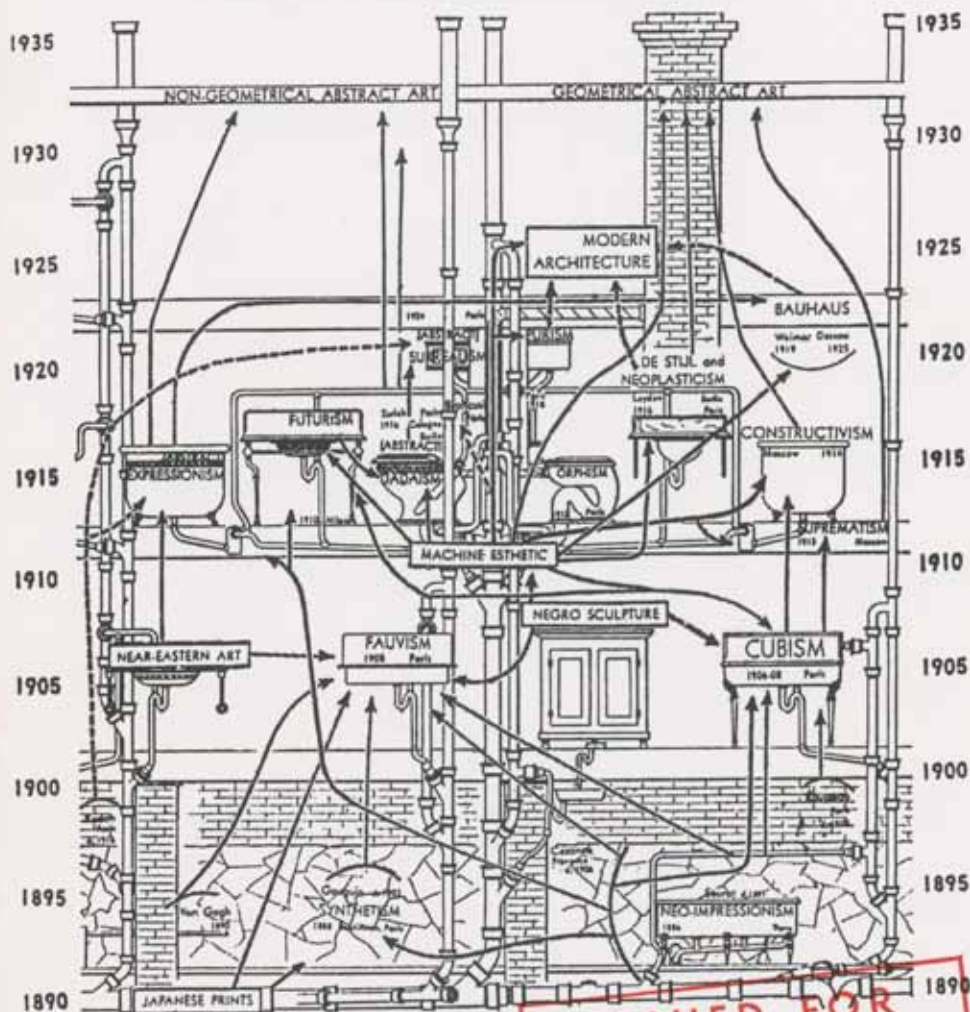


Margaret Morgan Out of Order

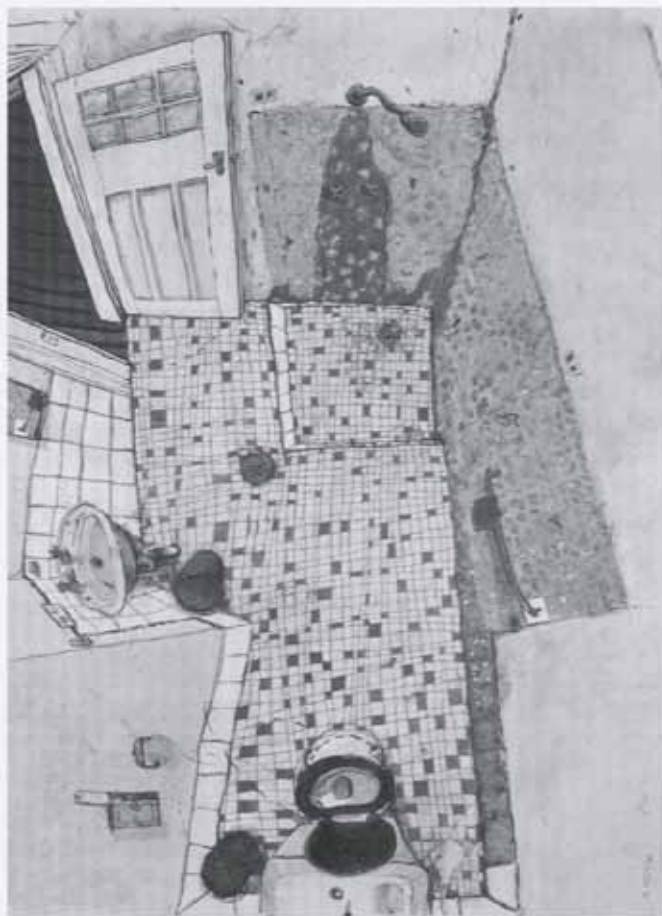
BARR/LOOS:
PORTRAIT OF A HISTORY OF MODERN ART AS SANITARY SYSTEM



or: A Place For Everything And Everything In Its Place
(The house that Adolf and Alfred Built)

ISSUED FOR
CONSTRUCTION

DATE: 22/8/77 SIGNED: M. Morgan



Mystery Bathroom 1981
 acrylic on paper
 Collection: Courtesy of Mr & Mrs L.E. Holdsworth

Out of Order

When people are out of order, they speak out of turn, are improper, or interrupt formal proceedings; when things are out of order, they are mixed up, out of place, out of line, or have ceased to function, as when the toilet's out of order or the phone on the corner of the street doesn't work. Yet, what else comes out of order? Pleasure, satisfaction, a sense of control; and, equally, out of order comes chaos, a sudden release from the strictures of such control. The history of the modern recounts this dialectic, between order and the preconditions for its undoing. At once repressive and empowering, modernism's compelling logic is evidenced in its official narratives; in its minor histories; and in the quotidian reception of its aesthetic paradigms, these in the small obsessive orderings of everyday ephemera, in the internalisations of order, the management of the self, the cleanliness of home and mind, as at least the model against which one is measured. If control is replete with both the pleasures of the bureaucrat and the anxieties of the barely repressed, then, sometimes it is useful to be *Out of Order*, to mess things up, precisely so as to make visible, legible, the complications and contradictions in the stories of the modern. And so too, in the display of two very different bodies of my work, produced a hemisphere and nearly two decades apart.

For the seventies avant-garde, narrative was characterised as anathema to radical practice, a tool of the patriarchy, a trick of capital, a device by which Hollywood and all the sentimental fixtures of mass culture, duped their audiences. To disrupt or fragment narrative was to quell its syrupy flow. Yet for those who felt themselves as much unrepresented in the mass, as outside the discourses of modernism, narrative was a powerful tool. Young women just discovering feminism, for one example, swapped stories with each other in the name of consciousness raising, in the name of the personal being political. To tell stories, share domestic histories, paint in an illustrative, figurative, manner was to embrace those qualities with which, as a woman and one of the 'duped masses', I was already identified.

This sense of exteriority and the place I found in feminism informs the early work (from 1979 to 1982) included in this exhibit. The bathrooms and kitchens I drew, painted and collaged together were based on actual places – or rather non-places, for whose bathroom is really a place? – those rooms my friends and family used, decorated, enjoyed, every day. The work was not explicitly concerned with high cultural critique so much as with that critique's occlusions; it was celebratory of the ordinary – humorous, and full of the conviction that to

represent is of consequence. And it was full of a melancholy for the diminution of one's life, for the eking out of existence on a subsistence wage, for the loving tenderness lavished on the cover of a toilet roll. Though the human figure was largely absent from the pictures, I wanted to trace a busy humanity, palpable in every domestic detail. To narrate a story, to suggest a person and their life, was to have a stake in the possibility of representing them, the possibility of that life being worth remembering, a responsibility I still take very seriously. I thought of those bathrooms as comely, close, warm, and without what I saw as the high-minded seriousness of documentary photography: the camera would have distanced me too much from that to which I was intimately tied. Drawing seemed to meet this challenge; it still does. There is something about the brevity, immediacy and accessibility of the medium that has always appealed. Directly of the artist, it is hand-made without the histrionics of painterly gesture.

I deemed the bathroom, with its drains emptying counterclockwise, its tubes of toothpaste curling, its floor coverings riding up, as doubly absented, a non-site from a non-place outside of art-history. How curious, fifteen years later, to return to the bathroom, only this time to its plumbing via the canon of art history, from modernist architecture to Marcel Duchamp. And, again, to employ narrative, more explicitly than ever, albeit filtered through deconstruction and the inevitable ambivalences at this end of a history of modernism. Drawing in chalk, that most fragile of media, pulling fragments of art history, sullying them, making them up, interspersing them with anecdotes, from anonymous sources, real or imagined, these methods are informed by uncertainty, by a critique of knowledge, by a scepticism for the value of narration, the possibility of representation. Yet, stubbornly, they seek, in the fissures and interstices, to represent none-the-less, and to articulate an art history that is neither monolithic nor totalising and has a place for me still.

Though the bodies of work made in the time between these two have been through many theoretical and stylistic changes, and as much as the early and late work differs, these concerns are continuous.

Margaret Morgan July 1997

Out of Order



You remember it groaned under the force of the wind, its rigging straining, near pulling from the rotted wooden housing. The timbers creaked, a response to the ache of the unfurled sail. Like the rush of the sea in a shell, the sound comes back to you. Sudden, vivid, so audible, so distinct, it catches you unawares, washes over you, drenches you in the memory of your time at sea, when the leverage of your body was of vital importance, the pull of your weight the only thing between you and disaster. You hear it still. You carry the sound with you, a whisper in your ear, it fills the interstices of your day, the early morning, the pauses for a pipe, the lateness of the night, home from a meeting, the noise and the banter long gone. Sometimes, when working on a project, you tug at the pulleys, the steel cords and wires, and again are transported. The studio a deck, the relief your rigging, you remember the tension, the stress between you and the tilt of the ship. You well understand, at the level of your body, the relationships of mass in space, of the draw of gravity, of the inevitability of the struggle. To construct something is to resist this powerful surge. But you are no engineer, your designs of no practical value, impossible monuments never to be built. Yours an aptitude for the structure of the social, you invoke the ideals of construction, abstract its mechanics, use it for the workings of thought, the function of the intellect, the possibility of imagining. In the name of order, you send order flying, up and down spirals, improbable geometries, places to build the ships of the future. You use it to ward off the sound of the sea.



You expected more resistance, such a sturdy object and yet so compliant, so able to be ridden over mountain, under dale. A bicycle, like magic rings in fairy tales, was a powerful possession: strong, lightweight and, in the right hands, full of mysterious properties. It made you a force to be reckoned with. Just this morning you flew past your father, your feet a futurist painting, a jet stream on the side of the house, a Doppler effect in your cry of farewell. You loved the bicycle, the transports it provided. You cycled all day, much longer than promised, transported indeed. You exhilarated at the power of your thighs, the keenness of your reactions, the propelling of your mass through air at speed. You were addicted to its thrills. Recalling your first attempts, the teetering of the bike into the bushes as you struggled to turn, as the scrub loomed large, as your legs, still turning, dragged in the dirt, you remembered your determination to get yourself back on the seat. So you borrowed the bike whenever you could, stealing an afternoon here, a morning there, inventing any pretext to mount again its tubular frame. Its construction was a marvel, the fine proportions, its gleaming surface, the handsome seat conforming precisely to your own. You had never known such release, the racing wind drowning your shout of delight, taking your breath. You felt your blood course through your system, its circulation a perfect pattern for a well heeled machine. You were pleased by the sweat that gathered in the pits of your arms. Yours, a modern frame, was functional, efficient, easy to maintain. Though a spectacle to others, dress riding up, underpants showing, your thighs on high, functional, purposeful, in control, you were a vision much too fleeting to behold.



Standing before your mirror, you twisted your body, an anxious contrapposto. You strained, chasing the small of your back, as a dog chases its tail. You struggled, twisted some more, pricked yourself with the safety pin, safe indeed, then decided there was something to be said for asymmetry. You pinned the tail-light where you could reach, askew, to one side, out of line. You adjusted the apparatus, attached the battery, tested the circuit, its erratic signal a retort to the scrutiny of the artist. This mechanical bustle, like the bustle of the city, moved in unnatural rhythms become second nature. Blinking with your motion, the tail-light syncopated with the bicycles, the motorcars, denizens on foot, at once pulsing and flowing, the ground-level parade to be seen from your window. With your motorised accessory, you exceeded the machine, as attractive as a bicycle and as mad as a meat-axe. On the street, you ambled past pedestrians, half on the footpath and half not, scoffing at those who would stare, incredulous, failing to recognise art or understand life. Mockery your sustenance, you strove on, consuming the cat-calls like the scavenger you were. If for others dress reform meant draping themselves with the loose fitting clothes of antiquity, your reform was an embrace of the modern, its structure, industry, and mass manufacture, your most haute couture. A coal scuttle for a hat; tin cans to cover your breasts; postage stamps your rouge; cutlery your hair pins; curtain rings your jewels; such was your modern and ready to wear garb. The city was your feeding ground, it flicked your switch, fueled your engine, and when its sometime too rich gasoline made you convulse, collapse, laugh hysterically, you retreated to the warm and comforting stench of your sub-basement apartment.



You squint in the light of the morning, thoughts rushing like the busy chirping of birds in the tree next door. The dampness clings momentarily to your skin, evaporating in the time it takes to reach up to the line. Peg by peg, as you hang out the nappies, a spectacular display unfolds. Fluttering in unison, the unwitting squares of bleached and scrubbed terry towelling make an elegant abstraction, a Busby Berkeley choreography, a modern ballet. Hung to advantage, on high like banners, streaming and waving, they salute to their unknown soldiers: to absent fathers; to the desultory breeze; to the power of Surf; to the shit of the child; to the supremacy of the geometric; to the ordinary order of your washing day. If you had the flight of a crow, you might see that each line of white was one of many lines hung also with white, and that each was arranged as its neighbours, a junction of the grid, each grid in parallel with the next, endless and reproducing. You pause to adjust your bra strap. The folds of the washing flap at you, billowing, then snapping back, an unfurled spinnaker. You remember with sweet nostalgia the clotheslines of your childhood. You loved to climb them, swing from them, feel the weight of your body, a fulcrum against them. You recall the rush of anticipation, your omnipotence. They were your kingdom, your castle, illicit playthings, forbidden toys. You remember your mother washing, her image a dazzlement in the brightness. You remember the airing of linen, the canopies of sheets in sunlight. You could walk beneath the crease from which they hung, gathering a populace of pegs where it fell, a marquee sheltering you from the day, lambent, full of the transports of childhood, the fantasies of escape.



Wrinkled, watermarked like the inside covers of books, your hands feel the sting of the soapy water. You immerse them again, gingerly, but immerse them you must, if you are to finish this stack and go on to the next. You glance around the teetering forms, a ruined city of dirty dishes, piled up like the city itself, sky-scrappers beside a lake of sudsy water, inverted cups its power stations, the cutlery its docks and wharves. And so plate by plate, the cityscape flattens before you, as you think of the bustle, the sound and the fury of the city without, of the city you want to be yours. Chicago. You select another slippery dish, holding it between still stinging fingers, scrubbing the greasy residue, the half-eaten, half-baked, half-rinsed remnants, from its soon to be glistening surface. In your reverie, the shine of washed plates transports you again, their gleam a spark to the eye of your mind. It takes you to the streets, to the motorcars, to the mills, to the hubs of industry, to the noise of commercial transaction, the trains, trams, machines, the construction, the blare of electric light, the bumping against people in the streaming rush, the morning and evening flows. And it takes you to the columns of a paper, the Chicago Tribune, its news, its listings, urgent, appealing, as structured as any architecture and as current as the movement of the crowds. In the midst of your daydream, your hand stops, suspended mid-air like a construction crane during a strike, only to begin again at the bellowing of your boss to change your water, your washing up is filth, a travesty to the cleanliness of the nation. You pull the plug, and the image is flushed down the drain.



The saw-horse was a minor prop in the quotidian recordings of ordinary life. Headless, ridiculous in the light, stubbornly resisting the metaphor of its name, it was a reluctant creature. It was no competition for the brooms, mops and sticks that more readily lent themselves to equestrian pursuits. On a saw-horse, there were no flights of fantasy, no galloping to the cities of dreams, no leaping an imaginary river. At best, this failed object was ridden side-saddle, and then by princesses and babies, the boys who didn't play rough, the ones who stood on the sidelines, who didn't leap and bound. It was strong enough to take their partial weight, as they leaned and smiled into the purview of the snap-shot, performing, good kids for a moment, for their photographer. The usual antics, in the absence of an adult – the climbing, swinging, leaping would have made that saw-horse fold its legs to the ground, its joints rickety, the holes for its nails grown big and loose. The saw-horse was pure surfeit, incidental, coincidental, inconsequential but for the fact that it served to bring objects to table, the two by fours, the ply, the panes of glass. It recurred without note in the workshops of carpenters, in the hobbyist's garage, and – hobbyhorse that it was – in the studio of the artist. You remember the studio, filled with detritus, emblems of the early modern, a bicycle wheel, a diagram, a coat rack on the floor, a toilet upside down; it also had its saw-horse, a resting place for dust to breed. You had never been one for cleaning; no time in your schedule for the neuroses of housework so you let the dust gather, a monumental landscape in an arid clime, the bride in planes of glass to sleep.



The saw-horse was a minor prop in the quotidian recordings of ordinary life. Headless, ridiculous in the light, stubbornly resisting the metaphor of its name, it was a reluctant creature. It was no competition for the brooms, mops and sticks that more readily lent themselves to equestrian pursuits. On a saw-horse, there were no flights of fantasy, no galloping to the cities of dreams, no leaping an imaginary river. At best, this failed object was ridden side-saddle, and then by princesses and babies, the boys who didn't play rough, the ones who stood on the sidelines, who didn't leap and bound. It was strong enough to take their partial weight, as they leaned and smiled into the purview of the snap-shot, performing, good kids for a moment, for their photographer. The usual antics, in the absence of an adult - the climbing, swinging, leaping would have made that saw-horse fold its legs to the ground, its joints rickety, the holes for its nails grown big and loose. The saw-horse was pure surfeit, incidental, coincidental, inconsequential but for the fact that it served to bring objects to table, the two by fours, the ply, the panes of glass. It recurred without note in the workshops of carpenters, in the hobbyist's garage, and - hobbyhorse that it was - in the studio of the artist. You remember the studio, filled with detritus, emblems of the early modern, a bicycle wheel, a diagram, a coat rack on the floor, a toilet upside down; it also had its saw-horse, a resting place for dust to breed. You had never been one for cleaning; no time in your schedule for the neuroses of housework so you let the dust gather, a monumental landscape in an arid clime, the bride in planes of glass to sleep.



You remembered the shame of a word mispronounced. Your malapropism revealed you in the blink of your listener's eye. You were discovered; you did not belong, the sudden burn of your cheek confirming suspicion, its flaming rush a denunciation, your very body betraying you, each gesture an imposture and an admission of guilt. Sometimes you preferred silence to the arch of a brow or the flare of a nostril, that passing of judgment. You spoke little, thought much. This was the habit you shared with your brothers and with the page upon which you wrote, the silence between you an intimate understanding of what cannot be said, but only is known, in writing and in your bones. In your family silence is golden, to be laconic a gesture, an inflection of speech. You wrote in these silent spaces and found embodiment in the physical shifts of the written word, the transcription a form for your mindful self. In the world you translated, in ink and on paper, its patterns run amok, out of order, indiscreet, these wordly importunities were the skeletons in your closet. You were a bastard to the mother tongue, minor player in the major leagues, indiscreet, antecedent, always afterthoughtful, a persistent reminder, as were your words and the lines you drew, around the words of others. You carved your initials in the faces of their letters, the nicks and crevices in the surfaces of the words, the textures of the text, your distinguishing features. To fit the changing shape of your person, you made diagrams, drawings, analyses, typographic anomalies, flow charts defying gravity with the plumb of your insistence. And even in their bindings together, your disorder resists order, your misuses become coinage still unstable currency, the words ready-made to exceed their place in the lexicon.



The smooth end pummelled your palm. You liked the feel of the density of the thing. You cherished the way the years had made it conform to the shape of your hand. You held it firmly in your grasp, its cool weight gathering your heat as you plied it to each void, form gaining substance under the guidance of the tool. Inverted and held by the middle of its shaft, the implement could be used to articulate the toe or the heel. Held like a stabbing thing, its blunt end could pry open a leather seam, only then to fill it with glue, to clasp it together, to seal it with the finest of nails, to stitch it in the nick of time. You were a good worker. When told to keep your head down, you did, the less to speak, the better to work, the more efficiently to fill the space provided you. Indeed your motions emulated the machines, their repetitions your rhythm, their hum your tuneless song, the arch of your body, a complement to the verticality of the needle's motion. A fixture, you looked neither to the side nor above. To speak was to lose your job and you'd rather not know of the rats on the plumbing overhead, the warm pipe a rodent's Fifth Avenue. You wanted your own Fifth Avenue and at knock-off time, removing your apron and your snood, fixing your hair, changing your shoes, and descending the stairs, you allowed the pressure inside you to subside, the draining to diminish, a thin stream only dampening your mood with the vaguest of aches in your back. You stretched, smiled to yourself, anticipated the pleasures of conversation, of touch, of the warmth of another's proximity and hurried on to your date at the restaurant.



He was late, as usual. You had arranged the drapes, the bedding, the fruit, just this morning bought fresh flowers from the woman down stairs. You arranged them once more, fussing, unnecessarily, adjusting the blooms and the asymmetrical lines of the stems. You had selected them to contrast with the colours of the bedding. With a casual throw, you added the shawl, to complete your palette and to connote just the right impression of a casual life, a sensuous disorder, the studied mien of an urban blasé. You surveyed your design from each vantage, considered the form, the entire mise en scène. You changed the vase for another, and, again, rearranged the flowers, pinks and clematis in a crystal vase. Laura, who had just arrived, stood watching your antics, arms folded across her body, a bouquet of peonies in hand, clutching them through the paper in which they were wrapped. She watched you quizzically, with the amusement she reserved just for you. When you again adjusted the vase, she laughed out aloud. You stopped, turned your decided gaze to her and, smiling, accepted the cigarette and the light she held out before you. The peonies, still in their wrapping, sat beside you on the bed where you and she smoked when he finally came through the door. Perspiring slightly, cursing at the ordinary injustices of a routine day, he kicked aside the knowing cats who always made him sneeze. Without apology for his tardiness – it was actually his usual time – he cursed again, as if allergies were the source of all his problems. Then he sat his sweaty body down, grabbed a handful of cherries, the photographs where you'd left them for him to find, and, in a sudden delight upon looking about, declared, that's it! that's perfect! let's begin!

Clogging the works

While Margaret Morgan's subject matter and media have altered over the course of the last decade and a half, three paired concerns continue to circulate through her work. Both formal and conceptual in nature, they are labour and history, image and text, idea and object. These concerns provide Morgan with the critical tools to examine gender and class at the levels of the social, the personal and the linguistic. It is something of a truism to say that in modern patriarchal, free-enterprise culture, class and gender are largely elided by its ostensibly neutral and value-free ordering of art history. Over the past few decades, this modernist position has been problematised, critiqued and much revised by a new art history. It is this more recent critical foundation that provides the impetus for Morgan's work and suggests the ways in which an art historical hegemony is promoted, internalised and maintained. Yet, her work complicates this project by allowing for the desire and the agency of the subject, the viewer, the artist. Their pleasures, identifications, and inputs to the system – those rattles and seepages in the works – ultimately alter the system: History is no one-way flow.

Morgan's work from the early 1980s exposes the conscripted spaces of the domestic sphere, so often the site of unacknowledged and unappreciated labour. The bathrooms and kitchens of domestic suburban interiors, often the most occupied spaces in the home, yet also the most ignored, are rendered in cramped and twisted perspectives. Toilets, sinks and tubs seem to bump into each other, their porcelain bent and stretched around a concave bathroom, while kitchen environs are impacted with scraps of bread, stacked dishes and the detritus of everyday life. Strange corners and the backs of doors jar the perspective. Morgan's thick acrylic adds an encrusted dimension to the tactility of the tile and grout. These spaces with their awkward perspectives seem to be culled from surveillance cameras, although they lack the distanced nature of this apparatus. Instead, the compacted and bowed spaces are damp but homey, replete with the clutter and chaos of lived-in-ness. There is a palpable human presence – an open bottle of wine, a ring around a tub – yet these interiors lack occupants; they are vacant rooms, as if their inhabitants have gone for the day, leaving only their traces, like the stains from leaky faucets. Within an art historical discourse, the painterly banality rendered in these bathroom and kitchen scenes slips outside the accepted vocabulary. Morgan's work runs counter current to much of the cool, conceptual, and detached aesthetics of the late 1970s and early 1980s. They are not interrogations of the domestic from a safe theoretical distance; rather they are strategic affirmations of these intimate spaces, stressing the personal and the power of unresolved narrative. Morgan's early work was informed by feminists and activists

who were explicitly dealing with class and gender.¹ Narrative functioned as a useful implement to displace traditional and contemporary social institutions and art practices. Passing these domestic and 'gendered' spaces through a narrative filter, Morgan's strategy effectively functioned as a critique of a critique.

Morgan's very different work of the 1990s continues to push against and disclose the ways in which social and art historical systems have been constructed, formatted and sustained. A critical exploration of the impact of gender and class, this work uses the language and structure of modernism in order to render visible its inner workings. Within art history, modernism privileged perpetual innovation and art work that attempted to divine the essential experience of modernity. Each new generation of artists and theorists ensured the evolution and improvement of the art system. This continual retrofitting reinforces the edifice of art history, a structure within which all artists and styles could be judged and measured. In practice, it is a streamlined, heavily fortified, and 'man-made' structure.

Morgan takes this modernist system to task from the position of one both excluded from it, via gender and class, and invested in it, by way of the art academy. This dialectic, although never resolved, creates a space for critical analysis. Concerned less with the façade of modernism and more with its internal mechanisms, Morgan literally and figuratively explores modernism's blueprints and plumbing systems, its physical make-up and confined thematic fluids. The blueprint that Morgan uses, monumentally rendered on an entire wall of the gallery, is appropriated from Alfred H. Barr's diagram from the catalogue for the exhibition *Cubism and Abstract Art* (1936). Barr, the first Director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, was instrumental in articulating the hegemonic model of modern art history. Morgan combines his diagram with an early twentieth century map of a plumbing system meant to evoke the aesthetics of the modernist architect Adolf Loos, who valorised rational and functional art systems. In this layering, the plumber emerges as the hero who maintains these systems. When merged together, Barr and Loos undergird the founding tenets of modern art and theory. However, by making visible their metaphors of art history and aesthetic idealism, Morgan reveals their systemic absurdity.

Those familiar with Morgan's work will recognise the plumbing system in *Out of Order*; the constant recirculation of form, content, and ideas is an important component of this body of work. The plumbing, a conceptual conflation of Barr's and Loos' diagrams, stress the continuity of the modernist system: the flux and flow is regulated, contained. The blue shadow behind the plumbing bears testimony to the careful orchestration of its geometry. Labels with art

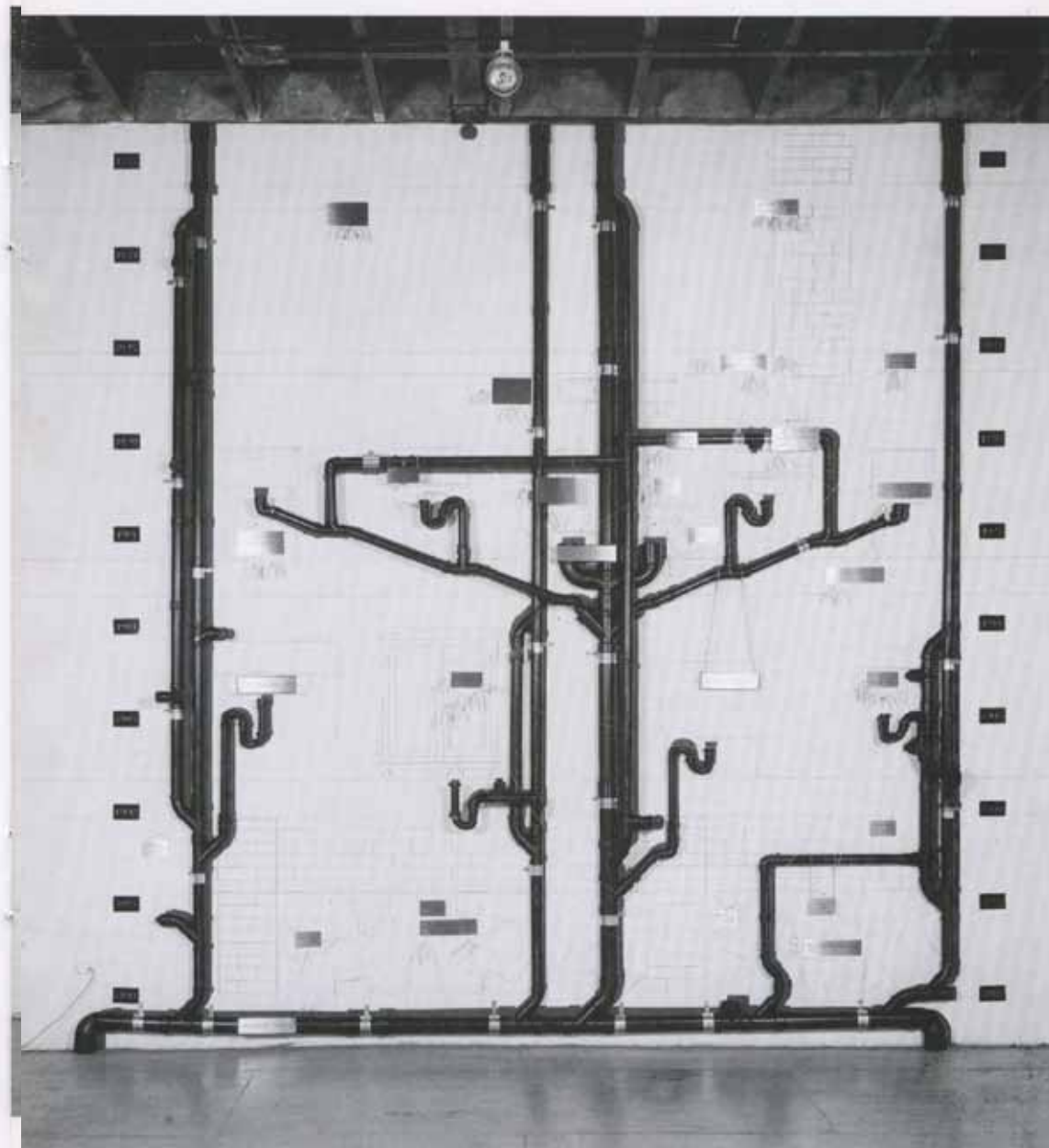
historical movements emphasise the directional current: Machine Esthetic runs up toward Futurism and onward to its teleological ends, Modern Architecture and Abstract Art. The force of influence courses through these pipes. But the canonical system cannot contain every movement, nor every artist. Small paintings bearing icons disrupt the clean organisation of PVC pipes. Their presence calls attention to positions excluded from, although still tenuously connected to, the system. They contain unwritten histories, perform undesirable labours, and remain discarded objects. They elicit the beginnings of alternative narrations, obtuse relationships.

These small paintings, appearing like minute snap-shots, parallel the large panel works around the room. The portraits rendered in white chalk on blue panels, like photographic negatives, depict minor figures from art history, people one may not recognise but whose impact on the discipline is great: Victorine Meurent, Richard Hamilton, the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, etc. The portraits in blue chalk on white panels, appearing like faded blue prints, are snap-shot images of what Morgan calls, 'nobody's history.' They are figures who seemingly have no pertinent relationship to either an art historical or social system. Each of the portraits, minor or anonymous, is accompanied by a story about work and modernism. Yet any expectation of the stories providing a fixed and final explanation is thwarted: these overlong 'captions' are neither simply descriptive nor explanatory, meaning residing somewhere between the drawn image and the oblique fictions. The relationship between text and image starts and stops, thereby clogging any whole and unified narrative and instead invoking the possibility and limits of meaning. They are never about the 'truth in painting', or the truth in history, or the truth of the word. Icons, snap-shots, and histories each circulate around the modern and art historical system, emphasising its constructed aspects. Together they perform their own deconstruction, unfixing the system, allowing for adjustments, leaks, and always insisting on the possibility of process.

Mario Ontiveros July 1997

¹ In conversation with the artist, she cites figures and institutions in the Sydney scene of the late seventies and early eighties such as Helen Grace, Virginia Coventry, Vivienne Binns, Ian Burn, Ian Howard, Dennis Mizzi, Helen Eager, Vicki Varvaressos, the Film-maker's Co-Op, Watter's Gallery and the Artworkers' Union.

Mario Ontiveros is an art historian completing his PhD at UCLA focussing on contemporary art. He lives in Los Angeles.



Too Much Leverage is Dangerous – An Excerpt 1994/96
Installation comprising PVC downpipe plumbing hardware, builder's chalk, latex paint, Silver Satin brass, builder's chalk on latex on ply
Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Burwood Bathroom 1979

acrylic on paper

Collection: Courtesy of Mrs L. Moloney

Francis St. Bathroom 1980

acrylic on paper

Collection: Courtesy of Mr and Mrs L.E. Holdsworth

Ann St Bathroom 1981

acrylic and collage on paper

Collection: Courtesy of Hilary Edwards

Bathroom 1981

(aka) Another Ann St Bathroom

acrylic and collage on paper

Collection: Courtesy of UNSW Art Collection,
The University of New South Wales

Ironing Bored 1981

acrylic and collage on paper and plastic objects

Collection: Courtesy of Susan Norrie

Pam and Norm's Bathroom 1981

acrylic and collage on paper

Collection: Courtesy of Lesley Brown

Sixty a Week 1981

acrylic on paper and plastic objects

Collection: Courtesy of Tony Trengove

Herbie Laid Them Down 1981/83

(aka) Guildford Bathroom

acrylic and collage on paper

Collection: Courtesy of Michael Hobbs

Paris Kitchen 1982

acrylic and collage on paper, triptych

Collection: Courtesy of Tony Morison

Out of Order 1997

Installation comprising PVC downpipe,
plumbing hardware, builder's chalk, latex paint,
Silver Satin brass, Satin aluminium, builder's chalk
on latex on ply, oil on Baltic birch
Courtesy of the artist

Margaret Morgan

1958 Born Sydney

Lives Los Angeles, USA

Education

- 1994 Master of Fine Art, University of California, Irvine
- 1991 Independent Study Program, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 1984 Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts), College of Fine Arts, University NSW
- 1980 Diploma of Arts, Alexander Mackie College of Advanced Education

Selected Individual Exhibitions

- 1995 *Plumb: Tools for Modern Living*, Artspace, Sydney
- 1994 *Too Much Leverage Is Dangerous: Modernism and Plumbing*, Fine Arts Gallery, University of California at Irvine
- 1993 *Fixtures: Modern People, Places, Things*, Fine Arts Gallery, U.C.Irvine
- Portraits of Modern Men (Lest We Forget)*, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- Domestic Moderne*, Women's Resource Center, U.C.Irvine
- 1992 *A Hung Jury*, William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
- 1989 *Rhyme and Reason*, Mori Gallery, Sydney
- 1988 *the place I see you*, installation, Dance Theater Workshop, New York
- 1987 *Between the Lines*, Jon Gerstad Gallery, New York
- 1986 *Lovers Leaps*, Mori Gallery, Sydney
- 1984 *Peggy Went to Market*, Mori Gallery, Sydney
- 1982 *Baguette and Vegemite*, Drew Gallery, Canterbury
- 1981 *Urban Exclusive*, Mori Gallery, Sydney
- 1980 *Views of the Suburbs*, Mori Gallery, Sydney

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1997 *Fibro*, in conjunction with *Perspecta*, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney
- 'In the Name of the Place', artists' collaboration organized by Mel Chin in association with Spelling Television, in *Uncommon Sense*, curated by Julie Lazar, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 1996 *LACE Annule*, curated by Suzanne Ghez for Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, LACE, LA
- Detours '96*, Side Street Projects, Santa Monica, CA
- The Object of Existence*, curated by Clare Williamson, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne
- 1995 *Working Girls*, curated by Suellen Lockett, Campbelltown City Art Gallery

In The Company of Women, organized by Belinda Carrigan, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, WA

Persona Cognita, curated by Juliana Engberg, Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne

Badly Functions, curated by Carol Mavor and Elin Slavick, Hanes Art Center, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC

- 1994 *Far Bazaar*, juried by Foundation for Art Resources, the Brewery, Los Angeles
- 1992 *Ten Steps*, in conjunction with Saul Ostrow, Horodner-Romley Gallery, New York
- Frames of Reference: Aspects of Feminism and Art*, curated by Sally Coucaud, Artspace, Sydney
- 1990 *Untitled*, curated by Winston C. Robinson, Momenta Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
- Post-Hype*, curated by Winston C. Robinson, 88 Room, Allston, Massachusetts
- The Complex Picture*, curated by Tim Morrell, College Gallery, South Australian College, Adelaide
- The J-Curve*, curated by Juliana Engberg, George Paton Gallery, University of Melbourne, and touring
- 1989 *Irony, Humour, and Dissent*, curated by Alison Carroll, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, and touring
- 1988 *The Naked City*, curated by Margot Osborne, Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide
- No More Blue Horizons*, Flaxman Gallery, London
- From Margaret Preston to Margaret Morgan*, Art Gallery of WA, Perth
- 1987 *Anti-Ego Show*, Minor Injury Gallery, New York
- Mori Gallery at United Artists Gallery*, Melbourne
- Australian Drawing: the Eighties*, Australian National Gallery, Canberra
- A New Romance*, curated by John McPhee, Australian National Gallery, Canberra
- Domestic Contradictions*, curated by Julie Ewington, Power Gallery, University of Sydney and touring
- 1986 *Forbidden Fruit*, First Draft Gallery, Sydney
- 1985 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1985 *Heartland*, Wollongong City Gallery and touring
- 1984 *Soft Attack: Artists Against Militarism*, Artspace, Sydney
- 1983 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1982 *Urban Images*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney

Prizes And Scholarships

- 1991 Moya Dyring Studio, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney

- 1987 Greene Street Studio, NY, Visual Arts/Crafts Board of the Australia Council, OS Development Grant
- 1982 Cité Internationale des Arts Studio, Paris, Power Institute of Fine Arts, University of Sydney and Dyason Bequest, Art Gallery of NSW
- 1981 University of New South Wales Travelling Art Prize

Bibliography

- 1997 Margaret Morgan, 'Too Much Leverage Is Dangerous', in Nadir Lahiji and D.S. Friedman (eds), *Plumbing: Sounding Modern Architecture*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York
- Amelia Jones, 'Mr. Clean', *Art + Text*, no. 58, August - October
- 1996 Susan Kandel, 'LACE "Annule" Rises Above its History', *LA Times*, October 17
- 1995 Jeff Gibson, 'Sydney: Theory or Therapy?', *Flash Art*, Vol. XXVIII, no. 185, Nov - Dec
- 1994 Diane Carlyle and Nick Walker, 'Scholarly Publishing', *The Australian*, November
- 1993 Juliana Engberg, 'Margaret Morgan, William Mora Galleries', *Art + Text*, no. 46, September
- Robert Rooney, 'Visual Haiku of Zen Images', *Weekend Review: The Australian*, July
- Christopher Heathcote, 'Morgan's Satire on the Business', *The Age*, July
- Susan McCulloch, 'Gifts That Galleries Find Hard to Receive', *Herald-Sun*, July
- 1992 Fiona Moore, 'Dark Obsessions in Another World', *Business Review Weekly*, May
- Rebecca Lancashire, 'In this Art Omelette, the Hero Gets Scrambled', *The Age*, May
- 1991 Catriona Moore, 'The Skin Trade', *Binocular*, Ewen McDonald, Juliana Engberg, eds., *Möet & Chandon*
- Frazer Ward, 'Notes on a Year in New York', *Eyeline* 13, Spring/Summer
- 1990 Julie Ewington, 'Rhyme and Reason: Margaret Morgan's Tales of Love', *Art and Australia*, Winter
- Beverly Creasey, '88 Room Ushers in era of Post-Hype', *Allston-Brighton Journal*, vol. 4, no. 23, June
- 1989 Cecily Miner, 'Margaret Morgan: Rhyme and Reason', *Eyeline* 10, December
- Frazer Ward, 'Between Here and There', *The Sydney Review*, July
- Rosalind Reines, 'For the Sake of Her Art', *The Age*, June
- Elwyn Lynn, 'Armchair Aesthetics', *The Weekend Australian*, May
- Joanna Mendelssohn, 'Artist on the Move', *The Bulletin*, May
- 'Vintage '89', *Vague Australia*, April

- 1988 Larry Berryman, 'No More Blue Horizons', *Arts Review*, vol. XXXX, no. 13, July
 Arthur Berman, 'Out of the Blue', *TNT*, no. 252, June
- 1987 Avenel Mitchell, Catriona Moore, 'Staking Claims', *Photofile*, Summer
 Terry Smith, 'Domain of the Deepest Contradictions', *The Times on Sunday*, July
 Robert Rooney, 'Palette and Palate', *The Weekend Australian*, July
 David Dale, 'Margaret Morgan, Australian Artist in New York', *Sydney Morning Herald*, October
 Russel Baker, 'Portrait of the Artist', *Follow Me*, May
- 1986 Terence Maloon, '...for the Sydney Biennale', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May
 Suzanne Short, 'An Exercise in Philanthropy', *The Daily Telegraph*, June
- 1985 Maggie Gilchrist, 'Male Monoliths, Female Symbols', *Art and Australia*, vol. 23, no. 2
 Robert Rooney, 'When Feminism Rules', *The Australian*, July
 Vicki Vidikas, 'Six Painters Unveiled', *The Financial Review*, July
 Jane Inglis, 'Challenging the Individual Genius', *Tribune*, March
 Terence Maloon, 'Polemical Remarks...', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July
 Cathy Lumby, 'Heartland (forget the hearts and flowers)', *Art Network* no. 16, Winter
- 1984 Avenel Mitchell, 'Critiques', *Art Network* no. 13, Spring
 Terence Maloon, 'Margaret Morgan's Grave New World', *Sydney Morning Herald*, July
 Elwyn Lynn, 'Ravishing Display of Nature', *The Weekend Australian*, July
- 1982 Suzanna Short, 'Urban Images', *Sydney Morning Herald*, July

Collections

Including Australian National Gallery, Canberra;
 Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Art Gallery of WA, Perth; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Newcastle Region Art Gallery, NSW; Wollongong City Art Gallery, NSW; Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW; Liverpool City Art Gallery, NSW; Griffith University, Brisbane; Benalla Regional Art Gallery, Victoria; University of NSW, Sydney; University of Sydney Student Union, Sydney; University of Queensland, Brisbane; Artbank, Australia, private collections in Australia, UK, USA

Cover image:

Portrait of Modern Art as Sanitary System 1993/97
 unlimited edition, photocopy on vellum

Margaret Morgan: Out of Order

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art
 22 August – 5 October 1997
 Catalogue co-published by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art and the artist
 August 1997 Edition 500 ISBN 0 947220 68 2

© Copyright The authors and Australian Centre for Contemporary Art
 Images copyright the artist
 No material, whether written or photographic, may be reproduced without the permission of the artist, authors and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. The opinions expressed in this catalogue are those of the authors.

Design: Ian Robertson; Printing: Econoprint
 The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art and the artist gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the private owners and public collections who generously lent their works, Mandy Finlayson and Dennis Stewart, William Mora and Anna Long, Mori Gallery, Juliana Engberg for opening the exhibition, Mario Ontiveros for his text, Wendy Wright for design assistance, Natasha Bullock and Alison Leach.

The Artist also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Tradelink, especially Cathal Bovard and Aaron Walkey, and wishes to thank Norm Laich, Stephen Mori, Alan Morgan, Susan Norrie, Shelby Roberts, the staff at ACCA and above all, Wesley Phoa.

Margaret Morgan is represented by
 William Mora Galleries, Melbourne

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art
 Dallas Brooks Drive, South Yarra 3141 Tel. 61 3 9654 6422
acca@adm.monash.edu.au
 Director: Jenepher Duncan; Curator: Clare Williamson
 Administrator: Jennifer Colbert; Sec./Assistant: Vikki McInnes
 Affiliated with Monash University

ACCA is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. ACCA is supported by the Victorian Government, through Arts Victoria – Department of Premier and Cabinet.

