped, produced by social processes; whilst secondspace is conceived space—subjective and imagined—a positivist concept of space. 'Thirdspace', Soja proposes, 'as lived space is portrayed as multi-sited and contradictory, oppressive and liberating, passionate and routine, knowable and unknowable. It is a space of radical openness, a site of resistance and struggle, a space of multiplicitous representations...it is a meeting ground, a site of hybridity...and moving beyond entrenched boundaries, a margin or edge where ties can be severed and also where new ties can be forged. It can be mapped but never captured in conventional cartographies; it can be creatively imagined but obtains meaning only when practiced and fully lived.'<sup>5</sup>

The Avoca Project as thirdspace produces place when practiced and lived; a space of interrelations, consistently under construction, always in the process of being made and remade, not just materially but socially. It is an event in progress rather than rooted to its physical limitations or in search of completion. Lyndal Jones describes the project as both poetic image and a model of resilience. It is in between these two artistic tropes—the representation and the model—and between these two periods of time—the past and the future—that we can locate the enduring legacy of the Avoca Project: a space of workings out; a landscape and architecture onto which propositions are drawn; a node in a network of conversations and discussions about lived experience and the possibility of change.

<sup>4</sup> Bachelard, G. *The Poetics of Space*, first published 1958, (English trans.), Boston: Beacon Press, 1995, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Relph, E. *Place and Placelessness*, London: Pion, 1976, p. 90.

<sup>6</sup> Massey, D. 'A Global Sense of Place', *Reading Human Geography*, T Barnes & D Gregory (eds.), London: Arnold, 1997, pp. 315-23.

<sup>7</sup> Massey, D. *For Space*, London: Sage, 2005, p. 140-1.

<sup>8</sup> Soja, E. 'Thirdspace: Expanding the Scope of the Geographical Imagination', *Human Geography Today*, D Massey, J Allen & P Sarré (eds.), Cambridge: Polity, 1999, p. 276.



tears f

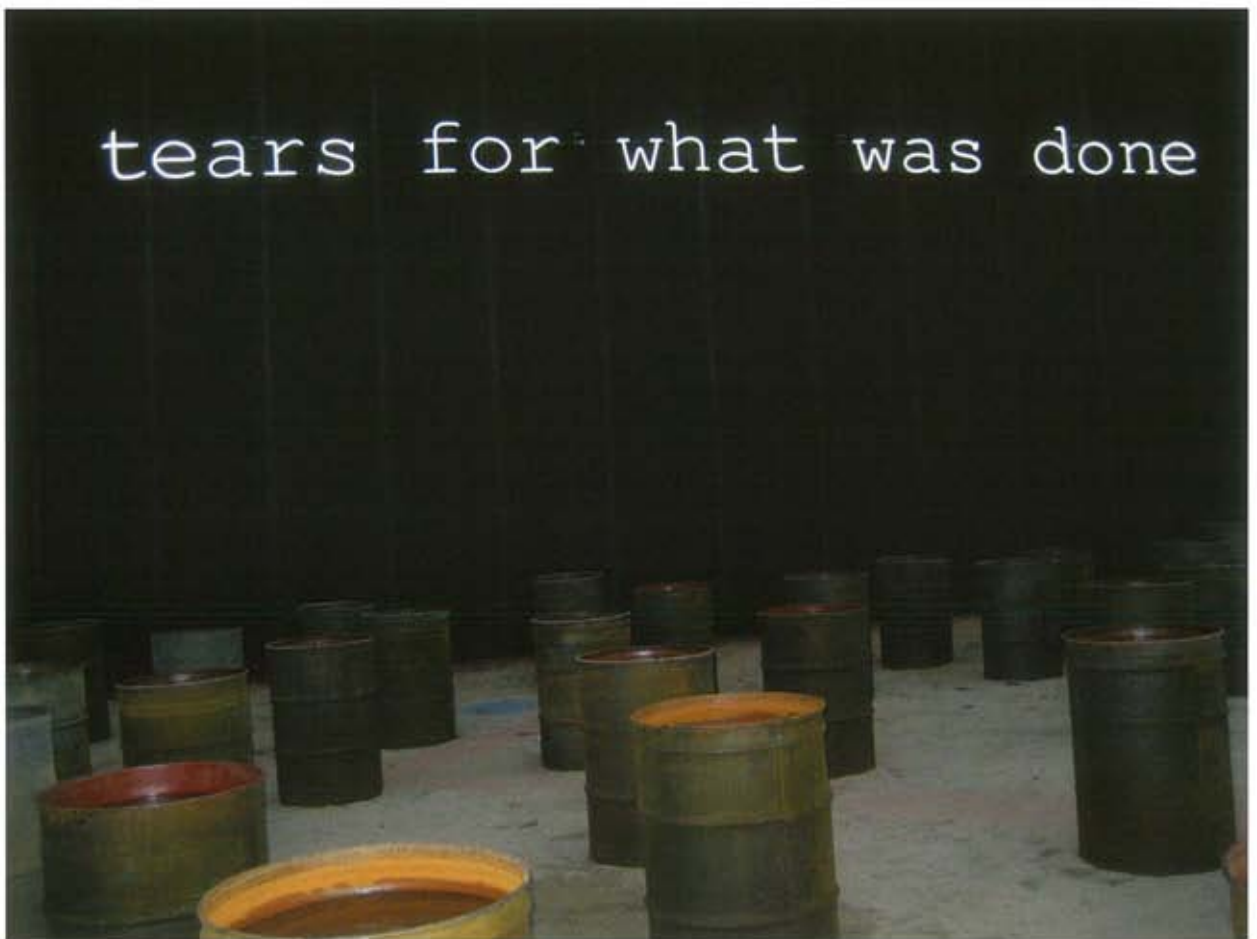
what was done







tears for what was done



## BIOGRAPHY

Lyndal Jones was born in Sydney in 1949 and currently lives and works in Melbourne. She completed a Bachelor of Arts at Monash University in 1971 before undertaking travel and research in England, Japan, China, Chile and the Galapagos Islands as part of an Australian Artists Creative Fellowship (1983-96).

Lyndal has undertaken four major research projects since 1977. These include: *Tears for what was done* (2003-06) comprising interactive video works on emotion; *From the Darwin Translations* (1992-98) including video installation, film and performance examining Darwin's study of sexual selection; *The Prediction Pieces* (1981-91) incorporating performance and slide installations exploring optimism; and *At Home* (1977-80) a solo performance series that utilised domestic imagery. Her most recent body of work, *The Avoca Project*, is an international art project based in regional Victoria. Here, Lyndal works with the local community and international artists, scholars and climate change experts to develop a series of works of art to heighten awareness of place, land and landscape as sites of climate change and response.

Lyndal held her first solo exhibition in 1978. Since then she has presented her video, performance and installation works throughout Australia and overseas, and in 2001 represented Australia at the 49<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale with the body of work *Deep water/Aqua profunda*. She has also undertaken a number of residencies within Australia and overseas, including University of Paisley, Scotland (1997); Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada (1994); and Performance Space, Sydney (1988). In late 2004 Lyndal began working at the School of Creative Media at RMIT University in Melbourne and completed her PhD on the propositional nature of art research and the use of the Internet to archive complex, time-based artworks.

Selected solo exhibitions include: *Lyndal Jones: Up to and including Deep water/Aqua profunda*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2002); *Demonstrations and details from the facts of life*, Newlyn Gallery, Cornwall, England (2001) and Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, England (2000); *Boys in loud cars*, MacLaurin Gallery, Ayr, Scotland (1998); *Spitfire 1 2 3*, the Ian Potter Gallery, the University of Melbourne (1996); *Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands*, Canberra School of Art Gallery, Australian National University (1995); *Fried's couch*, Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada (1994); *Lyndal Jones: the Prediction Pieces 1981-1991*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (1992); and *As time goes by*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (1990) and *Pipe dreaming*, Performance Space, Sydney (1988), both from *The Prediction Pieces*.

Selected group exhibitions include: *I thought I knew but I was wrong*, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne and Asia tour (2004); *Screen life*, Renia Sofia, Madrid, Gertrude Contemporary Arts Space, Melbourne and Govett Brewster Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand (2002); *Signs of life*, Melbourne International Biennial, Telstra Exchange Building (1999); *Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (1997 and 1983); *Unmapping the earth*, Kwangju Biennale, Korea (1997); *Video Positive '97*; *Escaping Gravity*, Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool, UK (1997); *On Dialogue - Contemporary Australian Art*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin (1997); *World Wide Video Festival*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1997); *Fotofeis*, *International Festival of Photography in Scotland*, Tramway Gallery, Glasgow (1997); *Biennale of Sydney*, Art Gallery of New South Wales (1996, 1986 and 1982); *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia (1994); and *25 years of performance art*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney and Australian tour (1994).

Selected publications include: Jeanette Hoom, 'Deep water: the particular pleasures of the art of Lyndal Jones', *Art & Australia*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2001; John Barrett-Lennard, 'The heart's pause: Lyndal Jones and the flow of time', *Deep water/Aqua profunda*, Venice Biennale of International Art, 2001; Lesley Stern, 'A fluid architecture', *Deep water/Aqua profunda*, Venice Biennale of International Art, 2001; Denise Robinson, 'Lyndal Jones: demonstrations and details from the Facts of Life', *Like, Art Magazine*, no. 12, 2000; Charles Esche, *Boys in loud cars*, MacLaurin Gallery, Scotland, 1998; Steven Bode & Charles Esche, 'Escaping gravity', *Video positive*, FACT, Liverpool, 1997; Deborah Clark, 'Spitfire 1 2 3: the nature of seduction', *On dialogue: contemporary Australian art*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 1997; Juliana Engberg, 'Achieving open endness', *On dialogue: contemporary Australian art*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 1997; Sonia Leber, 'On variety and profusion', *Spitfire 1 2 3: a performance*, Lonsdale Street Power Station, Melbourne, 1997; Linda Michael, 'Natural selection', *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, 1997; Vivian Bobka, 'Lyndal Jones', *Jurassic technologies: Biennale of Sydney*, 1996; Michael Desmond, 'Lyndal Jones: From the Darwin Translations: Room with Finches', *Islands: contemporary installations from Australia, Asia, Europe and America*, National Gallery of Australia, 1996; Jeanette Hoom, 'On longing', *Art Monthly Australia*, June, 1996; Rachel Kent, *Spitfire 1 2 3*, the Ian Potter Gallery, 1996; Mervyn Gates, 'Attraction shown by young adults in their manner of kissing each other: a curator's view', *Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands*, Canberra School of Art Gallery, 1995; Scott McQuire, 'Lyndal Jones: Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands', *Photofeis*, no. 45, 1995; John Barrett-Lennard, 'Negotiating position' and 'Negotiating history...', *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, 1994; Eloise Lindsay, 'The gender of theatrical express', *Dissonance: feminism and the arts 1970-90*, 1994; Scott McQuire, 'Lyndal Jones: From the Darwin Translations', *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, 1994; Charles Green, 'Lyndal Jones, Museum of Contemporary Art', *Art Forum*, January, 1993; Anne Marsh, *Body and self*, Oxford University Press, 1993; and Susan Cramer, 'An introduction to The Prediction Pieces', *Lyndal Jones: The Prediction Pieces 1981-91: writings and images from the archive*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 1992.

Lyndal Jones is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.

## LIST OF WORKS

*Prediction Piece #10: Do not go gentle* (1991/2008)  
35mm slide projection installation  
4 projectors on plywood pillars, each with 80 slides

*From the Darwin Translations: Sexual play in the Galapagos Islands* (1995/2008)  
audio visual installation  
7 monitors and speakers  
looped  
Camera: Lyndal Jones  
Voices: Anne-Marie Freybourg, Rolando Ramos Lyndal Jones and students from the Canberra School of Art  
First recorded for The Listening Room, ABC Radio National (producer, Tony MacGregor)

*From the Darwin Translations: Room with Finches* (1994/2008)  
audio visual installation with live finches  
45 mins  
Collection Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art  
Performer: Johnny Dady  
Voice: Lyndal Jones  
Camera: Margie Medlin, Lyndal Jones

*From the Darwin Translations: In the Garden of Eden* (1997/2008)  
3-channel video projection with audio  
20 mins  
Performers: Ingrid Ohlsson, Faruk Avdi  
Voice: Lyndal Jones  
Camera: Tim Patterson, Lyndal Jones

*From the Darwin Translations: Boys in loud cars* (1997/2008)  
3-channel video projection with audio  
20 mins  
Performers: Stuart Bradley, Alasdair Clarke, Robin Ghosh, Martyn Gordon, Simon Keating, Kevin McCubbin, Gary McCubbin, Mark Macdonald, Jamie McIntyre, Roberto McKenna, Brian McKowan, Alan Morton, Lee Porterfield, Fergus Shaw, Stephen Tait  
Camera: Lyndal Jones, Ian Downie  
Editor: Beverlie Dale

*From the Darwin Translations: Spitfire 1 2 3* (1996)  
video installation with audio  
looped  
Collection Australian Centre for the Moving Image  
Voices: Milijana Cancar, Nadja Kostich, Doanne Pasley, Lyndal Jones  
Composer: David Chesworth  
Sound realisation: Nigel Frayne

*Tears for what was done: Crying man 1* (2003)  
interactive video projection with audio  
looped  
Performer: Chris Ulbrick  
Video: Tim Patterson, Lyndal Jones  
Interactivity: Harry Sokol

*Deep water/Aqua profunda: Portraits of two women* (2001)  
2-channel video projection with audio  
20 mins  
Performer: Tanya Bulatovic  
Voices: Manuela Caluzzi, Lyndal Jones  
Camera: Patrick Burne, Gary Warner, Tim Gruchy  
Production: CDP Media  
Editor: Lindi Harrison

*From the Darwin Translations: 1000 details from the Facts of Life* (2000 /2007)  
12-channel video installation with audio  
looped  
Performers: Iris Walton, Cira La Joie, Aurora Leggett, Amy Farrell, Angus Blackburn, Stephen Cummings, Sue Dodd, Kim Donaldson, Juan Ford, David Garlick, Melissa and Ian Goodman, Michael Hutchison, Tony Lloyd, Deborah Levy & Leila, Alex Mavroordatis, Sam Mikelson, Graeme, Margaret, Andrew and Rachael Jones  
Camera: Lyndal Jones  
Editor: Bria Trenerry  
Audio support: Nigel Frayne

Production of *1000 details from the Facts of Life* was supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

*Tears for what was done* (2008)  
outdoor installation, 150 x 44 gallon drums with water and neon  
commissioned by ACCA for the exhibition  
Neon text: Delta Neon  
Drums: Ideal drums, Cheltenham  
Water: South East Water

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to the many people from the last fifteen years who took part as performers in the projects that make up this exhibition; to the video and audio artists and technicians who worked with me to create the final works; to the curators who worked on the initial installations; and to the many friends who volunteered their time and resources that enabled these works to happen at all.

My thanks also to the staff of the School of Creative Media at RMIT University who supported my extended research leave, thereby enabling me to complete this large-scale project.

And, for the realisation of this project, my thanks to Commissioning Curator Juliana Engberg, Coordinating Curator Hannah Mathews, the installation team led by Tom Cullen, Jesse Stevens and Brian Scales and the staff at ACCA for their professionalism and ongoing care of and for this huge and technically complex installation. Also to the writers who have contributed to the exhibition catalogue, including Claire Doherty, Elizabeth Grosz, Scott McQuire and Margaret Plant.

ACCA would like to acknowledge the Australia Council for support of this exhibition through its Presentation and Promotion Grants program. We also acknowledge South East Water's support of the outdoor commission. Thanks also to the writers that have contributed to the exhibition catalogue and those that have worked with us to make this exhibition a success. Our special thanks and congratulations also go to Lyndal Jones for the comprehensive body of work presented here.

## WRITERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Claire Doherty is a curator and writer based in Bristol. Since 2003 she has been research fellow in Fine Art at the University of the West of England and coordinator of *Situations*, a programme of projects, commissions, talks, publications and events. From 1995-2000, she was Curator at Ikon Gallery, Birmingham and from 2000-01 was involved in establishing a new programme of projects and residencies at Spike Island, Bristol.

Juliana Engberg is the artistic director of ACCA.

Professor Elizabeth Grosz teaches philosophy in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at Rutgers University, New Jersey. She is the author of *Volatile Bodies* (1994), *The Nick of Time* (2004) and most recently, *Chaos, Territory, Art* (2008)—all texts linked to the place of the human body in nature, culture and art.

Lyndal Jones is Associate Professor, Multimedia and Director of Research in the School of Creative Media, RMIT University. She is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.

Scott McQuire is Associate Professor in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne. He has a strong interest in interdisciplinary research linking art, new media, social theory and urbanism. His most recent books include *The Media City: Media, Architecture and Urban Space* (2008) and *Empires Ruins and Networks: The Transcultural Agenda in Art* (2005) which he co-edited with Nikos Papastergiadis.

Margaret Plant is Emeritus Professor of Visual Arts, at Monash University, Australia. She is the author of the acclaimed *Venice - Fragile City: 1797-1997* (Yale University Press, 2003).

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## PROJECT PARTNERS

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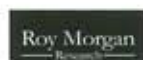


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the two points are very  
also close to the Cauchy  
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