An-Arcadia: A Visual Representation of Cultural Hybridity as a Multidimensional Trialectic Space

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Society allows artists to explore what we don't know in ways that are distinct from the approaches of science, religion and philosophy. As a result, art bears a unique responsibility in the search for truth.

Ai Weiwei 2013

Abstract

Arcadia is an imaginary and socially constructed space in which pastoral harmony is played out in various creative guises. The classic Eurocentric interpretation of Arcadia is relatively static, and was formed on a mythological and monocultural vision that reflected a particular time and place, a golden age formed through nostalgia as a “longing for a home that no longer exists—or never existed” (Legg 2004, 100). The title of this research is An-Arcadia: A Visual Representation of Cultural Hybridity as a Multidimensional Trialectic Space, and therefore the notion of anarchy refers directly to the wordplay of the title An-Arcadia, or more commonly referred to as *trouble in paradise.* Prompted by this idea, this creative research investigates a timely reimagining of Australia’s hybridised identity using Homi Bhabha’s (1994) thirdspace theory as a point of departure. The research interprets and develops Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) cumulative trialectics as a more appropriate model that extends thirdspace theories of contestation into a triangulated framework that is positive and creative, accommodating the embodied ‘self’ as a changing state of being: one that is dependent on a more fluid interpretation of history, time, and place.

Through reflexive praxis and artistic collaboration and production, this research explores a unique visual language to propose an imaginary space that creates new knowledge and the repositioning of cultural difference across cultural and language groups. As an experienced practice-led researcher using reflexive praxis as my methodology, I create a dialogic space based on my ongoing experiences of working with Aboriginal artists in Western Australia and, more recently, with Chinese artists in Mainland China. Besides that felt by migrant groups, the feeling of displacement brought about through cultural transformation is often manifested through the arts by contemporary urban Aboriginal people who do not fit Western ideals of Aboriginal art and who often find themselves alienated within their own country and culture (Bell 2003; Langton 2003). Within this Sino-Australian model, the issues surrounding displacement and cultural identity are examined through a more fluid interpretation of space, including the use of Disney characters and found objects as a way of introducing imaginary and nostalgic stimuli.

The development of a new multidimensional model through studio enquiry extends our understanding of constructed histories by the use of images and materials, prompting experiential, sensory and imaginative responses from the audience that in turn promotes a questioning of the validity of current textual systems of understanding and knowledge transfer. The research concludes that the artworks made as a response to Henri Lefebvre’s cumulative trialectics have the ability to communicate complex ideas that avoid polarisation, offering a theoretical model of praxis that is adaptable for artists in particular who approach their research from an autoethnographical position. Through this, the research contributes to the ongoing dialectic regarding the representation of cultural hybridity in Australia and beyond.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.



Clive Barstow

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Introduction

Background

Since the publication of Homi K. Bhabha's influential text *The Location of Culture* (1994), much postcolonial theory has focused on a broadening transnational approach that interprets today's world as a place of "multiple modernities" (Eisenstadt 2000, 1). Contemporary critical literature and theory (Papastergiadis 2003a; Ikas 2009; Dervin 2014) may have succeeded in developing a unified position in their attempts to decentralise modernity within a more fluid and globalised dialogue. For instance, while many Asian Australians have maintained their transplanted collective traditions (Grishin 2013), many Asian Australian visual artists have focused on more individualised responses to their location (for example, John Young, Ah Xian, William Yang), perhaps in an attempt to visualise their newfound personal and hybrid identities in reaction to their feelings of being dislocated from home. Often, these individual identities are firmly situated within the binary polarities of cultural exchange in which Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace theory operates. Bhabha explains thirdspace in these terms:

> The non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures opens up a cultural space—a third space—where the negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences…Hybrid hyphenisations emphasize the incommensurable elements as the basis of cultural identities. (1994, 86)

This research attempts to operate in what Henri Lefebvre terms "the quasi-logical presupposition of an identity between mental space (the space of the philosophers and epistemologists) and real space… [which is an] abyss between the mental sphere on one side and the physical and social spheres on the other" (1991, 6). While James Clifford (1986) suggests that culture exists "between subjects" (15), Julia Lossau (2009) describes thirdspace as being beyond its singular spatial meaning by asserting that "thirdspace tends to be transformed into a bounded space which is located next to or, more precisely, in between other bounded spaces, like a piece of a jigsaw" (Ikas and Wagner 2009, 70). My attempts to visualise and piece together these narratives respond to Johannes Fabian's critique of ethnography, whereby he says "taxonomic imagination in the west is strongly visualist in nature, constituting cultures as if they were theatres of memory, or spatialised arrays" (quoted in Clifford 1986, 12). I propose that through this research, a visualised trialectic space extends beyond the theatres of memory toward a more representative reflection of reality as it is *now* and how it might *be*. In this search for reality, visual artworks "both create and discover the real at the same time" (Moxey 2013, 69).

Traditional art histories as presented by such seminal historians as Ernst Gombrich (1950) and Kenneth Clark (1969) are grounded in nineteenth-century European literature, which to some extent echoed the Arcadian construction of the colony as the primitive and distant other. As Keith Moxey questions, "Can art history conceive of a time in any other terms?" (2013, 2). Sue Rowley discusses the role of the artist in representing and constructing binary realities in late-nineteenth-century fiction, explaining that: "Rather than emphasising the act of invention, they [the writers] sought to deny the fictionality of representations in order that the 'imagined community' they were engaged in constructing could be construed as real" (quoted in Gunner, Nuttall, and Darian-Smith 1996, 132).

Unlike nineteenth-century art and literature, the imaginary community I am constructing through this creative research is not the result of a romantic attempt to contribute to the formation of a collective national identity, or particularly one based on Arcadian principles. What I propose is the opposite: an imaginary community where the yet-to-be connected component parts are exposed and recognised as a true representation of complexity, incommensurability and non-fixity. This presents an unresolved space, as Moxey suggests in his thesis on heterochronic storytelling where he states "these essays ally themselves with persistent questions, never pretending that they can be settled for good" (2013, 8). Neither is

this space idealised; rather, it attempts to present a pluralistic reality and inclusivity, alluding to “everything but the kitchen sink”[1] in its efforts to unpack hegemony and replace its construct of reality, piece by piece, even if the pieces are ill-fitting. My regular use of Disney characters within my work for instance serves to disrupt the Arcadian ideal by taking the viewer on a dystopian journey of fantasy that might at times allude to a sense of reality. Disney animation played an important role in my upbringing as a counter to the harsh realities of social realism and the Kitchen Sink movement as a form of escapism, a form of counterpoint that now plays a significant role in this visual research.

This research aims to visualise alternative realities through creative work in which audiences are given prompts[2] by which to interpret and negotiate a shifting space in order to position themselves within it. In this respect, the research aims to offer new knowledge and new forms of visualising the relational aspects of history, time, and place beyond the limitations of geographically and time-specific texts.

Connecting with Aboriginal Artists

The first painting I viewed after arriving in Australia in 1992 was George Pitt Morrison’s *The Foundation of Perth* (1929) (Figure 1), on permanent exhibition in the Centenary Galleries Perth. The work’s colonial narrative affected me deeply and contributed to my active involvement toward change for Aboriginal people through a number of strategies as an artist and educator. In Pitt’s highly charged and politicised rendition of the new colony, the Xanthorrhoea[3] tree in the foreground has been symbolically felled by Mrs Helena Dance.

1 This is a reference to both the realities inherent in the kitchen-sink dramas of 1960s Britain and to Edward Soja’s interpretation of thirdspace (discussed in 1996, *Third Space: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real and Imagined Places*. New Jersey, NY: Blackwell) in which “everything comes together” (1996, 57).

2 As proposed by Lacan’s (1977) transference theory, prompting by using gaps is an important contributor to constructing an interpretive space in which the audience can complete the “picture”.

3 The Xanthorrhoea tree is one of thirty species of plants endemic to Australia and a member of the Xanthorrhoeaceae family. White colonists termed the tree ‘blackboy’, based on the purported similarity in appearance of the trunked species to an Aboriginal boy holding an upright spear. The ‘blackboy’ therefore makes enduring reference to the noble savage and the death of black culture in Australia.



Figure 1 George Pitt Morrison *The Foundation of Perth*

As recorded, “Dance cut down a tree; fired volleys, made speeches and gave several cheers” (James 2007, 36), signifying the death of Aboriginal culture and the beginnings of European pastoralism as an Arcadian ideal.

Although a seemingly passive work, *The Foundation of Perth* is loaded with colonial sentiment and represents a transitional moment in the history of white settlement (Bolton 2008; James 2012). As a blatant example of mythological construction, this transitional moment was in part also transitional for me, as a white European coming to terms with the weight of colonisation and my attempts to work alongside a culture that has suffered the consequences of disrespect.

The plight of Aboriginal artists and the underlying constructs that reveal the many contradictions surrounding the marketing of their work have been important contributors to my ethical position as an artist and educator. In an attempt to effect positive change, I have been actively involved with Aboriginal artists from the northern desert regions of Western Australia, particularly through my formation of the Open Bite Australia workshop, in 1998. This workshop acts as a centre for ideas surrounding cultural norms that extend beyond Aboriginal artists through international collaborations with other artists, institutions, and cultural groups (Uhlmann 2015, 2009; Barstow 1999). Rather than simply perpetuating the ongoing debate around Aboriginal rights, Open Bite Australia has taken an approach to affirmative action in offering a direct link between art production and marketing. In essence, Open Bite Australia breaks the chain of colonial dominance and power—or, as Jurgen Habermas terms, “systemic colonisation” (1989, 123)—by which unequal systems of interaction regularly occur to advantage one and disadvantage the other.

In his now infamous text *Aboriginal Art – It’s a White Thing*, Aboriginal activist and artist Richard Bell (2003) questions the validity of Aboriginal art and suggests that within Western terminology, Aboriginal art would be named “Hierowism” as a form of modern hieroglyphics. While I agree with Bell’s provocative statement, my involvement with Aboriginal artists attempts a more active role by promoting multiple voices through participation in workshops and collaborations. Through this action, the issues surrounding the place of Aboriginal culture within modern hybrid societies and how these play out in social, cultural, and commercial terms are debated through creative practice. The Western classification of Aboriginal art, as suggested by Bell, is an issue that is central to this research study in that it assumes a dominant voice.

Working Within Chinese Culture

The connections between Aboriginal and Chinese artists go beyond localised cultural histories. Both cultures have long histories in which a deep connection to the land has been maintained through continuing living philosophies, both physically and culturally, and through artistic styles that have survived rapid global change. In addition, both cultures feel the effects of displacement and urbanisation arising from colonisation or globalisation, and thus experience thirdspace alienation within their own countries. I would suggest therefore that the formation of thirdspace is not restricted to diaspora and migratory flows, but includes groups who are undergoing alienation and a loss of identity as a result of globalisation and urbanisation.

Furthermore, Aboriginal and Chinese cultures, although very different, share important markers of identity and one could argue that their identity, to a greater or lesser extent, has been formed *in* and *by* the West (Kus 2008) and in response *to* the West (Roberts 1999). Within the Occidentalism-versus-Orientalism discourse, an oppositional geographical binary is constructed, or what Said terms “imaginative geography” (1985, 2), where the colonising force justifies its actions as beneficial to the “other” through the perceived (imagined) validation that elevates one national culture over another. In his refused designation of the terms “Occident” and “Orient”, Said (1985) makes the point that once a simplified oppositional model is constructed in this way, the Orient naturally inherits aspects of the primitive, giving rise to the maintenance of the noble savage, particularly in indigenous cultures of the East. The labelling of “primitive” extends well beyond Eastern culture, but in terms of the East–West divide, the proliferation of primitivism still has potency within dominant political and cultural hegemonic construction.

The seemingly external inclusion to my lifeworld at this point, that of a Chinese cultural mix, acts as an important counterpoint in my work, by introducing an external[4] culture, and one that is both relatively contained within its own boundaries, and yet seemingly transportable through diaspora and migration. Through the development of a trialectic model in this research, I intend to interrogate this third element as a contribution to new knowledge in relation to a British / Australian context.

Defining the Aboriginal–Chinese Cultural Nexus from Within

Within this framework, both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures are constantly referred to in generalised terms as synchronic cultures that are static rather than in flux. While the classification of synchronic culture is useful as a representation of a deeper and embedded spiritualism generally associated with Orientalism, this classification only has meaning as a comparative binary opposite to the dynamic characteristics of diachronic cultures, and in this case a classification constructed, again, in the West. In actuality, both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures are in constant flux (Kus 2008; Frink and Perkins 2005), regularly responding to shifting dimensions of migration and urbanisation while simultaneously retaining visual traditions that are timeless and unique. The need to define cultures through a simplified binary classification is a trait of imperialism that serves to maintain the dominant powers of the West over the East. If Said's wish for "a clarified political and methodological commitment to the dismantling of systems of domination" (1985, 15) is to eventuate, then a more respectful and neutral position needs to be taken when positioning Eastern cultures within Western paradigms. As Marcia Langton comments, "Even though Edward Said and other scholars have explained how the art, imagery and literature of the imperial reaches find their way back to the centre and continually feed its cultural dominion, the 'otherness' of Aboriginal art remains virulent" (2003, 50). Hanna Fink and Hetti Perkins's description of Aboriginal art probably comes closest to defining the indefinable: "Aboriginal Art is a protean phenomenon, a way of introducing change to maintain continuity" (2005, 63).

This definition might also be applied to Chinese art in that it also represents a sophisticated culture that adapts to change, even though, from a Western perspective, it may appear static. This construction of otherness plays an important role in how I frame this research. The recent infiltration and celebration of contemporary Chinese art on the global stage is contributing to a redefinition of Chinese culture, from one of respectful tradition to that of a veiled sentiment of anti-establishment, particularly by migrant Chinese artists critiquing state-based Communist imagery. Similar to the categorisation of Aboriginal spiritual painting, the global perception of Chinese culture is therefore constructed in part by the commercial demands of the West (Kus 2008). An alternative view of this binary construct becomes central to this research and forms an integral component of my lifeworld. The term 'lifeworld', which is a direct translation of the German phrase "*die Lebenswelt*" (Terrell 1993, 427), describes the environment in which we live, with an emphasis on lived experiences and the communication and exchange of information.

The dynamic Aboriginal–Chinese nexus presents a complex and deeply spiritual[5] space that goes well beyond a visual critique of multicultural societies and the hybridisation of culture. This relational study between British, Aboriginal, and Chinese cultures offers an innovative lens by which to investigate constructed systems of truth and the conflicts that these often-oppositional forces can produce. More importantly, it offers me a context and structure through which I can develop an approach to praxis that is morally and politically positioned, based on my lived experiences as a migrant artist.

4 'External' in terms of outside the postcolonial debate within Australia, but not withstanding Chinese diaspora.

5 I use the word 'spiritual' as a common term of reference for both Aboriginal and Chinese visual culture, which highlight the human spirit and a profound sense of belonging to place.

Style and Structure of the Exegesis

The relational aspects of this research in terms of words and artworks and how they interact recall André Breton's (1948) commentary on the privileging of language over imagery. Much early Surrealist debate focused on the primacy of word over image or image over word (MacLeod and Holdridge 2001, 38). Breton's attempts to resolve "the dualism of perception and representation" (in Krauss 1986, 94) led to new types of artistic practices and, perhaps more importantly, to a new way of thinking. In line with this, the exegesis, along with the visual art exhibitions I hold in Australia and China, play an important role in both framing and informing my practice but also as a creative process to communicate and develop new meaning. I am a practice-led researcher using reflexive praxis as my methodology to critically extend my arts practice and understanding of the world, thus the exegesis demands the integration of two key structural styles. Chapters 1 and 2 present the underpinning theoretical, contextual, and experiential foundations of my lifeworld relevant to this research, through which an embodied and relational model of investigation based on a "centrality of practical and experiential knowledge" is examined (Eisner 1997, 261). In the search for a less dichotomised model, Chapter 2 is presented in three sections to reflect Lefebvre's (1991) model of trialectics with each subsection being prefaced with a brief introduction that explains the context, the relation to lifeworld, and the relevance within my current creative practice, as developed later in Chapter 3.

Once this foundation is established, the writing style in Chapter 3 necessitates a shift between poetic, reflexive, and descriptive styles (Hamilton 2011, 2), Whereas the *context* model of exegesis (Milech and Schilo 2004, 37) suggests a separation of practice from writing, I adopt what Estelle Barrett terms exegesis as "meme" (159), whereby the exegesis is used as a vehicle to "fix ideas in our collective consciousness" (160) through an interdependent process of practice and writing. This is particularly important in the construction of a narrative practice by which "significant moments in the process of unfolding and revealing" (Bolt, 60) are part of the storytelling, and best told through an embodiment of writing and making. In the spirit of the exegesis-as-meme model, the exegesis proposes "an alternative mode of understanding the world" (2007, 60) through which artworks, including my own, can be interpreted and communicated.

Throughout Chapter 3, I articulate my artistic practice by adopting an *assemblage* model (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 14) of reflexivity, in order to validate the process of studio enquiry and to elaborate on the value of its outcomes through a polyvocal text (Hamilton 2011, 1–4). The result is a *connective* exegesis that attempts a "reconciliation of multi-perspectival subject positions of the observer / ethnographer / analyst / historian / theorist / at times: and the internal, invested position of the practitioner at others" (Hamilton 2011, 2). As Hamilton points out, this approach demands a range of writing styles and multiple speech genres.

The autoethnographical form of reflexivity[6] involves visual storytelling that "transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation" (Chang 2016, 43). It also acknowledges the importance of time and space as the narratives around European, Chinese, and Aboriginal cultures are developed, and my resulting artworks are contextualised. The approach to visualising this discourse throughout Chapter 3 prompts a shift toward holistic reflexivity in its "inclusion of both the aesthetic and the ethical, as a practice of sensitivity to, and caring for, the world" (Bleakley 1999, 328). The concern for otherness and difference is a central premise of my praxis, through which a shift in language occurs in order to explore the changing contexts and situations "as reflections in one place connect with thinking in another, over time, with all the changes in the self and its practice acknowledged" (Griffiths 2012, 184). This approach enables the adoption of the central model of cumulative trialectics into practice as it changes and develops throughout the research journey as a means to answer the central research questions of this doctoral study.

6 I use the term autoethnographical reflexivity to represent a study of culture in which my own history and creative involvement as an artist plays a contributory role. This is developed more structurally through the adoption of Henri Lefebvre's model of trialectics later in the exegesis.

Chapter 1: Research Approach and Methodology

Central to the notion of Arcadia is our connection to place, simulated or real, which suggests a thematic model for this research that can be shared across cultural groups and across time. While my choice of using a classical European model of Arcadia might seem contrary to the goal of representing the complexities of our postcolonial world, the essential relationship between humans and place is clearly a vision shared in both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures. This has been played out in a more simulated manner in the construction of Australia's urban parks and gardens, and clearly referenced through early settler art in Australia where European value systems have been transformed into the Australian context (Grishin 2013, 68–72).

Arcadia is nostalgic and proven to maintain ideals about harmony that are transformative irrespective of geography, religion, or culture. However, when discussing hybrid secular cultures as a result of multiculturalism, the role of nostalgia within the Arcadian subconscious can also partly account for racism and cultural stereotyping in which a longing for past mono-cultural communities is central to the actuality of racial integration and diasporic flows (Ikas and Wagner 2009, 13). Nostalgia, along with a mix of other factors influencing the formation of identity within modern hybrid communities, is therefore a central driver in the development of my artworks within this doctoral research, and to the ongoing evolution of my lifeworld as a migrant artist. Lifeworld for the migrant, I would suggest, includes the maintaining of memories from environments where the migrant once lived, as part of their new identity forming.

In my case, nostalgia serves an important function in reflecting on the origins of European colonisation within the development of Australian art, particularly in relation to historic references to the noble savage.[7] The debates around globalisation (Said 1985; McLean 2004) and hybridisation (Bhabha 1994; Papastergiadis 2003a; Ang 1997) centre on the transition of culture through diaspora and its production of hegemonic systems. It is within these systems that the maintenance of the construct of the noble savage becomes crucial to upholding both the dominant political structures within the governing systems in Australia and the construct of spiritualism that feeds the international art market in respect to Aboriginal art. The categorising of what constitutes Aboriginal art is therefore driven by the demands of the market, as Bell (2003) suggests, a point made clear to Indigenous artist Judy Watson by Sotheby's of London, which requested that she categorise her work as either "Aboriginal" or "contemporary" but not both (Croft 2002, 84).

At this point, it is important to state the difference between Arcadian and Utopian ideals in terms of the core premise of this research. In her essay "Cultural Translation in a Globalised World", Ien Ang (2003) refers to the ideal of global togetherness in postcolonial Australia and how unity and diversity can become a living practical experience. She asserts:

> This is not a time for grandiose new Utopias: after all, globalisation itself in the guise of a so called New World Order was presented not all that long ago as the road to a new global Utopia. Multiculturalism, too, has not been devoid of misleading Utopian fantasies of harmonious diversity, as if differences were easily reconciled and smoothed over into a blissful state of happy together. Indeed it is precisely in the shadow of such programmatic Utopian doctrines, which have had such an inescapable transformative impact on our everyday lives, that the problem of defining an inclusive 'we' has become so acute. (2003, 33)

Thus, the differentiation between Arcadia and Utopia is essential in allowing a non-fixed and transformative ideal to be open and to allow a creative interpretation to be developed based on the past rather than an assumed shared ideal of the future. While Utopia is forward-looking in its aspirations, Arcadia looks back through a nostalgic lens; therefore, while Arcadia and Utopia are both unattainable constructs, Arcadian nostalgia involves memory in the construction of a narrative that serves to perpetuate and maintain cultural values. This element is important to my research.

7 The concept of the noble savage is not a singular representation of Indigenous people nor is it particular to Australian postcolonial history. It does, however, carry the most currency in terms of the underlying perception of Australian Indigenous art within the international market. Refer to authors such as Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755) or Sandy Greer on ethnic stereotypes/and social histories (quoted in Burayidi, 1997, 270–71).

The European Inside Me

To begin, I situate my position in this research model—that of the migrant artist as commentator and contributor, but also as someone experiencing the process of change as a component part of my developing lifeworld. Although I align myself with Said (1985) in his aspiration to create a more neutralised space in which to establish a cultural equilibrium, I also acknowledge that the artist is not neutral and therefore cannot profess to be so. Self, in this respect, is always relational.

In my case, I originate from Britain, and carry the burden of a legacy of colonisation, empire and cultural transgression. As a result, I indirectly shoulder some of the responsibilities for the injustices toward Aboriginal people, which is one of the main reasons I established Open Bite Australia. This is a form of empathic action through which an alternative relationship to the dominant agent–artist relationship is being trialled. I accept therefore that I inherit a legacy of colonisation and privilege that is negative, through which my actions as an artist and commentator are heavily influenced.

Jacqueline Lo borrows from Tessa Morris Suzuki's conceptualisation of 'implication' as a means of understanding and accepting inherited responsibilities as individuals. Lo highlights the polemic surrounding Asian Australians through the work of migrant artist John Zerunge Young, asserting that:

> 'Implication' means the existence of a conscious connection to the past, but also the reality of being (in a legal sense) 'an accessory after the fact'. We who live in the present did not create the violence and hatred of the past. But the violence and hatred of the past, to some degree, created *us*. It formed the material world and the ideas with which we live, and will continue to do so unless we take active steps to unmake their consequences. (2012, 22)

Within this PhD journey, my contribution as an artist reveals the inheritance of a Eurocentric learning system that has its origins in the Empire. To this end, rather than purport to being neutral, I recognise and actively explore my cultural construction both as a counterpoint within the Sino-Australian debate and as a central element of reflexivity within my methodology. With references to European Arcadia and as a migrant undertaking this study in Australia, my praxis draws from selected European theorists and key figures of British popular culture, together with relevant aspects of Australian postcolonial dialogue to connect past and present as a re-examined social context to my lifeworld. My art practice in this respect also references this history, along with the transformations I now encounter through working across and within Australian and Chinese cultural groups.

Research Questions

This doctoral research has emerged from my experiences of working with two specific cultural groups—Aboriginal and Chinese artists—and my realisation of the complexities involved in this activity, particularly given my status as a migrant British male. This research investigates an alternative to the polarities of cultural dialogue by examining my recent engagement with mainland Chinese artists and my development of collaborative projects based on thirdspace theories, which consider points of conflict between cultural groups. This conflicted space is described by Bhabha as "incommensurable" (1994, 86), a space that creates tensions and incompatibility within cultural groups forced together through global migration. I adopt Henri Lefebvre's (1991) model of cumulative trialectics as a strategy to avoid "branding human beings as types…which denies them their full humanity" (Abbott 2002, 129), a common point of tension identified within thirdspace dialogue and othering. In this respect, the trialectic model developed and applied through this research attempts to represent individual and collective identities, which are examined from a broader multicultural perspective. Thirdspace theory and its extension into cumulative trialectics is grounded in social integration and the conflicts of incommensurability at its borders, and as such offers a non-specific and non-dominant space which can be temporal, virtual or thematic: a hybridised space open to the imagination in which Arcadian ideals can be investigated and re-imagined.

To challenge the dominant ethnographic voice often found in the historical literature that were core to my artistic education (e.g., Gombrich 1950; Clark 1969), my research aims to develop a visual language to offer a multidimensional narrative where many positions, including my own, are presented. This is approached through artistic collaborations and across spoken and cultural languages. Within this triangulated structure in which I now operate, the central research question of this study is as follows:

How can a modern and shifting Australian multicultural society be visualised through creative praxis to represent the complexities of cultural hybridity as an agent of change?

Australian art history has been characterised by a constant and continuing dialectic between Indigenous and non-Indigenous art (Grishin 2013), echoing the binary polarities of Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace exchange. Today, this dialectic clearly needs to be broadened to consider Lo's assertion that Australia is already "Asianised" (2012, 1). Following this line of thinking, there is much credence in Eisenstadt's (2000) position regarding multiple modernities that involve multiple languages. My intent is to investigate the possibilities of a decentralised space in which the artist can play a more transnational and connecting role through collaboration and intercultural dialogue, operating in a way which words alone cannot always explain. This therefore leads to a secondary research question:

Could an interpretation of Henri Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics be used to generate artworks through reflexive praxis, that redefine the multidimensionality of social and cultural space?

My research takes the view that history should not be represented by a linear model that is fixed in time or even place, rather I propose a speculative narrative (the core aim of this research) in which multiculturalism and the inevitable process of hybridisation can be re-visualised.

Aims and Significance of the Research

The main focus of this doctoral research is to develop Lefebvre's (1991) theoretical model of social trialectics into a visual form through creative praxis. Edward Soja (1996) comments on Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991) in its relationship to thirdspace by redefining it as a more complex, wholly inclusive model that is speculative and futuristic. Soja offers a new interpretation that accommodates just about everything,[8] as he states:

> Anything which fragments Thirdspace into separate specialized knowledges or exclusive domains—even on the pretext of handling its infinite complexity—destroys its meaning and openness. For Lefebvre (and for Borges) spatial knowledge as a means to "thread through the complexities of the modern world" is achievable only through approximations, a constant search to move beyond (*meta-)* what is known. (1996, 57)

The inappropriateness of a singular and nostalgic vision of complex contemporary societies is questioned in this exegesis and through my artworks. An alternative model has significance for a reimagining of Australian and international hybridity at a time when the mass movement of refugees is testing our assumptions about nation, people, and place.

Rather than seeking a formula for artistic production, this research investigates a deeper and more personal interpretation of *cumulative* trialectics in which multiple aspects of modernity are visualised through a more fluid definition of cultural histories. In this study, cumulative trialectics present a progression and accumulation of themes and ideas by establishing complex thematic relationships within the exegesis and across international exhibitions of visual artworks. Through individual practice and various forms of cultural and artistic collaboration, this study repositions Bhabha's thirdspace of conflict and contestation as a space of interpretation and proposition in which the visualising of plurality is investigated.

8 Soja's interpretation of thirdspace is inclusive; in it, "everything comes together…subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" (1996, 57).

This research also aims to produce visual works that embody 'self' as a changing state of being, a state dependent on the fluidity of history, time, and place. Taiwanese writer Chung-Chi Yu, in his analysis of Edmund Husserl's writings on lifeworld, homeworld, and alienworld, states: "An adequate understanding of the other does not necessarily presuppose a pure 'my own sphere' (*Eigenheitssphare*), because we not only encounter the other in other persons, we encounter it in us as well" (2005, 27). Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics may offer a way for the artist to examine the other while at the same time, through reflexivity, the self.

This study is significant in that it offers a transferable model that is particularly useful for artists who take an autoethnographic approach to visual research through praxis in which the embodied self becomes an integral component in a triangular debate surrounding cultural polarities. Therefore, recognition of the past and how we assimilate this with our future is important in terms of framing my position in this research.

Through creative praxis, I am able to offer a personalised commentary on situations that I feel deeply about, and this praxis plays a small but important role in offering an individual interpretation and contribution to the development of a cultural identity in Australia, a culture that should be respectful, representative, and inclusive. As Ingham and Warren suggest, "[t]he West's sense of its own modernity is…grounded by and through colonised bodies suffering pain for belief in that abstraction" (2003, 2). Both through the intent of Open Bite Australia and through my creative praxis, I approach this dilemma with my personal ethics of inclusivity and empowerment of individuals as a contribution to long-term change as evidenced by policy change through Open Bite Australia.

Reflexive Praxis, an Approach to Creative Research

As a practice-led researcher, I use a "multi-method technique tailored to the individual project" (Gray and Pirie 1995), which allows me to critique and visualise my position, taking into account my past, present, and future as an active artist/educator. Given the complexities of our increasingly decentralised contemporary world, made more remarkable by shifting identities and the interrelationships between cultural groups, I have chosen to use a reflexive praxis methodology driven by an interdependent relationship between theory and practice. In conjunction to my creative works, publications resulting from this study, in the form of exhibitions, journal articles, conference publications and exhibition catalogues, all contribute to my creative praxis[9].

The central element of the visual output of this research is a series of hybrid jigsaws, which I have constructed as a metaphorical acknowledgement of the piecing together and the incomplete nature of modern complex societies. This metaphor also references the provocative nature of contemporary ethnography in its attempts to reveal the actualities of history, however chaotic and ill-fitting. George Marcus (1986) describes the modern ethnographic essay as one that "legitimates fragmentation, rough edges and the self-conscious aim of achieving an effect that disturbs the reader" (191). Similarly, each section of this exegesis has also been pieced together to form an autobiographical and autoethnographic[10] dynamic narrative. In my situation, the two-way interaction between writing and making frames and qualifies the relational elements of this research as a means of decision-making and meaning-making (Crouch 2007, 112) within the broader context of this body of work.

As an experienced practitioner, I have observed a point of interconnectivity through which the relationship between practice and associated theory has become co-dependent. While one does not privilege the other, there is an ongoing interplay between spoken and written language and visual practice to a point where this co-dependent relationship defines my reflexive praxis. While I approach this research as a contribution to new knowledge, it is important to understand the reflexive two-way creative process at its core. Writing on

9 Refer to appendixes 3-7 and the exhibition catalogues.

10 I use the term 'autoethnographic' to define this research where my observations around ethnography and space include my position as a migrant artist within a trialectic model.

practice-led research (PLR), Andrew McNamara states “Good PLR is a complicated affair necessitating a complex back and forth interaction between the practice and its conceptual framework of articulation” (2012, 8). Reflexivity, in my case, “goes behind immediate qualities, for it is interested in relations” (Dewey 1934, 293) between cultural positions and between theory and practice, offering up opportunities for contributions to new knowledge gained through the sharing and dissemination of insights as a result of this research. Because cultural background plays an important role within my praxis, I utilise a reflexive methodology that requires me to be “self-conscious about my social, political and value position and how these may have influenced the design, execution and interpretation of the theory, data and conclusions” (Greenbank 2003, 6).

For me, the *process* of creativity recognises the value of the unconscious, respecting that while the rational embodiment of mind and action is always at play, “tacit and creative decisions can, and often are, made” (Gray and Pirie 1995, 5) as part of my praxis. The acceptance of serendipity as a legitimate process of artistic rationalism aligns Paul Carter’s *Material Thinking* (2004) with the intercultural dialogue in Ang’s (1997) misinterpretation of language across thirdspace in which non-sense is celebrated. In the context of my research methodology, Gray and Pirie’s discussion of the value and legitimacy of serendipitous action within humanistic research is pertinent. They state:

> The ‘interdisciplinary’ nature of the research supports a range of research strategies, which are multi-method in approach, rigorous, open, transparent and accessible. This indicates a move from scientific positivistic models of research towards humanistic models based upon new intellectual paradigms (i.e. the complexity and randomness of chaos theory) and must consider the ontological (knowable in art) and epistemological (relationships of enquirer to knowledge) issues, which are adaptive and reflective acknowledging the ‘impact of serendipity. (Adams 2008, 26)

Tacit knowledge, innovation, subjectivity, risk, experiment and practice are embedded in the process of creation (Gray and Pirie 1995, 5). My approach to creative research in this sense is a form of thinking through experience and within the moment, where the cognitive aspects of creative decision-making are reliant on a lifetime of experiences as an artist in which tacit and embodied knowledge are always at play. Built on this are elements of chance, serendipity and spontaneity as tools of my trade as a writer, artist and educator, which at times “cannot and does not conform to conventional and measurable systems” (Gray and Pirie 1995, 5).

For me, the act of making art has always been an intellectual experience—the need to ask many questions in a search for answers. My artworks have always been socially and politically motivated as a reflection of my immediate environment and my place in the world, concurring with Crouch who states, “the creative artist assumes a process of meaning making, and that meaning and its process are contingent upon a cultural and social environment” (2007, 112). I align my approach with Anthony Giddens (1990), who takes a holistic view of contemporary societies and the way in which we can interact as reflexive practitioners. Giddens defines the process of analysis as a “chronic revision of social practice in the light of knowledge about those practices” (1990, 40). This embodies the sense of reassessment based on knowledge and experience developed into artistic practice that Crouch (2010) suggests. According to Giddens, the “reflexive ordering and reordering of knowledge and social structures” is what constitutes modern reflexivity; a “thoroughgoing, constitutive reflexivity” (1990, 52) characterises all human action in a modern society. In this context, Giddens makes a distinction between reflexivity in modern hybrid societies and in pre-modern cultures, which is pertinent to my strategy of updating and re-imagining the Arcadian construct in this research. The deconstruction of norms in complex hybrid multicultural societies is described by Giddens as “disembedding” (1990, 37) social life from tradition, whereas pre-modern reflexivity is restricted to a reinterpretation of history and tradition. I base the core of this research on the fluidity and dynamics of cumulative trialectics in order to extend Giddens’s (1990) reordering of knowledge into a predictive and imaginative future in which past, present, and future are incorporated.

Pierre Bourdieu contends that because knowledge about the condition of production comes *after the fact*, the finished product can often conceal the *modus operandi* (quoted Barrett and Bolt 2013, 4). Elements of my practice dating back to the 1970s (Figures 6-8) have attempted

to reveal process as a means of offering a suggestion that the work itself is unfinished and allowing the interaction of the viewer to complete it. Such an approach for me is to invite the viewer to participate in a cognitive sense by engaging in a contribution to the outcomes of the work, a parallel metaphor for empowerment and action through collective engagement. I achieve this by inviting the audience to participate in and interact with the work—to metaphorically contribute their own unique piece of the jigsaw. Methodologically, this introduces an interactive element of serendipity and chance to the work, through which the audience assumes some say in its resolution. This is unpredictable in terms of the reading of the work, and as such it is important to recognise that within my visual artworks, the reflexive act includes responding to failure as much as it does to success. As Bolt explains, "this reflexivity forms the locus of practice-led research's radical potential to affect movement. The task of the creative exegesis is to extend on existing domains of knowledge through its reflection on those shocking realizations that occur in practice" (2007b, 34). In my case, my artworks are invariably unpredictable and purposely suggest a state of the unfinished. The connected exegesis therefore serves to reflect this state of flux in its acknowledgement of insufficiencies in avoiding resolution in the scientific sense.

Bourdieu's epistemic reflexivity[11] underpins his claims to provide distinctive and scientific knowledge of the social world (quoted in Maton 2003, 52). My approach to engaging actively in and reflecting current social issues, together with the adoption of transcultural collaborative practices, opposes Claude Bernard's polarising statement "Art is I; Science is We" (quoted in Maton 2003, 53). Karl Maton (2003) summarises the foundations of a well-developed and adaptable reflexivity that applies to both scientific and artistic practice as follows:

> Most discussions of reflexivity share versions of a basic argument that authors should explicitly position themselves in relation to the objects of their study so that one may assess researchers' knowledge claims in terms of situated aspects of their social selves and reveal their (often hidden) doxic values and assumptions. (54)

11 Bourdieu consistently argued that his conception of epistemic reflexivity provided not only a means of developing richer descriptions of the social world but also the basis for a more practically adequate and epistemologically secure social science (Maton 2003, 53).

More explicitly, Henk Borgdorff contextualises art practice by stating:

> Art often takes an antithetical stance towards the existing world, and it delivers the unsolicited and the unexpected. That is its very strength. At the same time, engagement and reflexivity are inseparably bound up with the production of art—not in the form of demand and supply, but in the conveyance of a 'narrative' in the materiality of the medium which can be understood as a commentary on what we have here and now and an opening to the 'other', the unknown. (2009, 14)

Translating this theoretical and methodological model of epistemic reflexivity into practice is challenging, and involves the "constant analysis of both my lived experiences as well as my theoretical and methodological assumptions" (Ryan 2005, 2). The body of artworks I produce are "universes that offer a semantics created according to [their] own laws that [are] unusually expressively materialized" (Bredekamp 2004, 23). My approach to writing reflects a similar process to my visual practice—that of an open-ended narrative that develops a position of holistic reflexivity[12] (Bleakley 2006) in its commentary on the relationships between the aesthetic and ethical considerations that form my critically reflexive position as an artist.

Interpreting Lefebvre's Cumulative Trialectic Space

In my case, the triangulation of a British-Sino-Australian context seen through the lens of an Arcadian postcolonial viewpoint creates an immersive space in which the viewer can position themselves *within* the dialogue, a space in which their own "other" can be revealed. My early attempt to visualise this model is shown as Figure 2. This position also seeks to disrupt "the pre-dominant metaphors in anthropological research [that] have been participant-observation, data collection and cultural description…all of which presupposes a standpoint outside looking *at*" (Clifford 1986, 11).

Working with a model of trialectic space enables one to remove constructed and perceived borders, and replace othering by reorienting the audience or the reader *inside* the dialogic model. Through interpreting Lefebvre's (1991) theories on cumulative trialectics, my artworks made throughout this doctoral research aim to extend Lacan's (1997) liminal space of nothingness between polarities (in

12 Holistic reflexivity is defined as "an aesthetic and ethical apprehension grounded in an ontological framework of radical phenomenology" (Bleakley 2006, 319).

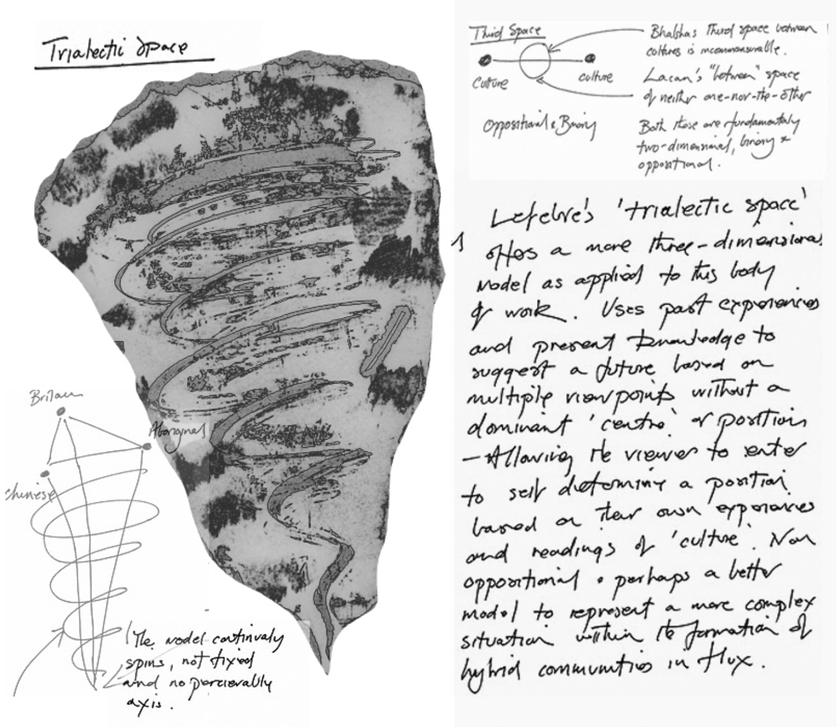


Figure 2 Clive Barstow *Visualising and Noting the Transition from Thirdspace Polarity to Trialectic Space*

reference to the space between cultures) to a peripheral visioning and ultimately toward a more three-dimensional space. This three-dimensional space is purposely unnerving for the viewer—especially when, in the spirit of Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* (1978), some clues are presented as red herrings—but it offers a space nonetheless in which polarity and the here and now no longer seem to exist. This research intends to identify, through reflexive analysis, a visual language by which this multi-faceted space can be articulated.

The idea of Lefebvre's (1991) new thirdspace as more accurately representing the complexity of modern day geographies extends beyond the real and the imagined. It suggests a cerebral space that searches for new knowledge and new meaning and, perhaps within this, a prediction of the future. "Thirding"[13] therefore produces what is referred to as "cumulative trialectics, which is more "radically open to additional otherness and toward a continuing expansion of (human) spatial knowledge" (Soja 1996, 61). Adopting the model of cumulative trialectics allows me to examine (in Chapter 3) other triangulated three-dimensional models that dovetail and interject in the formation of a conflicted space that can be represented both theoretically and practically. For instance, in Freud's analysis of daydreaming and fantasies, he suggests a similar trialectic space in which the active, temporal structure of fantasy:

> …hovers, as it were, between three times—the three moments of time which our ideation evolves…What it creates is a daydream of fantasy, which carries about its traces of its origin from the occasion which provoked it and from the memory. Thus, past, present and future are strung together, as it were, on the thread of the wish that runs through them. (quoted in Benjamin [1955] 1969, 147–48)

Freud's (2006) model of past, present, and future is chronological and linear, accommodating the retention and creation of lost memories through psychoanalysis, but this model has been countered by more contemporary postcolonial theorists who approach the construction of time from an increasingly three-dimensional perspective. As Yoko Ono states, "Time is a concept that humans created" (Needham, 2012), so for cumulative trialectics to work within this research, Freud's model must be removed from its chronological basis and be replaced

13 A term used by Lefebvre (1991) to describe the application of thirdspace theory to othering.

by a more interpretive and spatial approach in which the three elements are seen as simply different forms of consciousness, and not ones that are particularly positioned in time. In other words, the past can be seen as a form of experienced and fragmented memory, the present as a transient experience of this moment, and the future as an aspirational or logical consequence. If a departure from a linear time based understanding of experience is adopted, then any such three-dimensional model can be introduced into Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics as a representation of the complexities of a shifting and cross-pollinating culture. A more useful interpretation for my research is Walter Benjamin's application of a similar triangulated model to storytelling, which adopts a more socio-geographical position:

> Storytelling as it long prospers in the realm of artisanry—the rural, the maritime, then the urban—is itself so to speak an artisanal form of communication. It does not aim to convey the pure essence of the matter, like information or a report. It sinks the matter into the life of the storyteller, in order to bring it out of him again. ([1955] 1969, 91–92)

Benjamin ([1955] 1969) therefore subjectifies the model to a point where interpretation occurs for the reader *and* the author, a two-way model of cumulative trialectics that can be adopted, particularly by collaborating artists. Among Benjamin's many trialectic models is one that can be applied to my arts practice perhaps more than most, that of the "working, making and telling" ([1955] 1969, 91–92) configuration in which the invention and formation of ideas are communicated and interpreted through narrative storytelling. Although this model was intended to be primarily chronological (as an applied methodological process), similar to Freud's "past, present, and future", my working method is more circular in that the process often eventuates as a result of telling, a backward process that is self-generating. My interpretation of Benjamin's narrative trialectics is therefore less linear and more three-dimensional, and more in line with H. Porter Abbott's (2002) description of the narrative as "giving us this understanding [of what we see not just in space but in time]. It gives us what could be called the *shape of time*" (2002, 11).[14] This open model of time contests the

14 Abbott's mention of "the shape of time" is a direct reference to George Kubler's (1962) classic text *The Shape of Time* in which the relationship between time and space is discussed.

traditions of linear chronological histories by aligning more closely with Moxey's argument in *Visual Time* (2013) for a "heterochronic"[15] model of art history. Heterochronic history returns us to the power of aesthetics over semiotics; as Moxey asserts, "The work of art is… something that has the power to break time by addressing us directly and by demanding an aesthetic response" (2013, 31). Through utilising a cumulative trialectic model, my artworks seek to establish an aesthetic sweet spot of praxis[16], as illustrated in Figure 3, where, at the point of transference, the audience can create their own experiential understanding and interpretation of a future space that is unique, individualised, and in flux.

While this is not meant to be a formula on which to build practice, this research aims to investigate how cumulative trialectics can be adapted to accommodate a number of additional three-dimensional models which all contribute to the formation of transference beyond the focus on my artworks. Lacan's (1977) *vel* (of meaning, being, and the void of nonsense) introduced an element of a meaningless, nothingness space; an equation that can be applied across this body of work to offer a disjointed time (and place) within which the imagination of the viewer engages as transference.

Working Methods

I have developed a working method that shares themes and ideas with multiple crossovers between the mediums and techniques at play and that is driven by an underpinning theoretical discourse. New to producing art objects within my doctoral research is my approach to the experimentation that takes place *between* the art forms as a way of mirroring the theoretical position of a space between cultures (Bhabha 1994) and between the mind and the physical (Lefebvre 1991). The regular interplay between images, materials, and processes, along with a consistent approach toward deconstruction and reconstruction within what I term an

15 Heterochrony means 'different timing' and derives from allometry and the relationships between organs and organisms.
16 I use the phrase 'the sweet spot of praxis' to mean an optimum point where the combination of elements contribute to a clear aesthetic solution.

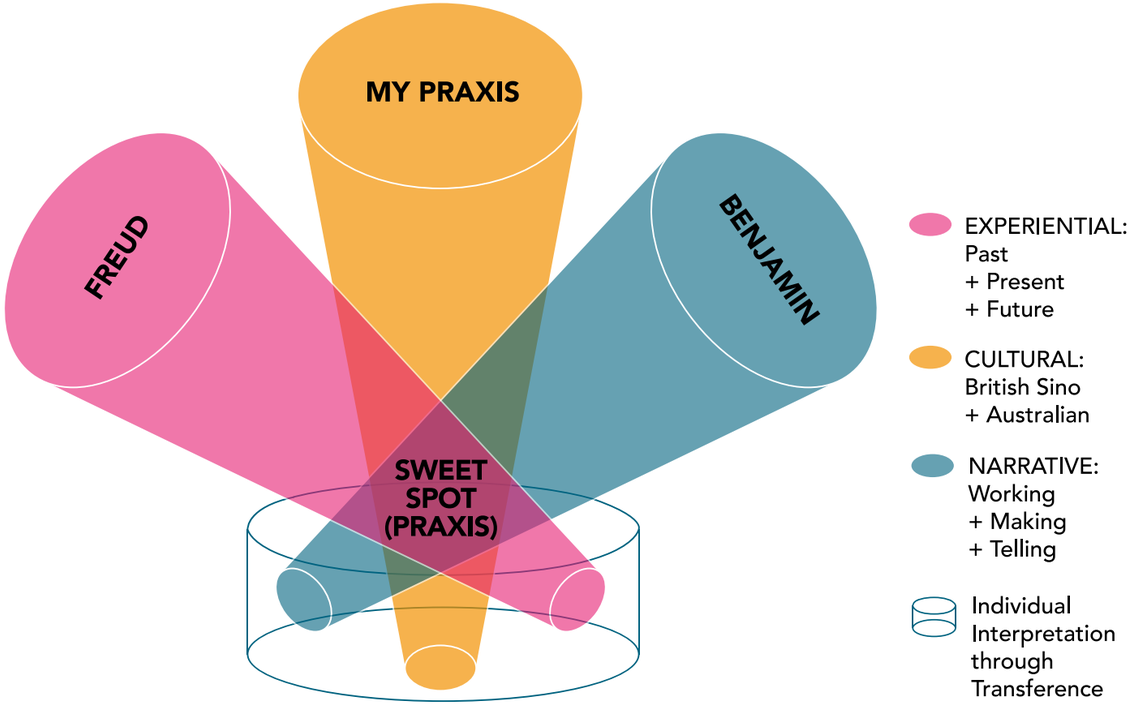


Figure 3 Clive Barstow *Cumulative Trialectics (As Applied to Praxis)*

unfinished jigsaw of critique[17] aims to contribute to a number of open-ended and unpredictable visual solutions. This approach is taken to avoid the trap of didactic and illustrative representations of theory, rather it facilitates a responsive and reflexive working methodology in which all elements of theory and practice contribute and interact in a searching and speculative research journey.

Through working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Chinese artists, I have held regular exhibitions in Australia and China as part of this research, as well as made contributions to group exhibitions held in Cuba and Turkey. Using exhibitions as reference points within my exegetical writing facilitates reflexivity through cross-referencing texts and artworks at particular times where the public viewed and interacted with my work, allowing the venue and the audience to play some role in the ongoing reflexive commentary. This is achieved by delivering a number of associated open forums, collecting comments and feedback. Each exhibition is articulated reflexively through the following:

- A preamble that gives structure to the central themes, including links to theoretical and cultural contexts in order to offer a clear intention to the body of work. This preamble includes a guiding research question.
- A review of the artworks and their inter-relation and connection with each other and to the venue. This will include how the practice articulates and communicates the theoretical and thematic concerns, and a description of the artworks (including narrative content and materials, and methods of production).
- A post-exhibition reflexive analysis, including an overview of any changes made, and responses to feedback, and how the work can be developed.

17 The idea of the unfinished jigsaw is a device to invite the viewer to participate in the resolution of the work, an element of cerebral interaction that is central to my art practice

Studio Practices: Collaborative, Negotiated and Head Space

Lefebvre discusses space in its many forms, including the formation of “mental space” (1991, 6).[18] Through this research, I have developed a particular mental space, in part defined by my responsiveness to adapting to situations of culture and geography, and consistent with the locational aspects of epistemic reflexivity[19]. My work with Aboriginal artists prior to this doctoral research has stimulated my recent practice and particularly my approach to artistic collaboration. The results of this are often indirect, where commentary about the plight of Indigenous cultures within thirdspace or the shifting space within contemporary Chinese art are revealed through negotiation and dialogue.

When I work in my Perth art studio, I often work alone and late at night. Consequently, my intellectual involvement is focused and intimate, affected by the quietness of my surroundings and to some extent the small size of my studio. This is where I have produced most of my jigsaw works. In contrast, my studio in Shanghai offers a totally different working environment, as I work with assistants, negotiators, and translators, and the simplest decision can become very complex due to the language barrier. Ang’s (1997) commentaries on misinterpretation and miscommunication are no more acute that in the process of making artworks with assistants across the language divide. Therefore, a difficult process of negotiation takes place on a day-to-day basis through translators and assistants. Working with studio assistants is still prominent in contemporary Chinese education and forms the basis of the traditional Confucian method of teaching.

Chance, serendipity, and even chaos prevail across this cultural and linguistic divide of misinterpretation and misunderstanding; a situation that I see as being unpredictable, productive, and at times frustrating. Executing simple designs, purchasing materials, and constructing works can become long, drawn-out, and negotiated team activities, with everyone working with different

18 Lefebvre refers to mental space as a cerebral and non-specific space as a counterpoint to physical and geographical spaces. This offers a space in which imagination can be viewed in terms of space.

19 Using existing knowledge as part of the reflexive process

understandings of what we are trying to achieve and how we might achieve it (Figure 4). It is in this space between languages and cultures that new solutions are arrived at that regularly challenge my working processes as an artist. Through the production of new works deriving from this situation, I will investigate how this affects my art practice. The communication between languages is both innovative and significant as it constantly tests the theoretical discourse around miscommunication in a very practical sense.

The Found Object as a Process of Making

In his commentary on the process of assemblage, Robin Spencer cites Eduardo Paolozzi, who was my mentor at the Chelsea School of Art in 1980, as “the best example of an artist for whom collage and the readymade are not only interchangeable and part of the one and the same creative process, but more or less a way of life” (1995, 15). I adopt this process of assemblage to make commentary on cultural hybridity as a *way of life* and as a reflection of my position as a migrant artist positioned between cultures.

As a strategy to stretch my practice into a sphere of unpredictability both with the artworks and the audience, I have used the found object for the first time in my artistic career as a source for many of my artworks. The term ‘found object’ derives from the French phrase *object trouvé* and refers to the modernist period in Europe where artworks were constructed using “products with non-art functions that are placed into an art context and made part of an artwork” (Wallace 2014). These newly assembled objects carry inherited meaning, and through the narrative construction of objects and images, offer fragmentation and incompleteness as a metaphor for stories yet to be told.

Prior to this research, my approach to making was based on a pragmatic and practical development of ideas, having trained as a master printer. For my doctoral research, I challenge these established processes of thinking and making and I have intentionally developed a very different approach to making artworks. Traditional processes in printmaking demand a lengthy and logical approach, driven by the limitations and possibilities of the materials and their relationship to the development of the image. This often results in an over-obsessive involvement in the craft and can eliminate the sense of spontaneity



Figure 4 *Shanghai Studio: Working with Assistants Across Languages*

and accident that I have come to rely on more and more in recent years. While my sculptural works might retain the demands of technical discipline, I have chosen to abandon this within my two-dimensional works in favour of the found object as a starting point to new constructions, to enable me to work outside and beyond the expected parameters of the craft.

For example, my use of found jigsaws involves the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of images that contain many uncontrolled elements, parts that both add and subtract from the key themes and narratives. This use and manipulation of found objects and the new meanings brought about through their reconstruction acknowledges such artists as Joseph Cornell, Robert Rauschenberg and Marcel Duchamp, who were pioneers of assemblage. Robert Hughes describes Cornell's approach to referencing the past through found objects as follows: "To others, these deposits might be refuse, but to Cornell they were the strata of repressed memory, a jumble of elements waiting to be grafted and mated to one another" (1997, 499). I take a similar approach to making objects that refer to past memories while at the same time construct new narratives.

By directly referencing repressed memories and forgotten histories, I establish a process of un-learning (Habermas 1989) and re-thinking of our past, present, and future as a dialogical experience with the audience. These interrelational components rely heavily on serendipity and chance, very much in the spirit of chaos theory as utilised by the Dadaists and Surrealists (Hofmann 1920; Rosen 2014). In his essay on chaos theory in practice, Dean Wilcox makes a comparison between the works of Henrik Ibsen and Robert Wilson, illustrating the oppositional forces at play between logic and chaos by stating "it becomes apparent that Ibsen's work is compact with no extraneous characters or images, whereas Wilson's performances thrive on the expansion of a central theme or visual motif" (1996, 7). The description of Wilson's methodology summarises my approach to storytelling through expanding narratives and in response to the unpredictability's of the moment. This theme is developed in Chapter 3, where absence and the unconscious are related to the artworks and the audience.

Using Visual Narratives to Critique the Binaries of Othering

In discussing the relationship between art and the complexities of related and unrelated encounters between cultures and people, a particular view of the construction of lifeworld and its reliance on systems and codes is of great importance to my research position. Systems (Habermas 1989) that are constructed by individuals and groups are often motivated by different reasons. At a deeper level, the interpretation and application of belief systems tests established codes of truth and how we accept these truths within our religious, cultural, and economic structures. A number of dominant systems are at work within the scope of this research. My motivation as an artist is to bring about a change of perception about history, and thus the work I produce aims to communicate new ideas through educational practices and art exhibitions, and to transform thinking about established systems and how they privilege the dominant voice. To achieve this, I have returned to a narrative approach in my jigsaw artworks in order to articulate the complex issues surrounding the hybridisation of culture. Habermas, in discussing narration in his definition of the everyday concept of the lifeworld, asserts:

> *Narration* is a specialized form of constative speech that serves to describe socio-cultural events and object…This everyday concept carves out of the objective world the region of narratable events or historical facts. Narrative practice not only serves trivial needs for mutual understanding among members trying to co-ordinate their common tasks: it also has a function in the self-understanding of persons. (1989, 136)

While this statement refers directly to narrative speech, it can be applied to narrative images. Indeed, because of the contestation that arises through the formation of hybrid cultures and its association with miscommunication and misrepresentation between spoken languages (Ang 1997, 59), the narrative image has the potential to carry more agency than textual language as a legitimate carrier of meaning.

The importance of symbolic language and associated semiotic codes and their significance in both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures cannot be underestimated (Carter 2003, 209; Langton

2003, 51; Fung 1960). In Australian Aboriginal cultures, the visual language that connects people to place has survived where spoken languages have been lost. At the point of colonisation, there were in excess of six hundred Aboriginal languages and dialects, of which approximately sixty have survived (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). In Chinese culture, a single written language was developed based on early pictograms, serving many different spoken languages and variant dialects. While both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures are changing constantly to meet the demands of a rapidly globalising world, the narrative visual languages, particularly those in Aboriginal culture, serve to maintain spiritual authenticity (McLean 2004, 303). The connection between narration and lifeworld is therefore shared and is further developed by Habermas in that:

> They [the narrator] have to objectify their belonging to the lifeworld to which, in their actual roles as participants in communication, they do belong. For they can develop personal identities only if they recognize that the sequences of their own action form narratively presentable life histories; they can develop social identities only if they recognize that they maintain their membership in social groups by way of participating in interactions, and thus that they are caught up in the narratively presentable histories of collectives. (1989, 136)

In the Australian context, while hegemony drives a binary code of 'them' and 'us' as a product of incompatible systems and the power of domination, the noble savage remains firmly seated in Arcadian consciousness. As Said asserts, "The origins of European anthropology and ethnography were constituted out of this [primitivity] radical difference, and, to my knowledge, as a discipline, anthropology has not yet dealt with this inherent political limitation upon its supposedly disinterested universality" (1985, 5). While anthropology attempts a fundamental mind shift in terms of its binary approach to classification, contemporary theorists and arts practitioners (Blake and Young 1981; Frink and Perkins 2005; Lo 2012; Ang 1997) have contributed to a real change in influencing a different view of ethnicity and hybridity.

As with the inevitable polarities set up through othering, boundaries play a similar role in establishing a two-dimensional perspective toward them and us; and in the formation of individual and national identities, the concept of boundaries, both imagined and perceived, comes into play. Boundaries are an important factor in this research because they imply containment and order, both physically and philosophically, at odds with notions of hybridity as reflecting a state of inclusion rather than division (Papastergiadis 2003a). These boundaries therefore are often hidden beneath the surface of my own narratives and across all forms of my recent practice. In my jigsaw works and sculptures, boundaries between images and objects offer important signifiers in revealing the awkward transitions between cultural and physical norms as a way of exposing incommensurability. Boundaries also allow people to "compose or decompose their identities" (Bauman quoted in Dervin 2014, 38), and in an age of increasing hybridisation in which national and global identities compete, the polarising of identity often occurs, and stereotyping plays an important role. Additionally, the collective idea of a borderland as well as the actuality of geographical borders play a central role in thirdspace conflict and incommensurability, and as such contribute an important point of tension in my artworks. As Ang points out:

> Borderlands—or the spaces of translation—are not the relatively "free" spaces where through some magical process the tension between two (or more) cultures is resolved, on the contrary, they are spaces where those tensions, formed by prevailing hierarchies and relations of power, are intensified. (quoted in Papastergiadis 2003, 37)

Boundaries also act as containers, and in a social sense they carry long-held views that are often influential in the reading of narratives, especially when these narratives suggest contradictory and alternative positions. The proliferation of stereotypes (Dervin 2014) exemplifies how beliefs are maintained and applied through play and education, an aspect that I use as a device across all forms of my creative practice. The systems of learning through play (in my case, represented by jigsaws and Disney images) are a focus of my lifeworld, and embed socio-political narratives and nostalgic sentiments that can promote

stereotypical views of people and place as *others*, views that are inherited by children as a form of cultural indoctrination (Figure 5). This has become clearer to me since my recent work utilises more and more references to stereotyping (Figures 21 & 41) that serve to communicate Arcadian and colonial ideals through education and play.

While Aboriginal and Chinese cultures may share many characteristics in terms of a direct connection to land and place, they often present polarities in cultural terms. As Said (1985) comments on the truth/culture relationship within a modern multicultural context, "We note here a plurality of terrains, multiple experiences and different constituencies each with its admitted, as opposed to denied, interests, political desiderata [and] disciplinary goals" (1985, 14). Othering (Dervin 2014) is most often based on constructed polarities, and made easier when reference is made to cultural fixity when in fact these cultures are deeply complex within themselves and in relation to rapidly forming hybrid cultures, as Spivak (1998, 271–313) critiques.

Writers, critics, and artists can also contribute to the formation of othering, particularly in my case where the comment by the artist is an integral part of the critique. As Fred Dervin asserts:

> Othering allows individuals to construct sameness and difference and to affirm their own identity. Thus Othering is not just about the other but also about the self. For A Gillespie (2006), othering leads people toward a widespread tendency to differentiate in-group from out-group and Self from Other in such a way as to reinforce and protect Self. (2014, 10)

In his book *Marx and the End of Orientalism* (1978), Bryan Turner offers a position that decentralises and dislocates traditional epistemological historicism in line with my position in this research. He refers to Said's (1985) text *Orientalism Reconsidered*, saying "What he [Said] suggests, in discussing the epistemological dilemma, is a need to go beyond the polarities and binary oppositions of Marxist-historicist thought…in order to create a new type of analysis of plural, as opposed to single, objects" (1978, 10). This will be identified through an interpretation of cumulative trialectics as an alternative model of storytelling. To offer a context, Chapter 2 traces the salient points in my upbringing that have formed my current position in terms of social politics, and ones that have bearing on my current arts praxis.



Figure 5 *Jigsaw Boxes*: *Socio-Political Narratives and Nostalgic References Through Play*

Chapter 2: The Foundations of Lifeworld: The Integration of Lived and Learned Experiences and Their Contribution to Creative Praxis

Section 1: From Kitchen to Colony: The Forming of Values through the Mirror of Social Realism

This section investigates the British Kitchen Sink movement as a formative underpinning of the social and political values that have remained central to my lifeworld and the communicative role of my creative praxis. These values drive my creative practice in terms of my ongoing commitment to social inclusivity, justice, and empowerment. My upbringing was heavily influenced by Eurocentric socio-politics that drove a reactionary youth culture that was to make a significant contribution to a broadening new world order (Dunn 2008, 201). In its own way, this was a 'golden age', and one in which our attitudes toward our colonial histories and ourselves would be radically "disembedded" (Giddens 1990, 37).

I was born in the year that John Osborne published *Look Back in Anger* (1956), a pivotal work of fiction that was to set the scene for a class-based counter culture of social realism by authors of what was to become the Kitchen Sink movement. Based on a painting by John Bratby, the term 'Kitchen Sink' was coined by critic David Sylvester to describe the new social realist painters of the late 1950s to early 1960s who focused on internal everyday life (Heilpern 2007). The Kitchen Sink movement not only faced up to the reality of a shift in global power but also highlighted the consequences of a demoralised industrial workforce by aligning with certain elements of Marxism as an oppositional politic to counter the spread of capitalism. The British post-war austerity of the 1950s was replaced by an optimism that had its roots in American idealism communicated through film and television media. Britain was also experiencing a resurgence of Victorian moralism mixed with a domestic ideal as an escape route from post-war depression through the rebuilding of family values. In this respect, 1960s' British social realism was a counter to the influx of American ideals. The

Kitchen Sink movement in Britain, with its focus on the northern working class, presented a social realism that inferred an ideology that was primarily about a community in decline (Chivers 2009, 259). It revealed what Hollywood concealed: images of greyness, pollution, racism, gender inequality, and the failures of the human condition in its most graphic form.

While I discuss culture as a collective term and as being geographically specific, it is important to acknowledge that Britain's culture has always been eclectic, and like many other cultures, it has undergone dramatic shifts throughout its development. Many of these culture shifts stem from the class system, probably the most powerful structure of privilege and hierarchy ever to be translated through colonisation. The British class system is responsible for the development of hegemonic societies under British rule, including the construct of the noble savage and the inherent racism on which this construct is built. My experiences growing up in a geographically and culturally divided Britain were therefore, coloured with social and political division. This class-based polarity, that surfaced in many forms through colonisation, is a recurring theme in my current arts practice.

Living in a predominantly working-class community in Yorkshire in the north of England, I was exposed to the connection between labour, essentially physical,[20] and the politics of Labour and the trade unions, later becoming aware of the politics of division, played out more graphically in the 1980s under Thatcherism through such events as the miners' strikes and the pole tax riots. My home was on the Yorkshire–Lancashire border of the Pennine region at the time when it was known for its production of coal and textiles, both of which have now disappeared and been replaced by light industry and a growing unemployment rate. By the mid-1980s, the aspirations and optimism of the 1950s had been replaced by disillusionment and bitterness through generations of families in the north of England, Ireland, and Scotland that have never known work, creating serious and far reaching social problems—problems not limited to the UK.

20 The north of England and Scotland were generally centres of heavy industry, including shipbuilding, engineering, mining, textiles and farming. The foundations of the industrial revolution were born and later buried in the north.

The problems associated with mass unemployment in the UK when mixed with a growing far right racist sentiment produced a volatile situation between the local and immigrant population, although ironically much of the perceived immigrant population was born and raised as British. In a theoretical reading of clashing cultures, Bhabha comments that viewed through thirdspace theory, “we begin to understand why claims to the inherent purity and originality of cultures are ‘untenable’” (1994, 86). It would be difficult to imagine how the ambitions of Bhabha’s thirdspace could be applied so practically in these extreme cases of social unrest and incommensurability, but at least in an ideological sense, “embracing the hybridised nature of cultures steers us away from the problematic binarisms that have until now framed our notions of culture” (Mudrooroo quoted in Bhabha 1994, 86). Within this argument, the binaries that emerge between race and culture in the context of this research are not just due to oppositional cultures, but have some foundation in the British class system in which binaries are applied across all forms of society, and often transported and reinterpreted through colonisation.

In terms of the landscape I experienced as a child, the Pennine ranges offered a glimpse of nature and a feeling of pastoralism. Living within the juxtaposition of an industrial and natural environment has therefore contributed to my sense of borders and of spaces between, creating a sense of the void. This is a view from within, an embodied living experience that Habermas (1989) and Giddens (1990) discuss as essential elements within a lifeworld affected by environment and context. While travelling by train through Yorkshire in 1952, and passing through Huddersfield, Australian actor Michael Blakemore offered perhaps a more external and dispassionate view of the same landscape:

> Most of the journey had been grim, rattling through the bleak monochromatic Midlands… the last section however was spectacular in its awfulness. As the train wound through the devastated beauty of the hills, each valley was revealed as a sink of smoke from which, like neglected washing up, bits of townships projected - a chimney stack, a church spire, the long spines of terraced housing sloping upwards. Down there entire lifetimes were ticking away as remorselessly as a chronic cough, I was appalled! (quoted in Kynaston 2007, 399–400)

Coloured by his own lived experiences in Australia, Blakemore viewed the industrial landscape nestled within beautiful and idyllic greenery as a blot on the landscape. This highlights the phenomena of real and imagined landscapes, formed by our lived experiences and ones shaped by time. In a recent interview in the *Guardian*, Irvine Welsh, writer of such stark social realist literature as *Trainspotting* and *Filth*, comments on how his perception of home culture changed through his move to Chicago:

> When you grow up in a place, you always think it’s mundane. Then you travel around and live in different places and you realise that you’ve got it the wrong way round. It’s where you come from that’s the strange, exotic, quirky, mad place. I’m seeing it with very different eyes now. (Welsh quoted in Brooks 2015, 4)

Welsh’s observations establish the beginnings of a modern and universal thirdspace view, and one in which the feeling of ‘no space’ starts to emerge as a result of migration and dislocation. It is within this void that my current practice operates as a reflection of my feelings as a migrant and in my search for a more productive and neutral space.

Within the setting of an austere post-war Britain, whether imagined or real, the contribution of a new and bleak reality culture played a significant role in maintaining class divisions in Britain in the early 1960s. Distant family member Stan Barstow, who wrote *A Kind of Loving* in 1966, was one of this group of writers who introduced a stark realism to British culture through the Kitchen Sink movement in northern Britain. The Kitchen Sink movement played out through literature, art, music and film in Britain, thus greatly influencing my approach to the representation of social and cultural groups within a new Arcadia. Barstow, together with Alan Silitoe, John Braine, David Storey and Keith Waterhouse, established a bleak and voyeuristic, fly-on-the-wall view of everyday life, the basis of what is now known as the soap opera. Granada Television (part of the Independent Television Network) was the first to popularise this new realism through *Coronation Street* (Jones n.d.). The genre quickly gained momentum throughout Britain, and later in Australia in the hybridised and sanitised

form of *Neighbours* and *Home and Away* (Cunningham 2016). As well as influencing my socio-political views as an artist, Kitchen Sink novels play a defining role in the culture shift from re-presenting idealised representations of society with those of an unsentimental and often conflicted community.

While the polarising of political extremes in Britain was acted out culturally in terms of the formation of a bourgeoisie and a proletariat by the 1980s, it is clear that in its infancy, the social realism of the late 1950s would adopt the term 'othering' to its advantage. Othering existed locally within the class system of Britain in the form of a north–south divide, a point at which the Kitchen Sink writers would differentiate their work from the painters of the day, who were generally working in the south of England and the west country. This was the first moment in my learning experience where, at a certain moment in time, socio-political culture became geographically specific.

Constructing Imaginary Worlds

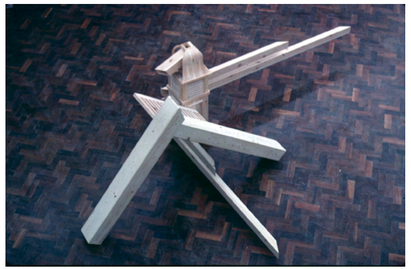
Constructing imaginary worlds prefaces my current arts practice by outlining significant works from my working life as an artist in the UK, and in relation to the artistic and socio-political context of the day. These works are important in contextualising both the common themes and issues that are being presented in my current exhibitions, and to my approach to processes and techniques as a constructivist maker[21]. The notion of constructing imaginary worlds has involved many stylistic approaches; my current work in this respect is a departure from my usual methodologies as an artist.

In my formative years as an artist, a personal construction of society was a central theme in my practice as a painter, but in a post-Pop environment of rationalism and accountability, it was the possibilities of architecture that seemed to facilitate the dreams of a new Utopian society. As Hughes points out in his reflection on modernity, "The culture of the twentieth century is littered with Utopian schemes…the home of Utopian impulse was architecture rather than painting

21 Rather than a direct reference to the Constructivist movement, I use the term constructivist as a technical process of addition, as opposed to the reductive techniques of carving.

or sculpture" (1980, 164). Before working with Paolozzi in 1980, I was drawn to the ideas of physical construction and to its relational interpretations of such philosophers as Ludwig Wittgenstein, whom Paolozzi regularly included in his narratives on urban and technological expansion. Paolozzi mentioned in a discussion with me (pers. comm. September 1980) that his attraction to Wittgenstein was not so much his definitive analysis of the philosophy of mind and language, but the fact that his writings were interpretive, and that he was writing to facilitate a different way of thinking. Robin Spencer (1976) made the comparison: "Just as Wittgenstein rearranged the structure of language to create new philosophical truths, so Paolozzi juxtaposes the familiar with the unfamiliar to bend our preconceptions about art and its role in our lives" (1974, 19).

At this stage, I was reflecting the interconnectivity with philosophy and structuralism through sculptural works (Figure 6), drawings (Figure 7), and prints (Figure 8) that used architectural drafting codes through which imaginative but impossible scenarios were played out. My approach to sculpture indirectly referenced the work of artists and architects such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe within the tensions of what Corbusier (1989, 269) termed "architecture *or* revolution" in his critique of poor housing as a cause of social unrest in 1930s' Europe. My drawing practice at this time (Figure 7) also included an unconscious approach to ritual through a particular approach to automatic drawing, a process I revisited when I arrived in Australia, which referred to the interrelational aspects of conscious and unconscious action particular to the Surrealist movement. While the Surrealists engaged in the conflicts associated with visual and written language through the practice of semi-automated drawing (Macleod and Holdridge 2001, 38), I chose to utilise an architectural language as a more disciplined approach to drawing. At the time, I found it important to reference the creative subconscious as a means of creating imaginary Utopian spaces through established visual codes, with the resulting work, derived from man-made physical structures, establishing both metaphorical and symbolic references to bridging physical and cultural spaces. In retrospect, I recognise this as the beginning of my moral and ethical position in terms of spanning cultural divides.





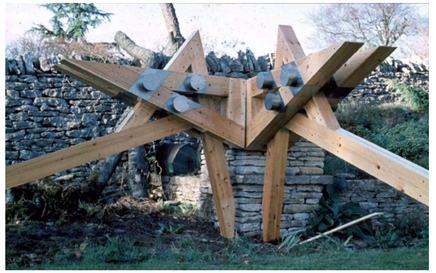




Figure 6 Clive Barstow *Sculptural Works*

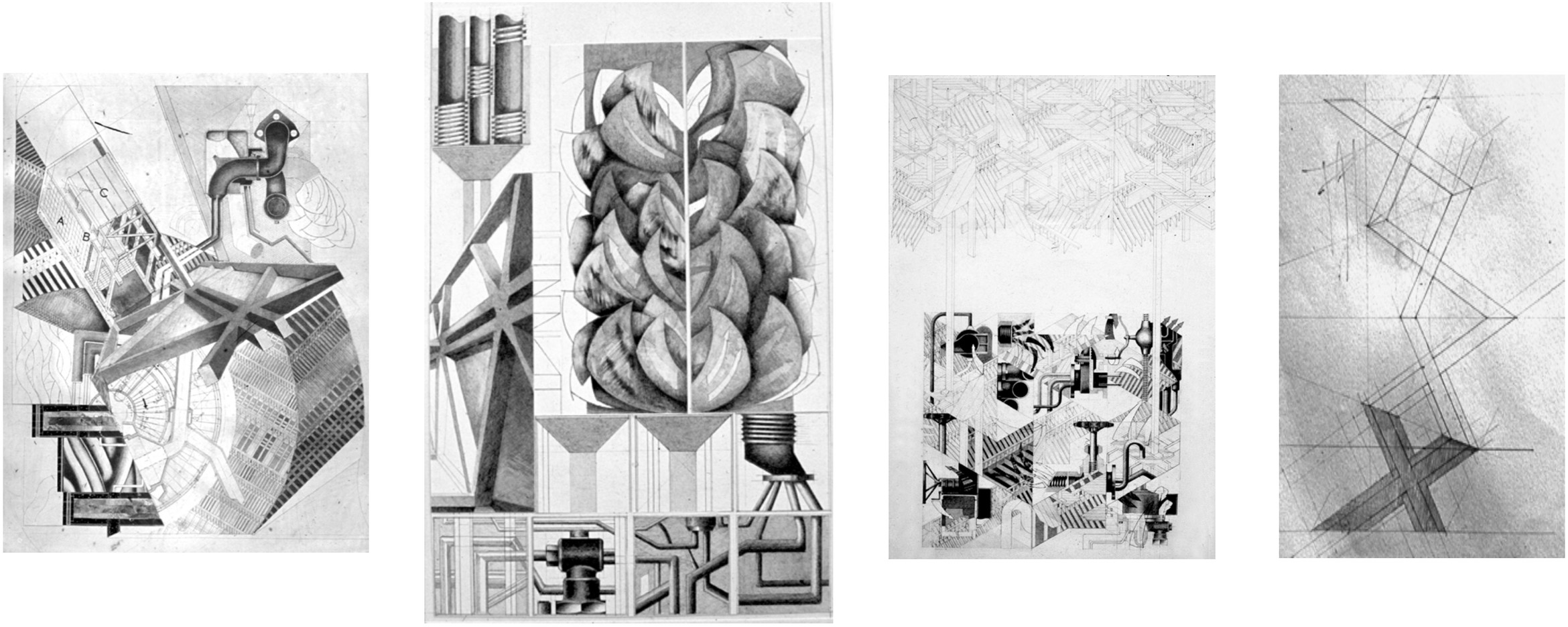


Figure 7 Clive Barstow *Drawings for Imaginary Spaces*

This approach supported a practice that had an interdependent relationship between drawing and making in the physical sense, and was based on structuralist theory[22] as a way of understanding the broader context of culture in which the work would exist. Construction as an additive process has underpinned my methodology throughout my artistic career, and one in which both lived and learned experiences have accumulated. Although these early attempts at re-ordering our environment in a schematic form might seem to have little relevance to my current narrative practice, the Utopian ideals on which they are built along with a practice methodology that is constructivist in nature are still evident as foundational elements in my current praxis.

While maintaining my structural sensibility, my move back into storytelling was heavily influenced by my training as a printmaker and a sculptor at the Chelsea School of Art[23] in London in 1980. The learning of the craft of process is like that of a musicians training; a language needs to be learnt before it can be improvised on. While learning the craft, I was at the same time developing a bridging language between sculpture and printmaking (Figure 8). The images produced during this period attempted a transformation of language, working in a space between the physical and the illusionary, elements that are clearly resurfacing in my current work, albeit in a more narrative form. The additional characteristics of reproductive printmaking in its various forms introduced an element of multiplicity and mechanisation to the autographic process, thereby inheriting a devaluing element that was a central theme of the American Pop Art movement, propagated through Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein in particular. However, British Pop and the associated artists I came into contact with at this time were more concerned with upholding British intimacy and humour and its connections

22 By this, I mean structuralism as a theory of understanding culture by means of structure, modelled on language as opposed to concrete reality or from abstract ideas originating from the work itself. My current position cites more post-structuralist propositions and particularly those based on binary opposition.

23 Chelsea School of Art was known for its focus in the visual arts, particularly in printmaking. It is now a member institution of the University of the Arts London.

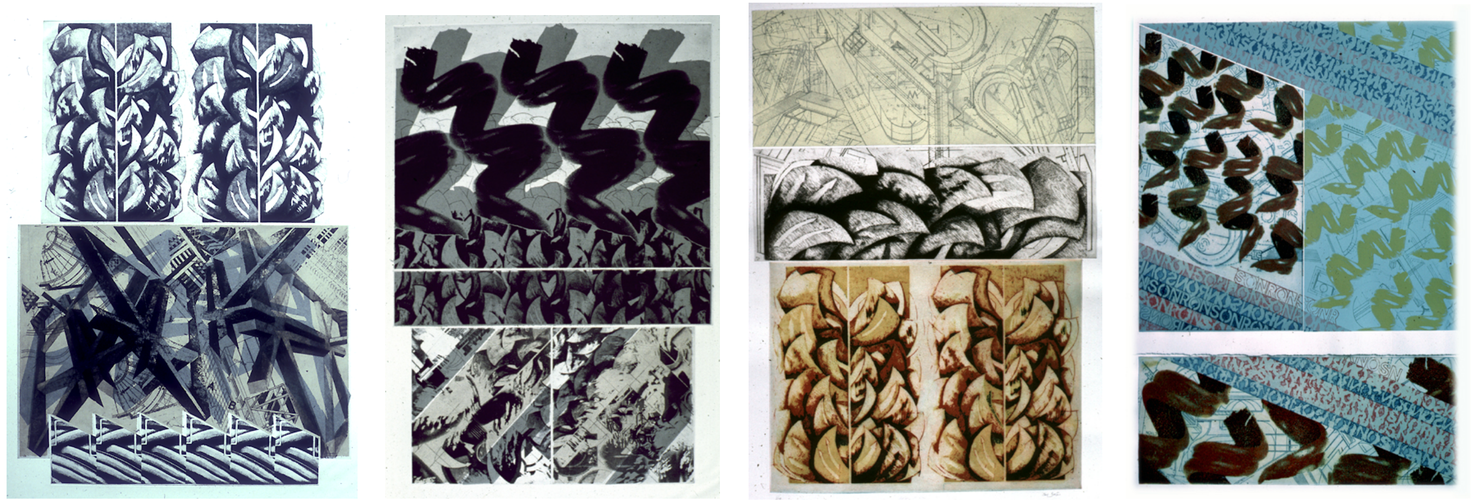


Figure 8 Clive Barstow *Prints of Social and Urban Construction*.

through music, literature, and film. They also emphasised narrative sensibilities in their work through the art of storytelling that made reference to the narratives of Lewis Carol, George Orwell and H. G. Wells, among others.

In 1980, my connection to land and a sense of pastoralism also started to develop. The 'land' in my case was not the harsh industrial north that was revisited through printmaking, but European landscape that was experienced through travel rather than through a stylistic critique of European art. The sensory nature of travel armed me with the taste, sounds and smells of European landscape first hand, and specifically to plants and animals. Any sense of Arcadian consciousness was no more than a reference to Greek classicism at this stage in my artistic development, as my approach was more aligned with the contemporary British Ruralists[24] and academic landscape painters such as David Inshaw, Graham Ovenden, and Peter Blake as a form of internalised Utopian pastoralism. My exposure to this group and its approach to romantic landscape painting came about through my time studying art in the west country of England during the peak of its popularity in the late 1970s.

While the Ruralist movement presented Arcadian and Utopian images of harmonious country gardens and woodland in the west of England, my series of ongoing works *Greek Pastoral Narratives* (Figures 9, 10 and 11) focused thematically on events in which the effects of man's attempts to tame nature through farming and agriculture resulted in failure in one way or another. Crop failures in Europe, floods in India, and typhoons in the US were responded to quickly and directly as a way of developing a narrative language that offered a journalistic commentary and critique that was in opposition to the romantic construct offered by the English romantic painters of the day, as a form of truth telling, referencing the northern Kitchen Sink movement. The taming of nature in this way has become a metaphor in my practice as an artist to symbolically represent how the process of colonisation has attempted to tame culture through hegemony and sovereignty, reflected throughout Bhabha's (1994, 86) discussions on thirdspace conflict.

Pastoralism in Europe had its roots in Arcadian principles that were locally and culturally specific, a reflection of a time and a place. The actuality of European colonisation however is a far cry from the romantic and idealised notion of Arcadia, and one where parallels can be drawn across the colonised world, including Australia. The arts to some extent have both reflected on, and in some cases contributed to, the perceived notions of primitive cultures. In his description of Gauguin's responses to Tahiti during his return travels to the island in 1891, Hughes highlights the actualities of a colonised culture in decline:

> Instead of paradise, Gauguin found a colony; instead of Noble savages, prostitutes; instead of the pure children of Arcadia, listless half breeds—a culture wrecked by missionaries, booze, exploitation, and gonorrhea, its rituals dead, its memory lost . . . Many strange and picturesque things once existed here, but there are no traces of them left today; everything has vanished. (1980, 129)

On arriving in Australia in 1992, I was immediately affected by the plight of Aboriginal people within a growing diaspora that was less than inclusive. The artworks *Cut, Run, A Linear Heritage* and *Miro Mirror on the Wall* (Figures 12–15) made in Perth, responded to the classification of cultural heritage that privileged European histories as a reconstruction of Gauguin's "paradise". In Papastergiadis's (2003) critique of Rasheed Araeen's summary of exile and the formation of identity, he proposes a key question about the writing of history and its assumptions. He asks "How can we re-write history if the language of history, with all its Hegelian hierarchies and Eurocentric biases, is itself not challenged?" (2003, 163). This research therefore attempts to challenge the paradigms of history writing by presenting a visual alternative to text-based knowledge.

24 The Brootherhood of Ruralists was a group founded in 1975 in the west country of Britain. It has been described as "a kind of late twentieth-century reinvention of William Morris's arcadian craft guilds" (Stuart Sillar, accessed http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brotherhood_of_Ruralists#cite_note-1).

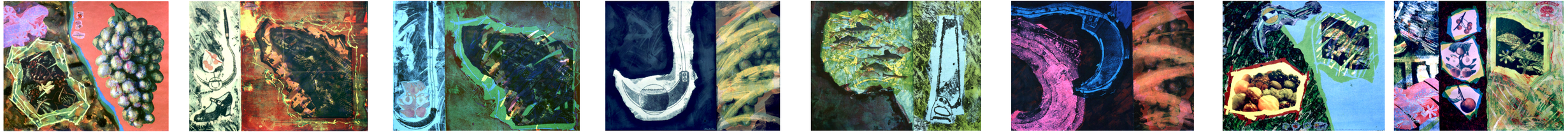


Figure 9 Clive Barstow *Greek Pastoral Narratives*.

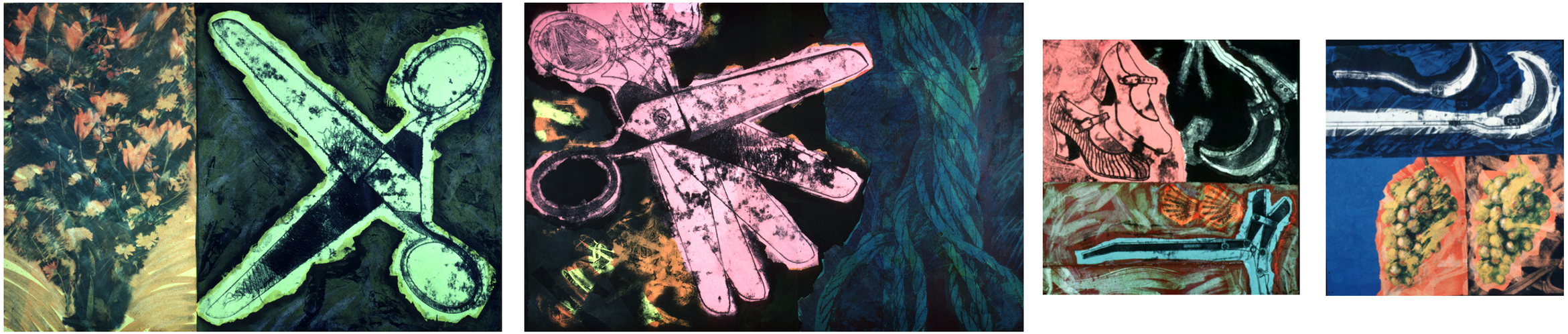


Figure 10 Clive Barstow *Severing the Ties*

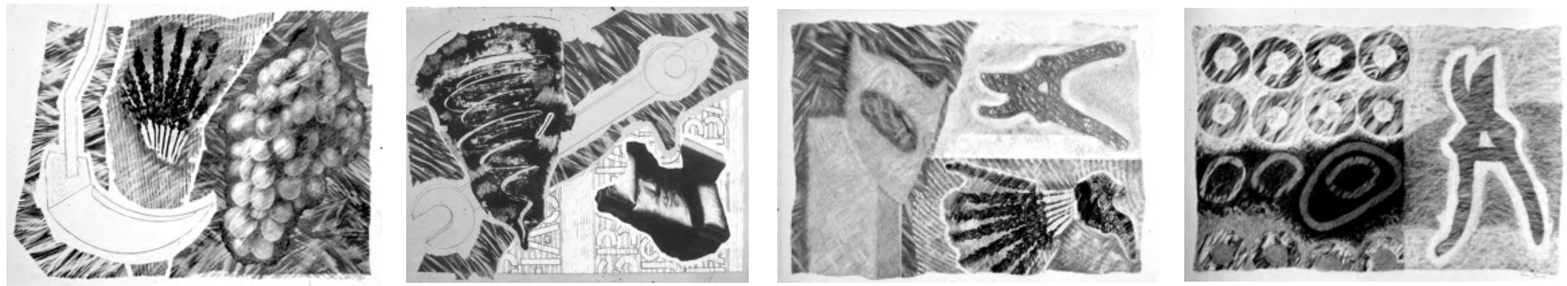


Figure 11 Clive Barstow *The Ruralist Drawings and Monoprints*.

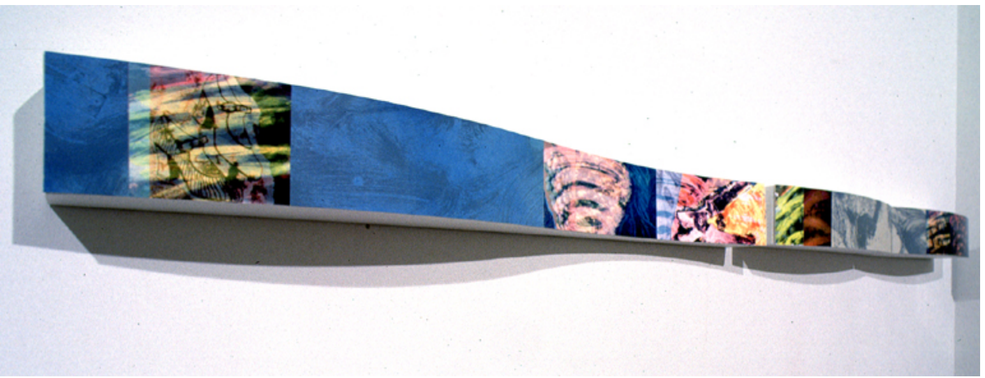






Figure 12 Clive Barstow *Cut*





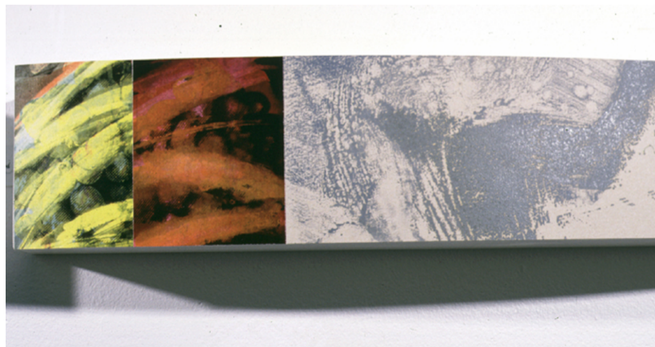


Figure 13 Clive Barstow *Run*

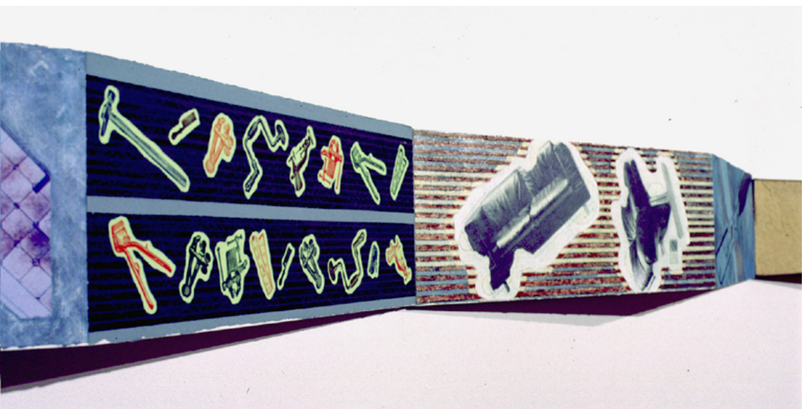






Figure 14 Clive Barstow *A Linear Heritage*



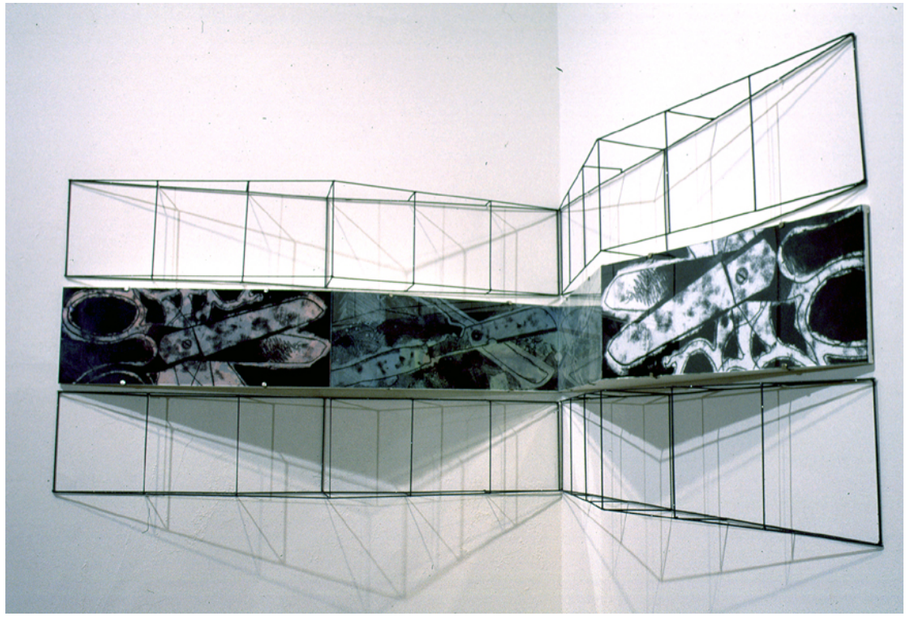


Figure 15 Clive Barstow *Miro Mirror On The Wall*

Disney: Indoctrination through Fantasy

This section explains the extensive use of Disney characters in my current artworks as a signifier of fantasy and the imagined, and as an ongoing reference to embedded racism that has survived time and place. As Andrew Lynch (2016) points out:

> We try to stay alert to difference and avoid imposing modern preconceptions on the past. Yet we are also aware that the idea of a shared 'modernity', as distinguished from a 'pre-modern' state, is in itself a fraught interpretative move, with its own unpleasant history (2016, 1).

Disney's rich but "unpleasant history" has been exposed by many artists from British and American Pop through to KAWS (a contemporary American artist who makes large-scale figures of popular images in order to overwhelm the viewer and re-position them as children), proposing multiple readings and contexts. The images of animalisations from the 1950s animations are still resonant as early hybrid forms, and are particularly pertinent in exposing the embedding of racial stereotypes through the innocence of play and entertainment, an important aspect in the revisioning of cultural narratives that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

American idealism as propagated through Disney animations gave me my first experience of cultural representation through animated propaganda and has remained an integral part of my lifeworld. The counter-image of animated and hybridised figures embedded within the Arcadian landscapes and sculptural forms I now make, (for example, Figure 16) offer alternative readings across time and place that expose a range of formal and thematic concerns prevalent throughout this research.

In Australia, the continuous attempts to construct a fixed national identity is mostly communicated and transmitted through political commentary, but, as Gerard Raiti suggests, "the fundamental patriotism for propaganda fades as one's concept of the nation diminishes" (2007, 162). The erosion of nation states and the formation of new hybrid and plural



Figure 16 Clive Barstow *Disney Characters as Hybrids*

communities in a postcolonial globalising world give credence to this statement. The diverse and multicultural nature of contemporary Australian society challenges the fixity (Spivak 1998) of national identities based on the white patriarchal model. Australia therefore pursues the conceptual rebuilding of a nation state through strict immigration controls and the related rhetoric around 'enemy' and 'invasion', scare tactics that have direct reference to wartime. This ideological reconstruction is less achievable through the use of animated propaganda today than it was in 1950s' America, since culture jamming has become the establishment today.[25] Propaganda and mistruths in their various forms, however, still have the ability to survive and to direct globalisation and multiculturalism by adapting new forms of political expression.

25 Culture jamming is a form of public activism which is generally in opposition to commercialism and the vectors of corporate image (Raiti 2007, 162).

In my current practice, I create reconstructed jigsaws and sculptural objects that incorporate Disney characters from the period 1940–1960 as representations of inequality and prejudice. The jigsaw series in my exhibitions that form part of this research often utilise painted and photographed images of Arcadian and postcolonial landscapes as backdrops to animated characters, creating tensions between the believed, the constructed, and the interpreted in which the changing nature of truth can be proposed in dynamic and metaphorical situations. As Heidegger alludes, “The history of the nature of western art corresponds to the change of the nature of truth” (2008, 201). While Heidegger’s statement could be interpreted across a range of thematic and technical contexts, his observation about the relationships between Western art and truth are also relevant to my values formed through the Kitchen Sink movement, and through my adoption of fantasy characters and their contribution to our acceptance of propaganda and embedded racial stereotypes. Early Disney characters are riddled with blatant conservatism and prejudice across the realms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability, with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Little Black Sambo* (Glassmeyer 2013; Willetts 2013) offering rich content for socio-political critique. I re-contextualise these characters in my current works to emphasise social issues that have yet to be fully resolved or ones where history repeats itself often at the cost of those disempowered. This is examined in Figures 21, 22, 23 and 32 in particular.

Disney animations at this time mirrored the growing negative sentiment among post-war white American society towards indigenous people of all races that was highly politically motivated. Appearing before the harsh reality of British Kitchen Sink realism in the early 1960s—wherein, as already stated, truth appeared to replace fantasy—Disney provided hidden universal signifiers and codes in which nationalist propaganda and racial discrimination could be interpreted and engendered beyond the shores of America. Dervin (2014) cites Jean Baudrillard in that:

> The narrative content of Disney films promotes optimism and nostalgia for an imagined version of the Midwest as well as the blatant patriotism of the wartime propaganda. As much as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck are global characters, they are understood at present as American characters within a global context. (2014, 156)

Fortunately, contemporary Disney animation reflects our changing attitudes towards a more politically correct and inclusive representation of society even when this is an imagined and simulated experience. As Raiti comments, “the socio-political *zeitgeists* that guided art and animation in the 1940’s have been so radically reconfigured by globalising forces that the creation of mainstream American cartoon animation today is nearly impossible” (2007, 154). In connection to this, the breaking point at which the realities of the growing Disney business empire were prioritised over Walt Disney’s duty to portray national patriotism resulted in the gradual shift in Disney animation away from blatant war-time propaganda toward more layered and implicit narratives of “race difference recoded as species boundaries” (Glassmeyer, 2013, 111) of the late 1950s.

The aspect of animals representing humans, and particularly the portrayal of black people as monkeys and apes in many Disney animations of the 1950s, is analogous to the attitudes toward and the treatment of Aboriginal people in Australia through their classification as flora and fauna until the Holt referendum in 1967. This is one aspect that links my art practice and the visual narratives that expose racial stereotyping to my ethical and moral position as Director of Open Bite Australia, in which I action various strategies to enable the self-determination and empowerment of Aboriginal people. Therefore, my artworks that integrate Disney animalisation and images of war and conflict are intended to be read in the context of Australian postcolonial history and identity building. The strategy of including Disney characters uses irony and humour as a way of investigating the past (racism through animalisation) to avoid repeating the same mistakes in the future. The following sections trace this strategy within my experience in the UK, a tradition that includes Hogarth through to contemporary artists such as Tracy Emin, Damien Hirst, and Banksy. This tradition extends into self-parody in many cases, self-critiquing the very art form in which it operates.

Cool Britannia[26] and Popular Culture

This section establishes relevant connections between the Kitchen Sink movement, the imported American cultures of the 1950s, and the developing Pop and post-Punk culture in Britain from the 1960s to the present day. This period was a formative part of my upbringing and training as an artist in London and has contributed to my reflexive approach to critique, self-reflection, and disruption to established systems, both politically and artistically. While this is partly motivated by a political position, through the process of reflexivity and the critical research undertaken through my doctoral work, the key elements of disruption and social critique are resurfacing in the form of oppositional narratives in my current artworks.

Historical Context

The Disney studio adapted both to shifts in socio-political sentiment and to the emerging technology of television as the most popular communicator of narrative storytelling. The early development of Pop Art in America and Britain was as much in response to the increasing accessibility of regular high culture as it was to commercialism and consumerism as a direct theme. The shift from film to television popularised the Kitchen Sink movement by mediating between everyday lived experiences and simulated experiences in the home. As Hughes observes:

> In a cinema, we do not confuse film with reality in the same way. We see movies in a ceremonial space, a screen populated by giants. The television set, by contrast, is just a box sitting in one's room, issuing images which become part of the furniture. It is more intimate than film and more casual in size. (1980, 344)

On the one hand, American Pop Art responded more directly to commodity culture and trash as a revaluing of the found object, with strong references to Abstract Expressionism, particularly through the scale of the work. British Pop Art, on the other hand, made reference to its literary past and attempted new associations with the East, through which a democratisation of culture was established. In its "rejection of upper class culture and out of revolt within the art education system itself" (Wilson 1974, 34), the Pop Art movement that Paolozzi and Richard Hamilton established in Britain was founded from very different principles to American consumer-oriented Pop.

Britain was continuing the tradition of self-referencing in its rejection of the intimacy of classic British painting replaced with developing commercial graphic technologies in print and reproduction. Hamilton and Paolozzi, along with Joe Tilson and Allen Jones, were among my tutors at the Chelsea School of Art long after the initial impact of Pop Art had been felt. While their influence on me was not stylistic, their collective philosophy about the power of popular culture in identifying collective and inclusive commentaries as a means of democratising and ultimately popularising cultural values, has had a lasting effect on my practice. This surfaces within my current doctoral research in such tenets as the fantasy/reality construct, developed throughout Chapter 3 and evidenced in my exhibition in China in 2015.

My time studying and teaching in London coincided with a creative subculture at its most subversive. Contemporary British society has an element of the disposable in terms of giving life to new ideas and fashions at the cost of the old, and in this respect British art exemplifies a throwaway diachronic community at play. Complex high culture in the arts also reflects its socio-political context as well as its history, and this was no more acute than in the period 1979–1990 under Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister. Now referred to as 'Thatcher's Britain', this period of political division will be remembered by many as a pivotal point of social conflict that fed a subculture of protest. Because most of the heavy industrial centres were in Wales, Scotland, and the north of England, the labour divide had geographical as well as philosophical ramifications throughout Britain. These divisions generated oppositional relationships that formed the basis of Bhabha's thirdspace conflict, and fuel my practice in terms of visualising the realities of separation and exclusionism.

26 Cool Britannia was a period of increased pride in the culture of the UK throughout most of the 1990s inspired by 1960s' Pop culture. It is a pun on the title of the British patriotic song "Rule, Britannia!"

Thatcher rejected the economic theories of John Keynes, who advocated deficit spending during periods of high unemployment, and instead followed the approach of monetarist Milton Friedman. The results of this approach to conservative rationalism was a growing social divide in Britain, the haves and the have-nots, a social divide that some say has never healed. Recently, the current day Kitchen Sink playwright Mike Leigh, reflecting on his classic 1977 play Abigail's Party, comments on the social transition from the conformism of the 1950s to consumerism of the 1980s. He states "By the late 70s that tame aspiration of the 50s to 'keep up with the Joneses' had given way to an aggressive consumerism of a new and much uglier and more cynical strain. People hadn't been inherently selfish in those post-war years. But now, many were becoming so. Enter Margaret Thatcher" (2017, para 2). This particular phase of my lifeworld has had a significant influence on my political position, and as a consequence a major bearing on my research.

Theoretical and Thematic Links

Zygmunt Bauman's thesis on liquid individuals describes how "reality should be emancipated from the dead hand of its own history…dissolving whatever persists over time and is negligent of its passage or immune to its flow" (2000, 3). This was particularly the case with British Punk subculture in the late 1970s, which took on new life as a politically motivated protest movement with right-wing politics as its focus. The concept of disruption and anti-establishment, and the "dethroning [of] the past" (Bauman 2000, 3), has always provided a hard edge to British art; it has also spurned a long-lasting and highly influential deconstructionist culture in which protest and self-criticism are central. So it is with my practice. In his summary of Punk Rock politics, Kevin Dunn states:

> Heavily conditioned by class politics and working class culture, the original British punk scene both reflected and mocked the disintegration of British society in the late 1970s. Rude and unconventional, punks tended to view established social conventions as hypocritical obfuscations obscuring the brutality of real life….but viewed from within, the employment of violence—both performative and real—became an important device for disrupting what many considered to be the stultifying effects of everyday life in modern capitalist societies (2008, 195)

This was Kitchen Sink with teeth, and far removed from the genteel re-enactments of Arcadia briefly delivered by the Ruralists; rather, this subculture offered a graphic expression of nihilist self-destruction. Regarding the inevitable cycle of transformation, Dunn makes an interesting observation about the return to social cohesion after the point where anti-establishment subcultures become normalised through time.

> As the subculture begins to strike its own eminently marketable pose, as its vocabulary (both visual and verbal) becomes more and more familiar, so the referential context to which it can be most conveniently assigned is made increasingly apparent. Eventually, the mods, the punks, the glitter rockers can be incorporated, brought back into line, located on the preferred "map of problematic social reality (Hebdige)". (2008, 201)

This observation partly explains the short-lived nature of British protest culture and the way it was absorbed into the very establishment it intended to criticise and became ineffective through its contribution to the process of recuperation and repair of the dominant social order over time. This phenomenon reflects what Theodore Adorno in 1944 termed the 'Culture Industry', the central element of his classic text *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* in which he describes authentic culture as being marketed to a point where it "perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises" (Horkheimer and Adorno [1944] 2006, 145).

Hebdige (1979) cites two particular forms of recuperation: (1) the conversion of subcultural signs into mass production as commodity (dress, music, arts); and (2) the labelling and redefinition of dominant group behaviours (as ideological). Over time, therefore, protest becomes commodity and otherness becomes sameness, with both situations contributing in the long term to a return to socially accepted norms. This characteristic is particularly relevant when high culture is transported and can explain the imbalance of power as a result of the colonisation of culture. When I moved to Australia, I immediately observed that when culture is exported, the complex contextual issues that prompted and surrounded its existence are usually left behind; only the 'look' survives the journey of colonisation. Bhabha refers to this two-way aspect of colonial transmutation as "mimicry", explaining that:

> Mimicry is, then, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualises power. Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an imminent threat to both 'normalised' knowledge's and disciplinary powers. (1994, 86)

This form of mimicry, when viewed both ways and when applied to the high culture of the colony, often results in a sanitised and diluted understanding of the totality of culture, and is responsible for superficial readings of cultural contexts.

From Mimicry to Appropriation

The visualising of power has generated a bi-product culture [27] in Australia and, perhaps more importantly, attitudes toward appropriation that have had damaging consequences for Aboriginal artists in particular. This was highlighted in the heated debate surrounding *The Nine Shots* (1985) by Imants Tillers[28] in which Gordon Bennett took particular exception to the notion of pre- and post-Aboriginal art in which appropriation and hegemony sat at its core (Morphy 2005). While Grishin (1997) mentions only briefly Tillers' "collaboration largely within a theoretical framework of post-modernist appropriation" (1997, 497), the lengthy debate that surrounded this work served as a catalyst for how Aboriginal art has been used "as a reference point" (North 2001, 36). In Bennett's case, as with a number of contemporary Aboriginal artists, this conflicted debate resulted in a "bounce" (McLean 2001, 38), where a two-way interplay occurs between cultural groups, exemplified in Bennett's postmodern response *Nine Ricochets* in 1990. The production of this new creative and dialogic space sits firmly within the polarities of Bhabha's thirdspace of contestation, a productive space on one hand but one that perhaps has deflected the original debate surrounding the ethics of accepting cultural appropriation as a postmodern strategy.

27 By 'bi-product culture', I mean a culture based on the translation of another culture but in a limited and diluted form.
28 For further reading on this, see Bourne (2013).

McLean updates modernist attitudes to appropriation by stating "These days, however, appropriation is applauded for its originality, criticality and ethics" (2013, 1), so in this respect both Adorno's and Dunn's observations about normalising practices can also be applied to the growing acceptance of appropriation as a legitimate form of creative currency within complex multicultural societies. Punk culture was essentially also a culture of appropriation but in a form that served to undermine the dominant imperialist power systems that sustained it as a culture. According to Ryan Moore, author of "Postmodernism and Punk Subculture: Cultures of Authenticity and Deconstruction":

> The original British punk subculture exemplified a 'culture of deconstruction' in response to the condition of late twentieth-century post-modernity, offering the practice of appropriating the symbols and media which have become the foundation of political economy and social order in order to undermine their dominant meaning and parody the power behind them. (2004, 198)

My exposure to post–Punk as a direct response to the politics of Thatcherism taught me the power of political commentary: a central tenet of this research and my ongoing practice. Although I do not appropriate the stylistic remnants of my own Punk subculture within my practice, I do retain underlying beliefs and attitudes that both question and respond to the disempowerment of individuals and groups within society, as demonstrated in Figure 17. As Daniel Sinker, founder of the magazine *Punk Planet*, points out: "Punk said that *anyone* could take part—in fact, anyone *should* take part…Punk has always been about asking 'why' and then doing something about it" (quoted in Moore 2004, 199). In this respect, Moore's culture of deconstruction through parody and humour is used extensively throughout my artworks as a way of communicating darkness through light, and as a way of taking part in a process of change through protest and commentary. The point about 'taking part' and 'doing something about it' refers directly to my central research question, that of *could an interpretation of Henri Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics be used to generate artworks through reflexive praxis, that redefine the multidimensionality of social and cultural space?* in terms of art acting as an agent of change.

Humour, Misinterpretation and The Trickster

As with Punk subculture, humour is a central element in my creative work and operates in a subversive way to enable a layering of subjective meaning. It also acts as a tool of communication and reflective critique when narratives messages in themselves are limited. Serious critique through the vehicle of humour has been at the centre of British and European culture for centuries as evidenced though caricaturisation and satire on both literature and the visual arts. Northern England can claim an element of social realism that is based on hopelessness, and alongside it a humour that transcends it. Heavy unemployment, social problems, and the general sense of hopelessness connected to time and place are often played out through humour as a way of dealing with adversity. This is a form of self-deprecation, the ability to laugh at our inability to escape our circumstances. Humour, therefore, adds to the power of social comment in heightening the dystopian hopelessness of life in general. In the now-famous rant by Mark Renton in *Trainspotting*, Welsh exposes his own position within the drug-induced Punk subculture:

> It's shite being Scottish! We're the lowest of the low. The scum of the fucking Earth! The most wretched, miserable, servile, pathetic trash that was ever shat into civilisation. Some people hate the English. I don't. They're just wankers. We, on the other hand, are colonised by wankers. It's a shite state of affairs to be in ... and all the fresh air in the world won't make any fucking difference! (quoted in Brooks 2015, 4)

Welsh reflects on the evolution of self-reflection by highlighting the process of transition—from a position of blame to one of action:

> There have been three phases of Scots' consciousness. When I was growing up, it was that childish one: it's the English's fault. Then it changed in the 80s and 90s to the Renton thing: it's our fault, the self-flagellating thing. Now it seems to have evolved into a healthy pragmatism that it doesn't matter whose fault it is; the point is to get on with it and make it better. That's been the evolution in my lifetime and it's made it easier for people like me to get involved. (quoted in Brooks 2015, 5)

Within creative action, political satire and social critique are bedfellows, exploited by Hogarth, Shakespeare, and a wealth of political cartoonists who have served to engage the public in serious issues made accessible through humour. The power of cynicism and irreverence is undervalued, as it is difficult to evaluate and measure; however, the impact of humour is far-reaching. The attacks on 7 January 2015 on the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris by religious extremists demonstrate the influence and reach of satirists, particularly when lampooning established and sacred beliefs. At the same time as the Paris attacks, China was attempting to ban the humour of wordplay on the grounds "that it breaches the law on standard spoken and written Chinese, makes promoting cultural heritage harder and may mislead the public—especially children" (Lin 2014, 1). This is a less dramatic but equally paranoid attempt to stifle criticism through humour, as the Chinese language is perfectly suited to puns because it has so many homophones (Lin 2014). In China, popular sayings and even customs, as well as jokes, rely on wordplay. David Moser, academic director for CET Chinese studies at Beijing Capital Normal University, comments:

> Idioms are one of the great features of the Chinese language and contain profound cultural heritage and historical resources and great aesthetic, ideological and moral values, that's the most ridiculous part of this: [wordplay] is so much part and parcel of Chinese heritage. (quoted in Lin 2014, 2)

Within complex language, interpretation, as opposed to translation, reveals the boundaries around which humour can operate and contribute to understanding across cultural groups. In my theoretical and practical interpretation of hybrid groups, it is the issue of wilful mistranslation that is most useful in terms of thirdspace theory. In her critique on Felski's 'The Doxa of Difference' regarding incommensurability through language, Ang states "It does not imply an absolute impossibility of communication, but relates to the occasional and interspersed moments of miscommunication that always accompany communicative interchanges between differently positioned subjects" (1997, 59). Ang asserts that in the context of social theory, misinterpretation and miscommunication are realities of hybridity,

where language is not always shared. James Clifford (1986) cites Vincent Crapanzano's portrayal of ethnographers as tricksters, "promising like Hermes not to lie, but never undertaking to tell the whole truth either" (1986, 6). It could be argued, therefore, that in mainstream ethnography prior to globalised and hybridised communities, language represented a reality or truth, constructed in a way that represented ideologies that held inherent values within autochthonous communities. As Blake and Young suggest:

> In advanced capitalism, language does not function on the representation model, representing 'reality', commodity carefully weighted by use-value, since there is no more correspondence between word and object. Only the abstract, discontinuous manipulation of the code and its reproduction exist. (1981, 3)

My creative work facilitates the possibilities of pictorial communication through its resistance and transformation—a space in which everything is not entirely explained or resolved. As Caroline Howarth asserts, "Representations have to be seen as being alive and dynamic—existing only in the relational encounter, the in-between space we create in dialogue and negotiation with others" (2006, 72). The underlying comic mimicry in my narrative work therefore acts to emphasise hybrid language rather than to explain it; therefore, I assume the role of the trickster. As an example of this hybrid mimicry being used to examine and articulate the British-Australian-Chinese trialectic model, my work entitled *Uncool Britannia* (Figures 17 and 43) attempts a triangulation through its overt references to colonisation and culturally specific folklore, through its reference to Vivien Westwood's *God Save the Queen* series of graphic posters in the 1980s. Westwood was also one of my tutors at the Chelsea School of Art during the post–Punk period. References to *Anarchy in the UK*, while politically at odds with Chinese society, have found a place in a growing youth and commodity culture that seeks to question Chinese hierarchy, albeit with implicit politeness and through a fashionable critique of British monarchy. Exhibited in Shanghai in 2015 following Hong Kong demonstrations surrounding a democratising of government, this work seemed to resonate more than any other with the younger audience as a form of silent or veiled protest.



Figure 17 Vivien Westwood *God Save The Queen* (left and middle). Clive Barstow *Uncool Britannia* (Right)

UK art critic and writer Jean Fisher used the traditional figure of the trickster as a way to contest globalisation, which Papastergiadis highlights in his book *Cultural Identity and Its Boredom: Transculturalism and Its Ecstasy* (2003).[29] McLean cites Fisher who derives her idea of the trickster, in part, from Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque. However, as Bakhtin made clear, "the carnival's inversions affirm rather than threaten the dominant power. The trickster is a survivor not a revolutionary" (quoted in McLean 2004, 301). The position of survivor rather than revolutionary is a realistic position through which I as artist can make a contribution, through which the use of humour as a deeper language of communication, or miscommunication, plays an important role. I therefore assume the identity of the trickster, operating from within the system itself, and through acknowledging the traditions of satire and critique that are firmly embedded within my lifeworld.

To summarise this section, I have demonstrated how the socio-politics of the Kitchen Sink movement, the effects of Disney, the popularising of culture, and the use of humour and irony as a form of protest as experienced through Punk subculture have formed my position in this research study. The central question of this thesis—how to visualise and represent the complexities of cultural hybridity as an agent of change—is approached by recognising and acknowledging my past as a lens through which I now view the present and the future. The trialectic model I develop and visualise throughout Chapter 3 is appropriately multidimensional in accommodating past, present, and future narratives in the formation of complex cultural representations that more accurately represent a plurality of cultural experiences and culture forming.

29 The other trickster that Papastergiadis invokes is the early-nineteenth-century Aborigine, Bungaree. Today we may see his jokes as ironic parodies of colonial power, but in his day he was merely laughed at by the colonists: he was considered a sign of the desperate impotence of Aborigines in early colonial Sydney (McLean 2004, 301). Bungaree was Mathew Flinders's Aboriginal guide and advisor. He often dressed as a British naval officer with astute comic mimicry, and welcomed new arrivals to the land. In this respect, Bungaree too was a survivor, not a revolutionary.

Section 2: Open Bite Australia – Creative Works in Response to Ethical Action

Background and Context

On commencing this doctoral study, I originally intended to examine Open Bite Australia in the context of policy development as an agent of change, but through immersion in my praxis, I have developed a more reflexive and critical lens by which to examine how Open Bite has affected and impacted upon my creative work. For instance, working and exhibiting in China has produced reactions from very diverse audiences through which I have been able to articulate local issues in an international context. This shift in emphasis demonstrates my use of a critically reflexive model as a methodology that provides a far deeper immersion within the research, where audience, representation and narrative are realigning the "meaning making" (Crouch 2007) of my praxis.

The arts, typically considered a significant player in cultural inclusivity, may have also contributed to the dilemmas of cultural representation brought about through the marketing and production of Aboriginal art through unethical business practices and consumerism that have disempowered artists in the name of consumerism on the international stage. As Nicholas Rothwell points out, "The rotten, morally decayed state of the indigenous art trade is the best known of secret scandals among market insiders, but its scale and depth are completely hidden from the outside world" (2006, 1). Subsequently, Bell poses the question:

> Should an Art Centre not be involved in the sale of Aboriginal Art, and instead a middleman is involved, then that person should be permitted no more than 20% of retail as commission. Please note, these middlemen are there in numbers and they won't go away. They need to be regulated in order to avoid the Triangle of Discomfort. (2003, 2)

My role as Director of Open Bite Australia enables direct action towards changing existing unethical practices within this relationship. Putting to one side my creative practice as an artist, I have adopted a facilitating role in which opportunities are created to empower

Aboriginal artists to change the power base and revisit the relational aspects of this long-standing visual culture with more respect and integrity. To this end, Open Bite Australia has engaged in the following ways: established direct links with renowned Aboriginal artists and elders[30] (Appendix 1); run artist / student camps to promote cross-cultural understanding (Appendix 2); published articles on the history and relational aspects of Open Bite Australia (Appendix 3); worked in prisons as a way of highlighting the disproportionate levels of Aboriginal incarceration (Appendix 4); established a scholarship to support young Aboriginal artists (Appendices 5 and 6); and published texts on how this model can work as embodied learning (Appendix 7).

From Facilitation to Praxis

I have struggled for many years in attempting to translate my role as facilitator into one of commentator in the area of Aboriginal culture. The pitfalls are clear: how to represent my ethical position while avoiding (particularly as a British migrant) the inevitable criticism of othering.

Through working in collaboration with a number of Aboriginal elders (Jimmy Pike, Mary Maclean, Gordon Landsen) between 1999 and 2000, I produced a drawing every day for 365 days as a complete one-year cycle based on the same image and through the process of monoprinting. These repetitive images entitled *The Gentrification of Perth* (Figure 18), titled in response to the previously discussed painting *The Foundation of Perth* (Figure 1), resulted in unique variations on a theme as a product of the chance relationship within the process of print reproduction. This engagement became ritualistic in itself as a form of meditative drawing. Although to some extent referencing Dada approaches to chance, and Surrealist automatic drawing techniques as defined by Breton,[31] this series of works attempted to

30 See The Jimmy Pike Trust website (2016).
31 While Breton devised principles of automated writing and drawing as a means of expressing the subconscious in which the hand is allowed to move randomly across the surface of the paper, my images were pre-determined in terms of structure and content.







Figure 18 Clive Barstow *The Gentrification of Perth*

connect both consciously and metaphysically to the transcendental and spiritual aspects of the man–nature relationship in the contested space of Australian colonisation. In retrospect this was perhaps futile in its attempts to connect to a land alien to my lived experiences, but working in such a repetitive manner served to disrupt my normal process of working and to realign my connection to subject matter through an immediate and direct process of drawing from the unconscious. While this approach to automatic drawing is not obvious in the current artworks that are submitted as part of this research, the ideas surrounding narrative continuity and the thematics of humans' relationship to place and space remain central to my work, as evidenced in Figures 19-24.

The set of drawings were later exhibited in China in 2011 at the Meou Gallery in the M50 art district of Shanghai.[32] The aspect of pruning as a symbol of lost cultures was shared collaboratively with a number of Chinese artists who in their own way were also reflecting on the gentrification of histories as China globalises. The sense of a loss of tradition within hybridised cultures is a common theme within diasporic communities, and has become a common thread that connects Aboriginal and Chinese narratives within my current body of work. This exhibition reinforced the focus of my doctoral research in many respects, as the exhibiting of this work within a different cultural context revealed the symbolic nature of both the content of the images and the process of drawing.

In my current practice, I visualise my ideas after working directly with Aboriginal artists from a position of "legitimate fragmentation" (Marcus 1986, 191). I adopt an Arcadian model of the picnic in the park as a reference to European constructed nostalgia, and through the formation of a trialectic space in which time and place and reality and fantasy merge. In this imaginary space, the binaries and polarities of othering are laid bare and re-presented.

32 *Cultural Pruning*: Sino-Australia Invited Contemporary Print Exhibition, 29 June–10 July 2011, Meou Gallery, Building 4 no. 50 Moganshan Road, Shanghai China. Curated by Zhu Qinghua. Organised by the Australia Consulate Shanghai and the Printmaking Committee of the Shanghai Artists Association.

These concepts are made explicit in my recent jigsaw works (Figures 21, 23, 24, 31 and 32) and where the issues surrounding othering are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Certain aspects of cultural construction are important in framing my work, particularly in the area of exposing the constructed narratives surrounding national identity. The exploitation of Aboriginal artists is endemic and well documented, and a number of texts (Crowley 1976; Elkin 1979; Goehring 1993) have developed a historical and political context by which global Indigenous communities can be framed. Within the specific context of Australian art and its contribution to stereotyping, paintings and photographs from early colonial settlement have provided a unique visual legacy in which the depiction of the native and the myth of the noble savage are grounded within the European classic style, and one central to the construct of Arcadia. The photographs of J. W. Lindt (1845–1926) of Aboriginal hunters develop Augustus Earle's paintings of the early nineteenth century in which the European classical painting assumes a particularly colonial attitude toward Aboriginal people. The perpetuation of this stereotype and its connection to Arcadian ideals has enabled Eurocentric cultural structures, including that of a constructed Arcadia, to survive to the present day. Such structures demand cultural hierarchy, stylistic control and ownership as well as the need to categorise Indigenous art within Western structural systems. Although the constructions of Indigenous stereotypes are now less blatant, the colonial mind-set that created them is still fundamental to their market niche and currency.

The issues surrounding the categorisation of non-traditional Aboriginal art have continued to surface, exposing the inability of Western cultural systems to assimilate to a different kind of thinking, and instead establishing an inherently naturalistic and anthropological fixity, or way of life. In his essay "Looking Back and Looking Forward", Fazal Rizvi comments from the Australia Council perspective in 1992, highlighting the problems of categorising Aboriginal contemporary art within a growing hybrid arts practice. He writes:

> Lacking any commitment, some Council members simply rejected the relevance of multiculturalism, while others used the normative language of 'excellence' to dismiss the legitimacy of arts produced in alternative traditions. For example, arts produced by the so called 'ethnic' artists were often labeled as 'folk' and 'traditional' arts falling outside the scope of what the Council regarded as primary responsibility. (2003, 230)

Australia Council policy therefore maintained hegemony by controlling funding by classification and by linking multiculturalism to a discourse based on a form of ethnic essentialism. The ethnic communities were assumed to be synonymous with a particular set of cultural formations and characteristics that were treated as fixed (Rizvi 2003, 233). Clearly, there is an ongoing tension here, as Aboriginal culture is dynamic and adaptable, particularly in response to the situations created by colonisation and internationalisation. This form of pluralism presupposes harmony as an Arcadian ideal within which differences co-exist in complex hybrid societies, and is a central tenet to my current practice.

Papastergiadis (2003) links politics and art in Australia during the early 1990s, suggesting that the artists who dreamed of a broader field of cosmopolitanism were forced to reconcile their position, as globalisation seemed to create even greater levels of polarisation and unease. He comments: "The political posturing in art is increasingly being debased by its refusal to the shifts in the axes of power. …The first ghost towns in the age of globalisation were in the long corridors of the civil service" (2003, 4). Rasheed Araeen summarises the situation by stating "How can world cultures have a genuine dialogue between themselves and reflect upon their true reality when they are mediated by dominant culture, commodified and turned into a spectacle to celebrate the triumph of global capitalism?" (2003, 135)

While Papastergiadis and Araeen highlight the broader dichotomies of cultural collisions within a globalising world, my artworks focus on the polarisation of Australia's constructed national identity on two main narratives: pastoralism and war. With the recent centennial anniversary of the Anzac campaign, it is timely to investigate the contribution that it has made to the Australian consciousness and to investigate the connection to the pastoral myths on

which ownership of country has served to deny Aboriginal presence well after *terra nullius* (Latin for 'nobody's land') has been dismissed. In 2015, Australia spent in excess of $300 million commemorating a relatively small part in the engagement of World War 1, under the banner of 'The Spirit of Anzac' (Daley, 2015). Through this ongoing national focus, mateship and unity are promoted as the bedrock of the Anzac spirit, which is portrayed as a dominant white male image. In a recent article in the Australian *Guardian*, Paul Daley examines some of the repercussions of the Anglo-Australian myth, observing:

> Little wonder, then, that the cherished acronym has at times been misappropriated for exclusionary purposes; consider the 2005 Cronulla riots, where a beach, the Australian flag and the invocation of "Anzac" became pervasive cultural symbols. "This is what our grandfathers fought for, to protect this, so we can enjoy it, and we don't need these Lebanese or wogs to take it away from us," one rioter said, echoing many others. (2015, 1)

In addition to fueling the oppositional binaries of racism, the Anzac history, until very recently, has failed to acknowledge the involvement of Aboriginal servicemen in the World War 1. This presents a profound irony and mis-truth considering that Indigenous people were not counted as citizens until 1967 and that the black diggers fought for an empire that had invaded their country and stole their land. This irony also exposes a dualism in terms of relationship to land, both owned and colonised, and how the illusion of harmonious pastoralism ignores the deeper connection to land by Indigenous people. Narratives of war, peace and pastoralism therefore are simulated across my early jigsaw works (Figures 19, 20, 23, 37 and 38), as a point of reference in which the exploitation of Indigenous communities, and not solely confined to Australian Aboriginals, are exposed.

In my art practice, the remaking and modification of a hybrid jigsaw, and the associated memory of the process of carefully piecing together a new story that previously had a pre-determined outcome, is for me a reflection of Bhabha's definition of hybridity and its disruption of authority. As Britta Kalscheuer explains, "It is in the in-between spaces of cultures that the oppressed can come back to the surface and be rearticulated" (2009, 38).

Through my involvement with Open Bite Australia, the divide between romantic European Arcadian ideals and the actuality of the deep spiritual relationship that Aboriginal people have with their land has become even more acute. As Golvan proposes:

> Aboriginal people are masters at living with and fostering their environment. The sooner this genius for living is fully recognized, the better for all of us. We only have ourselves to blame for not comprehending or being willing to comprehend the Aboriginal mastery of their world. (1992, 232)

Through the many attempts to simulate a Western style, pastoral harmony in early settler culture, it is ironic that the construct on which the illusion of Arcadia is built, that of a total harmony between man and his environment, has been a lived reality for Aboriginal communities for over forty thousand years.

A Critically Reflexive Engagement with New Artworks

This section evaluates examples of my current artworks within this doctoral research that are a direct response to working with Aboriginal groups through Open Bite Australia. The works discussed in this section attempt a critique by utilising ironic humour and political satire as outlined earlier in this chapter, while avoiding appropriation or any direct reference to individual situations in the form of protest. In this respect, they contain multiple readings that make reference to European classicism and colony, bringing together many of the themes and practices discussed earlier. The grouping of these works are equally important, and this is discussed in the context of my exhibitions in Chapter 3.

The artworks *War* and *Piece* (Figures 19 and 20), a wordplay on Tolstoy's classic novel *War and Peace* (1869), pitch the conflicts of war and hegemony against those of the idealised and illusionary aspects of our developing hybrid communities, particularly those of a colonised Australia. *War* (Figure 19) presents a number of meta-narratives connected to civil war, such as the contribution of early Disney characterisation in which racism and propaganda played



Figure 19 Clive Barstow *War*

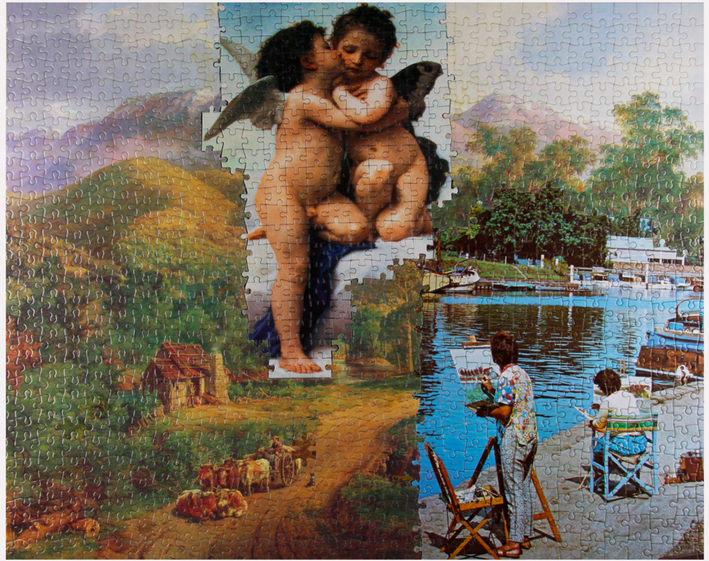


Figure 20 Clive Barstow *Piece*

its part in a nation's systematic erasure of its Native American culture. The appearance of Minnie Mouse offers an element of seduction and manipulation to this deconstruction of black Indigenous culture in which reality and illusion converse as oppositional forces. The Minnie Mouse image is an extract from *The Cactus Kid* produced in 1930, the first time that Minnie was situated in the American 'Western' genre. Prior to then, Minnie played the primary role of girlfriend to Mickey, regularly characterised as a damsel in distress and modelled more overtly as a sexual counterpoint to Mickey. *The Cactus Kid* is considered to be a remake of *The Gallopin' Gaucho* (1928) in which Minnie was cast as the local tavern dancer who is abducted by Peg-Leg Pedro. The short is considered significant for being the last short featuring Mickey and Minnie to be animated by Ub Iwerks,[33] but perhaps more significantly in the context of this thesis, as an entry into the cowboy and Indian construct in which the Indians were predominantly portrayed as the superfluous 'other'.

Compressed awkwardly between the two opposing cultural forces is a stylistic view of the American Civil War in which the Confederate flag is held high, symbolising white supremacy as a backdrop to the enduring aspects of racism and conflict. Coincidentally, during the term of my exhibition of this work in China, a mass shooting occurred in a black church in Charleston, South Carolina, in which nine people were killed. In the following days and before a pro-Confederate flag rally planned outside the Statehouse's Confederate soldier monument, local Bree Newsome scaled the flagpole to take down the symbol of white supremacy in light of the massacre. Newsome said in her statement, "We removed the flag today because we can't wait any longer … We can't continue like this another day. It's time for a new chapter where we are sincere about dismantling white supremacy and building toward true racial justice and equality" (quoted in McCormack 2015, para 7). Ironically, in the jigsaw fragment I have used, a white dove of peace lands on Minnie's hat, a moment made more poignant by recent sentiment following the tragic events in Charleston. Similar parallels between Indigenous histories have been highlighted by Gordon Bennett in his 2002 post-9/11 series of works *Notes to Basquiat (Death of Irony),* "which explicitly draws Australian and American colonial history and contemporary New York into the same narrative" (McLean 2003, 38).

33 Ub Iwerks was one of the founding members of the Disney empire and was the creator of Mickey Mouse. Interestingly in his later career he was responsible for special effects in such films as The Birds by Alfred Hitchcock in which the black raven reappears as a symbol of death, inheriting references to the black race as a negative connotation but perhaps in a less explicit way than in the early Disney cartoons.

The construction of Australia's narratives surrounding national identity are paralleled in *Piece* (Figure 20), in which the construction of an Arcadian landscape with its nostalgic references to European classicism plays a similar role in de-identifying Aboriginal existence through the phrase *terra nullius*. Adopting another early European style settler painting as a backdrop, that of *The Buffalo Ranges* by Nicholas Chevalier of 1864, *Piece* attempts to piece together the whitewash of black culture in which artists appear to paint an Arcadian mythological scene ignorant to the realities of place and time. *The Buffalo Ranges* was the first painting of an 'Australian' subject added to the National Gallery of Victoria's art collection and illustrates a transplanted European Arcadia, borrowing the horse and cart of Constable's *Hay Wain*, along with the chocolate-box rendering of the landscape in the English watercolour tradition. The romanticising of whiteness enters in the form of nymphs from Greek mythology, in this case from the 1890 romantic painting *L'Amour et Psyche Enfants* by William Adolphe Bouguereau, emphasising the basis of mythological constructs and the resulting realisation of shared belief systems through colonisation and indoctrination.

War and *Piece* draw parallels between the political and cultural constructs that have contributed to white dominance in America and Australia, and exposes the role played by visual culture in maintaining and promoting mythological narratives, reflecting Bhabha's theoretical position of incommensurability within thirdspace. The dual work also suggests that while the misrepresentation of indigenous culture is highlighted in times of conflict, it is equally virulent and enduring in times of peace.

A work that more overtly deals with racial classification, *Flora, Fauna and the Ranger* (Figure 21), depicts a park ranger recording what he sees in nature, a reference to the early British and Dutch anthropologists in Australia. Racism through scientific documentation and classification can be traced back to Carolus Linnaeus (Swedish) and Johann Blumenbach (German) in the early eighteenth century, and is evidenced as recently as 1958 with a study of the Fijians by Norman Gabel (an American). Here the connection is formed between racism and the gaze of the ethnographer through literature and illustrated scientific texts, forming the basis for our lasting attitudes to the 'other'. This jigsaw also makes direct reference to the cover of Disney's children's storybook *The Wonderful Tar Baby* (Harris 1946) (Figure 22), where the animalised gaze toward the black other is set in the "jungle of a far-flung British colony, [where] *Little Black Sambo* was immediately recognizable to Americans as an allegory of race and consumption" (Dingwall 2014, para 4).

Flora, Fauna and the Ranger acknowledges in part what Hal Foster terms "ideological patronage", where the artist unsuspectingly assumes the role of "native informant" (1996, 303). The placing of the park ranger as photographer replaces the artist with an authoritative figure who records the gaze, a tactical substitution of sorts that diminishes the presence of the artist. This, I would argue, deflects from what Foster refers to as the continuation of the "old productivist model [of ethnography] in the new quasi-anthropological paradigm" (1996, 302).

Flora, Fauna and the Ranger engages with the theme of Aboriginal classification in the most explicit manner possible. The park ranger derives from the television cartoon series *The Yogi Bear Show* written and produced by the Hanna-Barbera animation house from 1958.[34] The Hanna-Barbera studio was known to be more sympathetic to the human–nature relationship and less blatantly racialised than the early Disney films of the 1930 and 1940s, possibly due in part to the fact that William Hanna was a native Mexican who spent most of his youth in

34 Hanna-Barbera was a rival animation house to Walt Disney Inc. Hanna-Barbera produced a number of shows in Australia through Southern Star Entertainment in the late 1970s.



Figure 21 Clive Barstow *Flora Fauna and the Ranger*

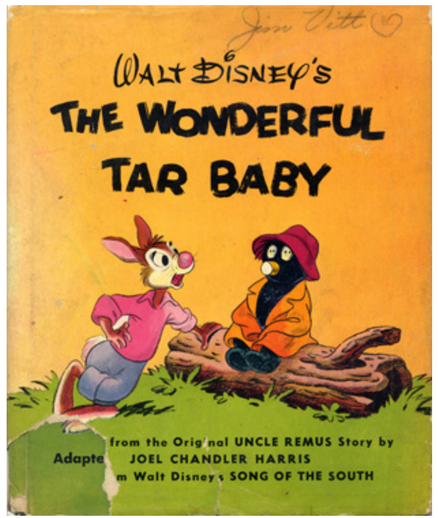


Figure 22 Joel Harris *The Wonderful Tar Baby*

the boy scouts. This series is etched in my childhood memories, singularly transporting me to the wilderness of the Montana National Park, my first real assimilation to a romantic 'wild'. *The Yogi Bear Show* was set in a fictional wilderness called Jellystone Park, a play on the name of Yellowstone National Park, the first national park in the world but lesser known for the fact that it was home to the Arapaho Indians,[35] who suffered a similar fate to the Aboriginal peoples in terms of displacement from their lands through white colonisation.

In the episode "Yogi's Great Escape", produced in 1987, Yogi and Boo Boo, like Goofy, find themselves in a ghost town, a common element in animated films in which animals play the parts of humans. Ghosts and their references to the passing, or absent, are often connected to dream sequences as a vehicle to introduce unconscious thought. These references to absence act as a balance in the imagined/reality relationship, a strategy referencing Freudian psychoanalytic theory developed later in this exegesis, in which human experience and thought are highly influenced by irrational drives that are rooted in dreams and the unconscious.

Building on these themes, *Buffalo Drought* (Figure 23) focuses on the irony of colonisation and its romantic relationship to the 'bush' as a colonised European transplanted space. Also using the early settler painting *The Buffalo Ranges*, this work alludes to the incompatibility of Western thinking in its approach to adaptation to Australian conditions. Instead, a romanticised European lifestyle is imposed. Interrupting this idyllic lifestyle in my reconstruction is a water tanker, reversed close to the cottage to deliver drinking water, the irony of which is lost on the seven dwarfs watching close by. The fact that many rural areas of Australia are now drought-stricken is partly due to the incompatibility of our lifestyle with what is a delicate ecological condition, an environment in which the original Aboriginal owners of the land once controlled. The humour in the narrative also exists in the truck, as the 'Buffalo' was a brand name for water and petrol tankers in the UK when I was a child. The buffalo is of course a reference to the water buffalo, adding multiple layers of resonant irony to this image of Arcadian-myth-turned-dystopian reality.

35 The Arapaho were Paleo-Indians of the Clovis culture and lived in this region for at least 11,000 years.



Figure 23 Clive Barstow *Buffalo Drought*

Towards Cosmopolitanism

This section builds on the ideas presented previously in that the artworks I have described in Figures 19, 20, 21 and 23 propose that globalisation is a disempowering force for some, as Papastergiadis (2003) and Araeen (2003) suggest. The complexities of this are perhaps oversimplified by the very term 'globalisation', which has come to be understood as a system of take–over rather than a process of inclusion. In this respect, 'cosmopolitanism' is perhaps a more accurate term in representing contemporary Aboriginal cultures in flux. Unlike the constructed notion of an insulated primitive culture, contemporary Aboriginal cultures in reality are complex and integrate regularly with other cultures and systems, and are therefore cultures that can no longer be represented by a binary inside–outside distinction of the nation state. Shifting perceptions away from a singularly primitive construct of modernism in which Aboriginal cultures are depicted as a combination of universalist, relativist and nationalist principles to one that is a fully functioning and multi-layered (albeit with existing tensions) is a step forward for Aboriginal identity. The shift from a neither/nor within Bhabha's polarised thirdspace to a both/and position as a pluralist cosmopolitan space contributes to a "shared framework for multiple identifications" (Schorch 2013, 77). This research proposes that this shared framework better aligns with the theoretical position of cumulative trialectics as a model that can propose visual solutions to the central research question of this doctoral study.

Cosmopolitanism also corresponds more closely with the themes of this research in that it connects cultural identity with aspiration, the dream of an inclusive society, which is Arcadian in principle but multicultural in actuality. Ulrich Beck discusses the changing context of othering within modern complex societies:

> What cosmopolitan idealists dreamed of, namely the inclusion of the excluded other, has become (in a specific sense), reality. You can be an alien, a non-citizen living elsewhere and at the same time be a neighbor, a competitor. The inside—outside distinctions of who is a citizen and who is an alien, who is a member and who is not a member, who has the right to be recognized and who has no rights and can be ignored—don't work anymore. (quoted in Ikas and Wagner 2009, 13)

For Beck, the notion of physical geography becomes an imagined geography in which barriers, physical and philosophical are disappearing, a space reflected in my adaption of Lefebvre's (1991) cumulative trialectics. While there are obvious counter claims to this argument, the shift in attitudes toward a cosmopolitan state will still maintain a bias of hegemony in the hands of the nation state. The notion of a totally inclusive and equal democracy as a secular community in which all cultures live together equally is admirable but unlikely. Within this merging of cultures, the reading of culture will change irrespective of how we might choose to construct it. In his book *The Silent Language* (1959), Edward Hall introduces the term 'intercultural communication' to explain the assumptions that all cultures have an identity of their own, which guarantees through association, a common set of values and beliefs. Britta Kalscheuer comments:

> All of these [cultural identities] form the material of the *covert culture*. Unlike the *overt culture*, elements of the covert culture are not part of individual awareness and reflection. It was [Stuart] Hall's deepest conviction that cultures hide more than they reveal: "Each culture has a hidden code of behavior that can rarely be understood without a code breaker. Even though culture is experienced personally, it is nonetheless a shared system. Members of a common culture not only share information, they share methods of coding, storing, and retrieving that information." (2009, 29)

The hidden codes of traditional Aboriginal visual culture are buried deep within its semiotic language, but may also be seen as part of its protection mechanism, a way of maintaining a living language that is contained and geographically specific. Hall's "shared system" also related to the labeling of "primitivist fantasy" where "the other [the primitive] has access to primal psychic and social processes from which the white bourgeois subject is blocked" (Foster 1996, 303). Foster rightly disputes the "automatic coding of apparent difference as manifest identity and of otherness as outsiders", leading inevitably to the marginalisation of race. Contemporary Aboriginal art and particularly that produced by urban artists often operates "between subjects" (Clifford 1986, 15) or at the "borderlands" (Ang 2003, 37) of culture. While paying respect to their cultural heritage, these artists communicate within more universal visual codes in order to make comment from within the system,[36] rather than from outside it.

36 This refers to the international art markets and the codes that are generally understood as universal codes and signifiers.

While early Australian settler paintings and literature express clear Arcadian references to serve both nostalgic and future colonial desires, I would argue that the mythological and romantic ideals on which they were interpreted were far removed from the realities of pastoralism in Australia, particularly in the conflicted area of land ownership with Aboriginal people. As John Kinsella, one of Australia's leading literary figures states, "If there is an Australian pastoral, it is as much about, for example, a problem of style as it is about a loss of an Arcadia" (2008, 1). In discussing the city / coast interpretation of Australian Arcadia by the poet John Forbes, Kinsella comments: "This is not simply the result of a colonial and postcolonial experience. That is to deny the agency of the land itself, which as most Indigenous speakers will tell you, speaks louder than any laws society might impose on it. Law comes from land, not the other way around" (2008, 1).

While Kinsella disputes the traditional pastoral of Arcadia as being inappropriate for Australia, he proposes the contribution of art as an agent of change. He states:

> We create art to make comment, and possibly to bring change, as well as to reflect 'truth', or from an aesthetic point of view, capture a 'beauty'. The process of writing or painting or composing music necessitate something that is positive, even if the content is 'pessimistic'. …Pastoral in Australia is about confrontation, recognition, conversation, and, one would hope, reconciliation. (2008, 2)

While thirdspace theory can be interpreted positively for many contemporary Aboriginal artists working within multiple situations and across traditional boundaries, for Aboriginal groups living in unacceptable conditions in remote parts of Australia, Bhabha's proposition of social conflict and incommensurability still apply. Thirdspace theory however does attempt a resurgence of minority groups within what is essentially a Western postmodernist discourse, and one regarded by many critics as being just another form of "cultural positionality" (Schulze-Engler 2009, 151). While acknowledging the potential Euro-centricity of the postmodern critique of Western modernity as a profoundly parochial exercise, Bhabha established limits on the relationships between postmodernism and post-colonialism by stating:

> The wider significance of the postmodern condition lies in the awareness that the epistemological 'limits' of those ethnocentric ideas are also the enunciative boundaries of a range of other dissonant, even dissident histories and voices—women, the colonized, minority groups, the bearers of policed sexualities. For the demography of the new peasant and Aboriginal communities, the poetics of exile, the grim prose of political and economic refugees. (quoted in Ikas and Wagner 2009, 151)

This statement proposes that marginalised people have the capacity to disrupt the unison and the cultural fixity (Spivak 1998) of the Western nation state, through which the polarisation of culture is maintained. The case of Aboriginal culture, however, is not always so clear, particularly when in relation to the construct of a national identity in which war and conflict are central. While governments seek to develop national identities around polarities, Bhabha suggests that it is the in-between space that carries the burden of meaning of culture: "It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-national histories of the 'people', and by exploring this thirdspace, we may allude to politics of polarity and emerge as others of ourselves" (1994, 152). The emergence of ourselves does not necessarily assume a reconciliation between Indigenous and colonial; rather, the "transformational value of change lies in the rearticulating, or translation of elements that are neither one nor the other, but something else besides, which contests the terms and territories of both" (Ikas and Wagner 2009, 92). Open Bite Australia and my resulting creative praxis attempt to rearticulate Ikas and Wagner's "something else" (2009, 92). Together, they contribute to answering the central research question regarding visualising a new dialogical space by which to read the complexity of cultural hybridity and contribute in some way to change. This is particularly the case in the artworks, *Entering An-arcadia* (Figure 44) and the collaborative performances with Xu Shanxun (Figure 55) discussed in Chapter 3.

Section 3: A Sino-Australian Arcadia

Comparative and Constructed Identities

This section investigates the third component of this cross-cultural and triangulated relationship; namely, my involvement with Chinese traditional and contemporary culture in both Australia and China through my collaborations with a number of Chinese artists. The first part of this section examines Chinese identity and its relationship to the land. The second part examines my key artworks in relation to constructed truths and systemic colonisation (Habermas 1989, 123) through which I intend to visualise the growing complexities of this trialectic relationship as a step toward answering the central research question of this study.

As a part of my cumulative lifeworld, I have sought out specific connections with Chinese scholars and artists in order to broaden my praxis beyond the confines of an Anglo-Australian dialogue. Working inside and outside of Chinese culture has in effect forced a new model of engagement that goes beyond Bhabha's (1994) and Said's (1985) points of polarity, driving the need to develop a more three-dimensional model in which my formation of a visual trialectic space can operate.

As my immersion in Chinese culture and philosophy has grown, it has become clearer that Aboriginal and Chinese cultures share certain commonalities as mentioned previously; those of a lasting symbolic language, a transformative and reflective living philosophy that connects people to place (Fung 1960, 334), the art of living with and fostering their environment (Golvan 1992, 232) and the fact that their identities, as suggested earlier, are externally constructed. The formulation of identity in both cases are directly related to a strong desire for a unified nationalism that alludes to harmonious conformity of the homogenous kind, where in reality one may no longer exist. The challenge of negotiating a future that is flavoured with the traditions of the past is one that seems to characterise Aboriginal and Chinese artists and writers. Edward Kus suggests a provocative thesis on Chinese identity from the perspective of othering and, as such, shares the central theme of thirdspace, stating:

> [t]he west has played *some* role in shaping Chinese identity because of the role of the 'other' that the West occupies in the Chinese psyche. An individual, group or society is most easily defined in terms of what it is not, and the China–West division has traditionally served as an immutable dichotomy from which the Chinese could define and project their own conception of identity. (2008, 102)

In contemporary China, identity forming is being driven partly by China's educated youth,[37] where a generation of Chinese-born passionate Maoists are adjusting to new conceptions of individual and group identity in the opening up of China, a position of shifting cultural values based on a globalising world and society's collective memory of the past. The push and pull of Chinese cultural identity are demonstrated throughout Chinese aesthetics. In his book *The Detour over China*, Francois Jullien creates an Occidental view in which regionalism establishes "a process of distancing from Western thinking as an effective strategy where Chinese philosophy functions as an 'outside' from which to see more clearly the values and preoccupation of Western culture" (quoted in Bolewski 2008, 3).

The move to globalisation and cosmopolitanism is partly responsible for the increased modernisation of China, along with the push for an integrated economy. Both these factors derive from the West, creating a wave of social change during post-Mao China. This in effect has contributed to a loss of national identity, an identity crisis that is a result of the Chinese desire to bridge the development gap between it and the West. This creates a thirdspace within its boundaries, a point of contestation between old and new, rural and urban, individual and community. Within this thirdspace sits the Chinese avant-garde (*qianwei yishu*) whose ambitions are played out in the shift from traditional practices to those of highly confrontational performance art (artists such as He Yunchang and Zhang Huan)

37 The 'educated youth' generation are those born around the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949) and who were involved in the Cultural Revolution through the Red Guard movement (1966–1968) and the "Up to the mountains, down to the villages" movement (1967–1979).

in which self-mutilation and sensationalism abounds. Araeen is highly critical of this more recent phenomenon, asserting:

> This is the work of a lost generation. They seem to have nothing in their life except frustration and desperation, which lead them to extreme cynicism. The only choice is either to drop out or chase a career through sensationalism…their work should not be confused with art as a critical practice (2003, 147)

The Chinese situation is perhaps better examined within the broader Orientalism–Occidentalism discourse. As Said alludes, as elements of identity production, Orientalism pushes, Occidentalism pulls. Jonathan Spenser summarises:

> In this sense, whereas Orientalism inquires from the outside looking in on China and forces on China conceptions of individual, group and society which gel with western expectations, Occidentalism looks out on the West and examines a range of responses to colonialism and modernity. (1995, 234)

Longing for the past while the future presents itself, is a central theme within Chinese diaspora, reflected by many contemporary Chinese-Australian artists who work in thirdspace, such as William Yang and Ah Xian. Restorative nostalgia is also a central element in the maintenance of Arcadian ideals within a growing nationalism in Australia. Ouyang Yu observes in his essay “Twenty–Three Years in Migration”:

> Unlike those who have returned to China, the Australian Chinese artists seem to choose to live between the two worlds, which I think is a positive outcome of twenty odd years in migration. Instead of rejecting either, they embrace both in an effort to move beyond the confined and confining spaces, a move whose impact is just beginning to be widely felt. (Yu 2007, 44)

While deeper political satire and anti-government comment are banned in official galleries in China, Chinese artists find elaborate ways of concealing and presenting the dichotomies of a modernising China in which traditional philosophies are being replaced by globalised consumerist values. Like traditional Aboriginal art, art by the Chinese avant-garde has had an enormous impact on the international art market in recent years (China is the third-largest global art market) in which the rupturing and dislocating from the normally politically controlled tradition has proven to be highly collectable. The original intention of the avant-garde in China—that of transforming ancient systems by oppositional practices—becomes redundant in a more complex and hybridised society. The both/and position therefore presents a multi-dimensional acceptance that is neither old nor new, but representative of the state of flux in which all elements of Chinese culture are able to surface. Clifford offers a poignant note of caution in the fixity of culture by proposing, “All dichotomising concepts should probably be held in suspicion…[and] we should attempt to think of cultures not as organically unified or traditionally continuous but rather as negotiated, present processes” (273). To this end, one of the defining characteristics of my creative praxis is the representation of transition or, as Clifford suggests, “present processes”.

The contribution of Western doctrines to the commercialisation of China through popular culture is important within this shifting state. The intersection of Disney and McDonaldism in China was spurred along by the Chinese yearning for a Western lifestyle, while at the same time retaining nostalgia for the lost civilisations on which Chinese philosophy was built. The resurgence of Confucianism in contemporary China (Roberts 2012) is attributed to this Chinese nostalgia, a longing for elements of society that were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. This nostalgia coupled with, and through, a lasting connection to rural life in Chinese traditional brush and ink painting (guohua) forms a Chinese Arcadia of sorts, one in which a philosophical belief system replaces religious doctrine and where Shufa (and Pinyin) transforms images into a written language that is shared, timeless, and dynamic. Through the development of my arts practice within my doctoral research, the diverse elements of European Arcadia, Aboriginal identity, and elements of Chinese traditional philosophy are brought together as a redefined liquid culture (Bauman, year) expressed as a triangulated model of hybridity, and one in which a traditional model of space, place and time is re-examined and re-presented.

Through the influx of Western popular culture in China, and particularly American culture, individuals are exposed to diverse layers of meaning and interpretation. This is particularly virulent with Disney films both old and new, where underlying capitalist and propagandist sentiments are indoctrinated into an unsuspecting youth and instilled through the commodification of culture. Conversely, controls imposed regularly by the government on the freedom of individuals suggest that the controlling state still has the power. This, of course, is tested as China opens its doors to invite Western economies in while at the same time underestimating the persuasive power of imported cultural ideals embedded within the capitalist system of engagement. Attempts by the Chinese government to censor the media, banning humour and suppressing religious expression[38] (Lin 2014), are examples of state-wielding power through which nationalism is focused and exploited as a means of defining and controlling both collective and individual identity. Nationalism therefore surfaces as an underlying force within my artworks, an issue that is visualised by utilising a range of idyllic narratives and established symbolic references within the work. These references are expressed through images (parklands, Disney animations, animals and plants), text (Chinese and English poetry), and that have particular resonance in our understanding and interpretation of a constructed national identity materials (plaster, wood, resin).

The juncture of Western indoctrination through Disney characterisation and the nostalgia of traditional Chinese imagery establishes conflicting values and oppositional discourse within my most recent narratives. The integration of Chinese figuration in Australian early settler Arcadian settings, and the inclusion of Disney cartoon figures within Aboriginal and Chinese narratives (Figure 24), not only reflect thirdspace conflict, but also critiques the transcultural phenomenon of hybridity. This expresses a gradual breakdown of homogeneity at a social level, and a subsequent increase in control at the state level. The ideological foundations on which Chinese regionalism was built connects art to life in a most direct way;

38 Refer to Appendix 9.

a spiritual and philosophical connection that I assert is shared with Aboriginal culture albeit in a very different form. Aboriginal cultures align both to Confucianism (in their focus on ritual social togetherness) and Daoism (in their alignment to the natural world). It is Daoism (ziran)[39] ideology that most directly forms a relationship with the land, but beyond that, to an unconditioned naturalness and spontaneity, as Chen explains: “The ways of men are conditioned by those of earth. The ways of earth, by those of heaven. The ways of heaven by those of Dao, and the ways of Dao by the ziran” (quoted in Crouch 2010, 48).

Shan-Shui-Hua landscape painting from the fifth century is often identified with Arcadian principles because of its harmonious connection to place based on Daoist readings, and through this, Daoism stresses how minor the human presence is in the vastness of the cosmos. Although Daoism, and later Neo-Confucian philosophy, does not go as far as explaining the origin of life on Earth, it suggests a connection to land that is more than stylistic or physical; rather, it promotes a philosophical connection through the *interpretation* of landscape, rather than its *representation*. Shan-Shui-Hua painters do not attempt to present an image of what they *see* in nature, but rather what they *think about* nature. According to Cheng Hsi:

> Shan-Shui-Hua painting is a kind of painting, which goes against the common definition of what a painting is. *Shan Shui* painting refutes color, light and shadow and personal brushwork. Shan Shui painting is not an open window for the viewer’s eye, it is an object for the viewer’s mind. *Shan Shui* painting is more like a vehicle of philosophy. (quoted in Maeda 1970, 16)

Munter and Shuangzhi elaborate:

> And so like a century old guiding principle reads that the painter must have seen a landscape from several viewpoints in order to fathom its being, we find in one and the same picture several perspectives…We accompany it more or less in its migration. The artists of the traditional Chinese landscape painting do not show us a moment in time, but rather a time span. (2007, 31)

39 Dao by ziran means the essence of Dao is that of a pure connection and profound respect for nature. The concept of ziran surpasses any other words that attempt to describe the union of natural beings to the world.

Shan-Shui-Hua painting, therefore, is an example of a Chinese regional visual culture that, like Aboriginal art, links what we see to what we perceive about time and creation without the interference of a shared religion[40] or the limitations of a scientific approach to viewing the landscape from a single body and mind position. My work entitled *Entering An-Arcadia* (Figure 44), which is discussed in Chapter 3, attempts to visually construct this multidimensional landscape and mind–body position through a reconstructed jigsaw.

Chinese landscape paintings, particularly those from this period, feature the brush technique called *xie yi,* an expressionist form of brush painting. According to Li Yong, "…*xie yi* depicts what natural things actually look like, [but it] also absorbs personal feelings. It creates imagery, but at the same time, it expresses the personal aesthetic ideals that can be found within natural landscapes" (quoted in Crouch 2010, 56), through which he explains the relationship between poetry and painting as one of "man and nature". Like Chinese poetry, Chinese painting has been mainly undertaken as a studio practice—or, in Wordsworth's phrasing, "emotion recollected in tranquillity" (quoted in Van Briessen 1962, 52)—rather than as a spontaneous reflection of nature. The unison of Chinese text and imagery in my narratives creates a human–nature relationship within a new hybridised context of globalisation and as a means of recollecting the illusions of tranquillity within contemporary contexts. In this respect, the multidimensionality (perspectives, time, and space) of Shan-Shui-Hua painting aligns with the spirit of my visual research in attempting to create what Yu Fung continually refers to as a "vehicle of philosophy" (1960, 348).

40 Many twentieth-century scholars contest the classification of Daoism as a religion. Wing-Tsit Chan, who translated many of its classical texts, suggests that Daoist philosophy (daojia) and Daoist religion (daojiao) are entirely different traditions. Interestingly, it was the classical Greek period of philosophy that questioned whether Daoism was a philosophy or a religion, a fact more revealing of the Western frame of reference and dominant ideologies of the Western world than those of Daoism itself.

A Critically Reflexive Engagement with New Artworks

This section introduces artworks I have made as a result of my reflexive process; specifically, the core representational elements of form, content and structure. This is developed into practice throughout Chapter 3 through a critical analysis of the exhibition and performance of the work and the involvement and feedback of the audience. Through this approach, I reflexively aim to link the theoretical ideas established with the works produced, and to demonstrate how the praxis model of research, creative production, and exhibition is facilitated through the adoption of the trialectic model.

Following my analysis of how Shan-Shui-Hua painting extends its multi-positional view of the land beyond a body/mind relationship. Through this interconnection, I have purposely created a polemic towards what Marcus describes as "an effect that disturbs the reader" (1986, 191). *A Happy Occident* (Figure 24) is my attempt to re-establish the park setting in which the new global citizens, both real and imagined, come together within a constructed communal space, but one that is now multicultural and slightly unnerving. The setting refers indirectly to Joan Ross's video *Barbeque This Evening* (Figure 25), a humorous and subversive story of invasion against the backdrop of a notional early settler painting by Joseph Lycett. Where Ross's simulation involves a meeting between Aboriginal and Europeans at the point of the first landings, *A Happy Occident* updates the event in a newly formed and gentrified park setting in which Europeans, Chinese, and Snow White share a space now devoid of Aboriginal existence. Absence is signified by the break-up of the picture shape, an emptiness that Cheng describes as "emerg[ing] as pivotal to the way the Chinese conceive the Universe" (1994, 35).

The jigsaw, as a form of ill-fitting social construction, is disrupted spatially by the lake running through the park as a gentrification of the original river. This is re-presented as a flat plane on which the Latin poem *The Magnificat* (*My Soul Magnifies*) by Jacopo Sannazaro (1489)[41]

41 See Appendix 10.



Figure 24 Clive Barstow *A Happy Occident*



Figure 25 Joan Ross *Barbeque This Evening*

is written in Chinese Pin Yin characters. The poem uses language and meaning that is almost impossible to translate into Chinese, and thus the resulting translation is a literal version of the original poem. This again evokes Ang's theories on the misinterpretation and misunderstanding of language. The text in this case, as discussed earlier, reflects Lacan's *vel* of meaning, a meaningless space that originates from the Latin origins of Arcadia, offering a sense of pictorial disjuncture and awkwardness and one that reflects Marcus's disturbed reading.

Continuing the theme of literary translation as a form of disturbance, *Every Road Has Two Paths* (Figure 26) translates a poem by contemporary poet Glen Philips[42] as a collaboration between artists and between languages. The image reflects a text that suggests the literal translation of Doaism as "The Way" or "The Road" as an explanation of change and transition as a process of reality itself. The image combines two interpretations of nature: one is a photographic construct of a British rural landscape; the other is a classic Chinese brush painting of birds, a symbol that reoccurs throughout my work as a meta-symbol of peace, life, death and deception (Figures 27, 32, 37, 39 and 59). The tree transitions between East and West and between reality and illusion as a signifier of transference, while the path refers to Gillian Darley's "narrative thread" (1997, 73), a connection between spaces and events that connects the road of Daoist philosophy to that of Arcadian idealism.

The Birdsong (Figure 27) extends the theme of the bird as a shared but multifaceted symbol that has various meanings across cultures. Disney's use of the raven as a representation of the black race and a symbol of death was appropriated by Hitchcock in *The Birds* (1963) in which threat was heightened by its racial connotations. Often referred to as a 'dark angel', the raven has multiple symbolic meanings. In my Celtic culture, the raven represents life, creation, alchemy and adaptability, while in Aboriginal and Chinese cultures, it represents transformation through the fire symbol, carrying lasting knowledge through the blackening

42 See Appendix 12.



Figure 26 Clive Barstow *Every Road has Two Paths*

of its feathers. The bird in *The Birdsong* is a blue jay, and it shares an essential quality with the raven in that both can be a representation of Bakhtin's "trickster". Ami Ronnberg and Kathleen Martin expand:

> We never grasp the full measure of the birds. They subvert our attempts to do so, just as the tricksters, shamans, magicians and culture heroes they embody in folklore and myth subvert our fondest notions of human superiority, put in question what constitutes the reality of sacred or profane, rearrange our moral landscape. (2010, 248)

The presumed superiority of humans over animals and what constitutes reality are brought into question in *The Birdsong* as the blue jay assumes the role of the trickster by imitating the sound of an old hand-operated water pump. Known affectionately as the "rusty pump" in early colonial folklore, the sound of the blue jay cruelly deceives us like the mirage of a water hole in the desert. The blue jay in this image rests on the head of one of Raffaello's nymphs who looks on with envy while acknowledging the irony at the agility and deceptive powers of the blue jay, in turn establishing a visual deception for the viewer through a deliberately uneasy tension between mythology and reality, and between belief and the profane. This communicates irony and deception as key elements of the trickster, a common thread through this body of work.

Truths of Embodiment, Place and Space

The artworks I have used as examples in this section serve to extend pictorial narratives beyond the visualisation of scientific ethnography; rather, they propose impossible and poetically illogical moments in time where, as in *The Birdsong*, truth, fantasy and nostalgia play together in what Johannes Fabien (1983) terms the "theatre of memory". In the connection between truth, lifeworld and homeworld, Edmund Husserl critiques the evidence-based biological sciences as a "naive science" ([1970] 2013, 7) in his text *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. He asserts, "biology in particular,



Figure 27 Clive Barstow *The Birdsong*

could never become, as a concrete theory in lifeworld, such a pure work of art, so completely rootless, entirely freed from naïve evidence, from the sources of intuition" ([1970] 2013, 6). Thus, scientific categorisation and interpretation of truth become conflicted within lifeworld where a construction of truth is central to hegemonic societies. Within the Arcadian ideal, Western constructs of truths underpin our political and social structures in Australia and it is within this conflict that we witness division in the formation of our hybrid societies and the maintenance of hegemonic systems over Indigenous cultural groups. As Kinsella suggests, these truth codes are both out of time and out of place:

> The depiction of a pastoral motif necessarily creates correlations to the emotional, political, and social 'truths' of an environment, even if that depiction is ironising or refuting the existence of the pastoral. The traditional pastoral arcadia—a golden age of plenty, and ideal social interactions based on a hierarchy of class, is obviously unacceptable outside its historical context, and even in its context is hard to accept….Here the destruction of the environments is recognised, as well as the fact that the hierarchy of land ownership, a concept imported from Europe in particular, though not exclusively, has meant that no nostalgia, no return to an Eden, is possible. These Edens are about dispossession and ownership by the few. (2008, 2)

When comparing the Indigenous cultural histories of Aboriginals and Chinese, common elements of a deep spiritual connection to place emerge;[43] this connection suggests a more embodied truism than one found in scientific classification or in the colonised Arcadian construct of pastoral harmony. Mark Johnson's book *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* attempts to approach visual aesthetics from a position of total embodiment "insofar as aesthetics concerns the very conditions of meaningful experience and thought, philosophy must [therefore] be grounded in aesthetics" (2007, 213). A contrary position put forward by Plato and Kant suggests a separation between the subjective and the objective as a way of defining truth, aligning closely with Aristotle's correspondence theory of truth, which states:

43 As Hal Foster (2012) suggests, the spiritual connection to place when aligned to singular native cultures has the effect of marginalising them. Rather, spiritualism should be acknowledged to be a shared entity that goes beyond primitivism.

> [T]he truth or falsity of a statement is determined only by how it relates to the world and whether it accurately describes (i.e., corresponds with) that world. Correspondence theories claim that true beliefs and true statements correspond to the actual state of affairs. (quoted in Hestir 2013, 194)

While the correspondence theory acknowledges a relationship with place, it does highlight the binary on–off / right–wrong approach that is a characteristic of ancient European attitudes toward truth, and more importantly, toward 'others'. As such, this presents a barrier to an understanding of embodiment with mind, body and ultimately nature, assuming that embodiment relies on the acceptance of aesthetics and subjectivity to *connect,* as Johnson implies. Plato, Kant and Aristotle were "hard line realists" (Hestir 2013, 194), and in present day thinking, they expose limitations in the correspondence theory of truth on which European philosophy (and ultimately Arcadian ideals) has been built. In his critique of Aristotle, Hestir (2013) questions this approach and proposes a broader redefinition of truth in which a relation to place and to the very nature of being is relied upon beyond the pure linguistic definition of truth. He suggests: "Truth requires ontological combination (broadly construed), in addition to noetic / linguistic combination" (2013, 208).

Aristotle's basic premise of truth and the signification of language that lies within it are based entirely on linguistic structure. This, however, does not so easily translate into visual language where images do not always share the same meaning, often requiring a deeper and somewhat subjective reading of context and meaning through which they can be interpreted and understood. Visual interpretation therefore takes on its own language beyond that of logical analysis about what we *know*, but rather what we might *think*, aligning more closely with Shan-Shui-Hua and Daoist philosophy. In this respect, art performs at times a cerebral connection to history that is less definitive and more perceptive, and one that encompasses a more human connection to land than can be explained in purely classical or scientific terms. Stephen Scrivener presents a thesis on subjective nature of art that comes close to a poetic description of our place in this world and one that aligns to the ambitions of my narrative artworks discussed in this section:

> [There is] the ability of works of art to affect our perception, emotion and aesthetic sensibility. Because artworks have the potential to arouse such responses we are able to associate sensation and feelings with how things were, are or might be. In this sense, artworks provide both ways of seeing and ways of being. (2002, 44)

In order to qualify a more sensory interpretation of aesthetics as a way of explaining a truth system, Johnson (2007) draws on recent developments in cognitive science to develop his position on the aesthetics of human understanding. Through this approach, he situates the mind and body not as two separate entities; rather they are one unified substance within which "the human mind is not contained within the body but emerges from and co-evolves with the body" (2007, 279). This position is in direct opposition to Cartesian dualism,[44] in which the mind and the body are explained as two separate entities, and through which humanity is defined as separate from nature. While Arcadian principles might allude to a harmonious human–nature connection, the classical philosophy on which this illusion was created was far from synchronous when compared to Daoist philosophy and its ultimate interpretation through Shan-Shui-Hua painting. Art and embodiment therefore become analogous as ways of engaging at a more subjective and personal level with the world, a language that is less definitive than a linguistic analysis but one that has been successfully passed down through generations of indigenous communities as a means of maintaining a spiritual and human connection to place.

The traditional western approach to truth connects from its classical origins through colonial power to the contemporary politics of division. This embedded mind-set establishes othering within a power structure that supports the illusion of exotic primitivism as a silent other, a central element within the critique of my narrative art works. I interpret the 'silent other' as a position of 'lost history', or "erasure" as Langton puts it (2003, 52). In this respect, Said's commentary on European dominant histories expose the assumptions supporting terra nullius. Said states:

44 Cartesian dualism originated from Plato and Aristotle and is based in Greek classical thought, and as such supports the underpinning philosophy of separation between mind, body, and nature.

> …historicism [European] meant that the one human history uniting humanity either culminated in or was observed by Europe, or the West. What was neither observed by Europe nor documented by it was, therefore "lost" until, at some later date, it too could be incorporated by the new sciences of anthropology, political economics and linguistics. (1985, 10)

While Scrivener (2002) proposes a visual model that reflects Lefebvre's (1991) cumulative trialectics as one that accommodates a collective space, national identity has typically been traditionally associated with place, either as a place of origin or a place of inhabitancy. Said (1993) and Bhabha (1994) agree on the negative effects of diaspora in that identity is based on where we originate as opposed to where we live, forming the central premise of thirdspace theory in which displacement is discussed as a third, in-between, identity. For Papastergiadis, however, the formation of cultural identity is perhaps more dependent on the present than on our history. The book *Complex Entanglements Art, Globalisation and Cultural Difference* (Papastergiadis 2003a) is an edited anthology of diverse positions on postcolonial theory. A central theme in Papastergiadis' introduction entitled "South–South–South" (Papastergiadis 2003c) is that who we are, in terms of identity, is formed by where we are now, rather than where we are from, suggesting that our cultural histories have little bearing on our current identity within a modern hybrid society. Globalisation, therefore, can be both global and localised in terms of culture forming, at least in terms of the formation of new national identities. As Robert Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake comment:

> It is now a commonplace that globalisation is at the same time localisation; the new world-space of cultural production …is simultaneously becoming more globalised (unified around dynamics of capitalogic moving across borders, and localised (fragmented into contestatory enclaves of difference, coalition and resistance. (1996, 1)

In supporting Scrivener's position on the limitations of text in describing this new multidimensional space, my recent work focuses on the contested spaces of resistance in which identity forming presents a point of conflict between diasporic and displaced communities and those of the nation state. In the Australian context in particular, I would contest that identity is reliant both on our histories (where we are from, geographically

and historically) and where we now live (as a hybridised and de-localised community). I would also add that whereas other forms of art, such as music, can geographically locate a specific group by “mak[ing] the scene…mak[ing] space into place” (Dunbar-Hall and Gibson 2004, 106), my visual trialectic model attempts the opposite by shifting our thinking from *place* to *space*. This approach offers a model to address the central research question of this research, that of a revisioning of hybridity through creative practice as a more fluid interpretation of space.

Within this growing thirdspace, Papastergiadis offers an alternative cartography for how we view the globalising of culture, but as McLean points out, this is a mapping of our spatial rather than our cultural identities, arguing for a new position of “the constitutive force of spatial [rather than place] in identity formation” (2004, 297). In her contributory essay in *Complex Entanglements: Art, Globalisation and Cultural Difference* titled “Dreaming Art” (2003, 43–56), Langton expands McLean’s observation by suggesting that this Western view of colonisation allows “the settler Australian audience, caught ambiguously between old and new lands, a way to belong to this place rather than the other” (55), or as Papastergiadis puts it, to no place at all (McLean 2004, 2). The Western assumptions of space being limited to place establishes an actuality of both time and geography, a symptom of colonisation and a physical reading that in itself establishes a polarised and hegemonic social context. Langton (2003), as with many of the Aboriginal artists I have worked with, emphasises the spiritual (as opposed to the geographical) in the authentication of the Dreaming, saying, “Aboriginal art expresses the possibility of human intimacy with landscapes. This is key to its power” (2003, 55).

The mainland Chinese artists I work with also regularly discuss the connections between art and nature as a mind–heart connection, an extension of the embodiment of mind and body that Johnson suggests has been lost in contemporary society. Chinese culture, like Aboriginal culture in this instance, is maintained through a deep philosophical and spiritual

connection to space, even when this space is not place, aligning with Lefebvre’s (1991) sentiments about the production of space beyond the physical or geographical. In his essay “Who Is the Foreigner in This Place?”, Niu Hongmei reflects on cultural differences as they transmit through time and space:

> Although I have Australian citizenship, I still feel I am Chinese. Australia is an immigration country, 90% of the population are immigrants, thus cultural differences definitely exist. You can’t deny it, even if the first and second generations of the immigrants are totally different from the younger generation regarding each other’s cultural identity. (quoted in Hong and Fen 2014, 83)

‘Chineseness’, therefore, can amplify through migration as first-generation migrants attempt to represent Chinese culture as a means of upholding traditional values through successive generations and within a rapidly changing hybridised society. As a migrant, Ji Cheng points out when answering the question: “Are you Australian or Chinese?” he answers, “I’m more Chinese than the Chinese! Maybe that’s something to do with culture” (quoted in Hong and Fen 2014, 48). This aspect of over representing oneself as a result of transporting fragments of one’s home culture is an interesting aspect of all cultures including my own. This is symbolic of the missing pieces of culture (and, in some cases, replaced in my jigsaw works) that did not survive the journey of migration, and to a greater extent how these missing pieces have been replaced with localised and hybridised ‘others’.

Chapter 3: Creative Praxis: The Development of Reflexivity through Practice

Contextualising Artworks and Exhibitions

In relation to the central research question of this study, this chapter discusses my artworks and exhibitions in the context of a developing theoretical and critical framework of cumulative trialectics and how this is interpreted, visualised, and communicated as the central strategy of my reflexive process. The various influences here include responses to a range of stimuli, the defining and underpinning socio-political issues highlighted in Chapter 2, and the more immediate and intuitive responses to materials, images and objects as they present themselves through the physical and cerebral process of making. An important part of completing the circle of activity within this process is to reflexively examine the responses to the visualisation of the new and provocative space I have created by engaging with international audiences through exhibitions in Australia and China, and to act on these in terms of creating new works and new writings. This chapter advances the dialogue established in the previous chapters by responding to the research question in terms of the communicative value of these artworks across cultures and languages as an essential component of my reflexive methodology.

I concur with Papastergiadis' comments, "Art is never outside the dynamic field of social change, it never develops in a purely autonomous manner" (2006, 19). In this respect, my art is politically and socially motivated, and the position I now take reflects a shift from postmodern to altermodern in that my artworks attempt to reflect the past, current, and future in which we live as a decentralised space. French curator Nicolas Bourriaud declared "Postmodernism is dead" in the opening line of his manifesto as a preface to an exhibition at the Tate Gallery of the same name in 2009 (quoted in Harrison 2009, para 4). Bourriaud frames altermodernism as the current time we live in, where culture, politics and economics merge through globalisation, and one where "the experience of wandering-in time, space and mediums; nothing is fixed" (Ryan 2009). Perhaps more importantly for this thesis, altermodernism is a term that encompasses a Dystopian future[45] within a metaphysical concept of time. As one of the communicative aims of this research, history is invented as a way of positioning oneself within time and place, and ultimately as a progressive process. Habermas states, "modernity expresses the conviction that the future has already begun: it is the epoch that lives for the future, that opens itself up to the novelty of the future" (1989, 5). Following Habermas, I too would assert that the future has begun, and the artworks in the following exhibitions predict in part a future that is truly dystopian, which makes reference to the past as a marker to the future.

By engaging in cross-cultural artistic collaboration, I introduce an element of the unpredictable in respect to this emerging multifaceted and decentralised position; collaboration therefore does not always bring about clarity but it does test the altermodernist view of a more metaphysical model of time and space. Collaboration is used across all forms of my work, with the intention of creating solutions and propositions that could not be arrived at from a singular and dominant position of practice or culture. Rather, collaborations create more in-between spaces and often unresolved tensions in which the audience can position themselves as active participants, as opposed to passive viewers, in the formation of new language and meaning. By transforming towards a multi-positional and transnational space, the resulting artworks contribute in some way to answering Rizvi's (2003) criticisms of the arts industry in Australia in which debates related to the complex processes of globalisation have been seen to rarely interact beyond the narrow frameworks of dualism. He states:

45 Based on the failings of modernism and the subsequent fracturing of postmodernism, a future was predicted that would not live up to the promises of the past. As Harrison suggests, "The reaction [to modernism] was severe; inciting a series of symbolic revenge killings: the 'death of man' (Foucault 1994), the 'end of humanism' the 'end of history' (Fukuyama 1992), the 'death of painting' and even the 'end of art' (Danto 1998)" (2009, 2).

> Changes heralded by global forces, connections and imagination could have encouraged us to re-conceptualise the idea of multiculturalism, beyond its national boundaries, to look forward, in an effort to imagine a more transnational understanding of space within which the artist of non-English speaking backgrounds worked. (Rizvi 2003, 231)

International and intercultural collaboration, particularly across languages and within various forms of contemporary media, facilitates the 'multi-' in 'multi-dimensional', presenting a moving and discursive process, rather than a scientific ethnography *about* culture. Therefore, this engagement extends the definition of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism beyond geographically or time specific groups, and toward a broader term of *multidimensionalism*, a space that accounts for multiple constructs of people, time and place.

In the Chinese cultural context, Araeen criticises contemporary avant-gardism, and particularly those associated with the identity politics of multiculturalism, suggesting that artists always serve a Eurocentric bourgeois consciousness when dealing with oppositional practices; this is a particularly Marxist criticism that upholds "Hegelian[46] notions of historical overcoming" (2013, 147). I therefore aim to avoid perpetuating the white bourgeois consciousness that Araeen critiques; rather I attempt to locate myself *within* the hybrid trialectic space as a driver of this praxical research. However, I am aware that as a white European and as a product of this privileged system, my position is open to criticism. I sit awkwardly in the "new form of resistance, incorporating difference with a critical edge" (Araeen 2001, 142) while carrying the legacy of the very capitalist bourgeoisie I oppose. However, as Araeen states, "The radical function of art today cannot be other than being part of this resistance" (2001, 142), and as such I propose that my artworks and exhibitions should be seen in the light of both resistance and proposition.

For the new works that I have produced as part of this doctoral research, I have adopted three basic methods of practice: constructed jigsaws (found objects reconstructed through collaboration); animated films (utilising visuals from the jigsaw works and narrated poetry); and wall objects (sculptures that have a particular thematic focus). The three methods of production align with my trialectic model by presenting the audience to an experience that becomes an eclectic but interrelated mix of thematic, material and spatial languages through which they also engage within the trialectics of the exhibition space.

46 Georg Hegel's main position within philosophy was one of absolute idealism as a means to integrate mind and spirit (Geist) without elimination or reduction. Marxism is said to have derived from Hegel's inclusive philosophies. Hegelianism is also connected through Kant and Plato in the sharing of ideals regarding universalism.

Re-constructed Narratives Using Jigsaws and Text

The jigsaw works I produce as part of this creative research focus on the complexities of two-dimensional visual narratives and the suggestion of incomplete or erased histories. These jigsaws form the core of my current practice, through which sculptural and animated works are made to extend the two-dimensional narratives into physical and time-based experiences. The use of found objects, and with a focus on idyllic landscapes juxtaposed against the fantasy of Disney narratives as outlined in Chapter 2, allows what I term 'inherited, or legacy value'[47] to enter the work. The production of jigsaws as commercial toys and games exposes an emphasis on idyllic and Arcadian landscapes of a truly transnational flavour, but in many instances, reflects privilege and hegemony. These mass-produced images transmit inbuilt value and meaning, and through the process of reconstruction, inherit new meanings by which hybridity and incompleteness can be.

The history of the jigsaw in Australia shows a proliferation of colonial images that, through play, have arguably contributed to the cementing of hegemonic influence in children and adults. Behind the veneer of innocent play, jigsaws of British heraldry, idyllic landscapes and early settler paintings have played their role in the indoctrination of nationalist sentiment in young people through the proliferation of "non-confrontational" images and puzzles. A large cross section of idyllic Arcadian photographs and adaptations of early settler paintings that

47 Duchamp refers to the inherited meaning of objects that carry past histories which, when re-presented are re-contextualised within the studio or gallery situation. This then countered by his Surrealist manifesto in which he proclaims "Value, let nothing have value" (Albright 2003, 46).

are specific to Australia flooded the market during the 1950s, later followed by an influx of Disney products, including jigsaws and early learning toys in the 1960s. While electronic gaming and new technologies have driven a change in the way that children engage and interact in play, and especially with their mediated simulation with war, the jigsaw remains popular as a tactile and nostalgic toy that, through its reconstruction, offers an interesting interplay between the jigsaw producer and the jigsaw maker. Game Oz, a major producer of jigsaws in Australia, offers this Plato–Hegel[48] association as a point of promotion within the highly competitive consumer culture of educational games: "Jigsaw puzzles are a fun and mentally stimulating way to relax. They are a great brain-exercising tool for all ages, which helps generate literal connections between the right and left-brain, in turn increasing our ability to learn" (GameOz n.d.).

In addition to the positive physical and mental development that jigsaws offer to children, the subliminal connection between images and re-construction also has the potential for significant influence in social and political indoctrination. In my body of work, the unfinished and awkwardly reconstructed jigsaws—where the pieces do not always easily connect—act as a dynamic metaphor for hybrid culture clashes in flux. The jigsaw, I propose, also allows entry to the concept of everyday activity as art and as meaning, forming new definitions in which relational elements of high art and the everyday are re-examined. In his critique of the everyday, Lefebvre comments on the leisure of everyday activity as:

> not simply "entertainment" or "relaxation" but the articulation of different forms of knowledge, knowledge that could aid in the potential and/or intermittent process of "disalienation." It is not in leisure as such where a critique of capitalism is to be found. Rather, a critique may emerge in those moments when the relations between elements of the everyday are made evident or challenged. (quoted in Molesworth 1998, 51)

48 Plato represents a purely logical scientific and evidence-based philosophy of learning (associated through neuroscience as left brain dominance) and Hegel a more subjective, inclusive and accepting philosophy of the creative (right brain). Current discussion suggests that right / left brain dominance theory is more mythological than factual (Bleedorn 2003, 4).

My use of reconstructed jigsaws signifies deeper connections between capitalism (through leisure) and colony, particularly where Arcadian representations of Australian and European landscapes are predominant. This mode of working within my current creative practice allows seemingly disparate elements to enter and emerge. The concept of social construction is signified through the piece-by-piece assemblage of "meaning-making" (Crouch 2007, 112), suggesting that the picture is always pre-determined irrespective of how we might arrive at its solution: a metaphorical reflection of hegemony. However, my approach to reconstruction and assemblage using multiple jigsaws exposes heterogeneity and its deeper political and social narratives. In *Life: A User's Manual* (1978), Georges Perec adopts jigsaws as a central theme, in which he comments:

> there is something futile about jigsaws. One carves an image up only so that someone else may slowly reassemble it. Bartlebooth [the central character of the novel] makes a career of pointless self-iconoclasm. But he doesn't quite achieve his goal of turning his existence into an act of gratuitous circularity…The message seems to be that things don't necessarily fit. (quoted in Turner 2015, 2)

Futility is an implied reading within the context of diaspora and particularly in communities that have been displaced or disempowered. The interactive element of jigsaw making and games in general is also an important aspect of involving the viewer in the work. Puzzling is not a solitary art, as Perec suggests:

> Every move the puzzler makes, the puzzle maker has made before; every piece the puzzler picks up, and picks up again, and studies and strokes, every combination he tries, and tries a second time, every blunder and every insight, each hope and each discouragement have all been designed, calculated, and decided by the other. (1978, 3)

Beyond the loaded signification surrounding the readymade / found object, Duchamp makes reference to the intellectual pursuit of play, through which a connection is made between inherited value and collaborative communication. Blake and Young comment within the context of art coding and interaction:

> His [Duchamp's] chess playing [is] an intellectual credential, but to play chess is to play *with* someone via rules, and to use this, perhaps as a hint, as certain relation (either by analogy or by contrast) with his serious but enigmatic art games or jokes, both activities, as it were, wanting to be clarified in terms of communication, both demanding a 'receiver' reinforces the myth of communication. (1981, 6)

The 'myth of communication', as Blake and Young suggest, is put into a state of turmoil once the common language of either art or text is disrupted; in my case, I work with these narratives in China. The addition of text, particularly in languages other than English, presents a Lacanian *vel* of nonsense (Young 2009, 87). Lacan's vel (or the splitting of alienation) is best described as two elements colliding, those of 'being' (subject) and 'meaning' (other) through which a third element is produced that reflects a 'nonsense' (unconscious non-meaning). Even where text embodies literary meaning, like each jigsaw piece, each word is meaningless unless pieced together and re-interpreted within a new context or code, and even then, as Perec (1978) suggests, they might not necessarily fit. This involvement in a new trialectic configuration invites deception and non-truths in the form of the trickster as previously discussed. In Perec's description of the art of the jigsaw, the jigsaw maker is referred to as the trickster, and in these terms:

> The art of jigsaw puzzling begins with wooden puzzles cut by hand, whose maker undertakes to ask himself all the questions the player will have to solve, and, instead of allowing chance to cover his tracks, aims to replace it with cunning trickery and subterfuge. (1978, 3)

My re-construction of jigsaws introduces the artist as trickster; an imposter who fools the viewer into believing that the newly constructed image is real, and who pretends the game is still interactive, when of course it is no longer the case. Perec's (1978) poetic commentary is beautifully written and interlaces fact with fiction, instruction with red herrings, humour and poignancy, as I also attempt to do in my visual works. It is as if Perec was making his own jigsaw of life by playing with the mind of the reader, with each jigsaw offering a different interpretation of its shape and meaning. Like the trickster himself, Perec never lets the reader compile a single view; rather, he lets them form their own picture from the pieces he presents. The process of making these jigsaw works is therefore a way for me, as artist, to be playful and immediate while introducing random elements that are often placed to deceive or de-rail the viewer. In addition, this method of construction facilitates a multifaceted story to be told, showing how "narrative, identity and morality are irretrievably intertwined" (Davidson 2006, 165). Moreover, the process allows a poetic language similar to Perec's approach to literature, in that the images can never be totally understood, fixed or trusted. Visual poetry therefore, in the form of a playful and intertwined language that extends beyond descriptive meaning, starts to emerge.

During 2016, I undertook research at the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green, London, to trace the history of the jigsaw. This history is not well documented but most research points to the originator of the irregularly cut up and reassembled image as we identify it today, as being John Spilsbury in 1750. The first jigsaws were often puzzles and "dissected maps" (Figure 28) taken from lithographic engravings used as early educational devices for young children in schools, extensively in Holland and Germany in the mid-eighteenth century (Williams 1990, 5). The association between maps and educational toys has great relevance to my current work. The jigsaw series together with my animations and more explicitly my sculptural works all reference teaching as a form of social indoctrination—an important aspect that links the work thematically and conceptually. The origins of jigsaws as interactive forms of the teaching of geography and cartography are even more interesting in connection to the recent theory that has been developed around social trialectics, which also originates from a rethinking about geographic space and its relationship to representing modern diaspora and shifting borders. To this end, my attempts to re-create meaning through reconstructed narratives takes into account the idea of shifting space (and by definition shifting meaning) previously discussed in the section Truths of Embodiment, Space and Place in Chapter 2. This notion of shifting space acknowledges recent discourse pertaining to geography and place (McLean 2004), and also the origins of the jigsaw as a tool of learning that alluded to land as a more fixed definition of space.

The Process of Making Hybrid Jigsaws

The two most inventive elements in my production of the jigsaw series are the choice of jigsaws as source material and the open-ended assembling of ideas through which new narratives are formed. I source most of the jigsaws from second-hand shops as this is where I find older and more used versions (that carry their own histories and meanings through constant remaking) and with images that are in some cases extremely nostalgic, many referring to the 'old country', often brought to Australia by European migrants. The choice of which jigsaws to buy is intuitive but certain themes I am working with suggest ones to collect, and often these are kept for long periods of time until I find a connection with other images I have stored. This process aligns with my approach to praxis; as new knowledge enters the work through research and writing, new themes and connections are made that give agency to jigsaws that have been collected with no real intent. Likewise, new jigsaws added to the collection might suggest new avenues of historical and contextual research. This two-way process supports this interdependent and interrelated form of reflexive praxis.

Once the narratives start to emerge, other jigsaws are made alongside in order to interact and cross-reference during the making process and to suggest new stories and ideas within an ever-changing narrative, an important characteristic that is reflected in



Figure 28 Unknown Artist *Map of Europe* (left). Unknown Artist *Kings and Queens of England* (right)

the exhibiting of these works either in pairs or in relation to each other. These works are being constantly re-worked (Figures 29 and 52) depending on the exhibition context, and as a reflection of the non-fixity of complex hybrid culture itself (Kus 2008; Frink and Perkins 2005, Spivac 1998). In this respect, the meaning of the work is changing through constant re-working.

Rarely do I look for particular missing components that might be suggested by the developing narrative content; rather, I allow, in a more Dada sense, what is there to at times fortuitously cross-reference other works. The jigsaws therefore are exhibited often as groups to allow meta-narratives to form both within and across the work. Meta-narratives are important in their distrust of grand narratives such as enlightenment and emancipation, and support the theories of locality, chaos and disorder, and an implied state of anarchy within my work.

Over years of collecting jigsaws, I have never found two jigsaws with the same die-cut, but as Perec (1978) points out, there are basically three shapes (Figure 30), which he names with poetic humour: the “little chaps”; the “double crosses”; and the “crossbars”. The piecing together of multiple jigsaws therefore is a long and laborious process of hand cutting around each piece with a selection of wood cutting tools to make the best fit possible (Figure 29). This often produces lost sections and areas that need adjustment, resulting in tiny pieces being glued in to patch the edges of the seams. In certain circumstances, the jigsaws have painted additions, usually to soften or balance the images or to add text where relevant. The fact that it is impossible to hand cut the joint sections accurately reflects the principles of thirdspace in which opposing cultures can never truly integrate (Bhabha 1994, 86): the awkwardness of the misfit is reflective of the inevitability of cultural incommensurability. The jigsaws therefore are never finished, just displayed at a point of development that is relevant to a particular time and place. The allusion therefore of an incomplete state in the jigsaws has become one of the most powerful signifiers in my practice in its acknowledgement of permeable boarders and the growing pluralisation of shifting space.



Figure 29 Clive Barstow *Reworking the Jigsaws*



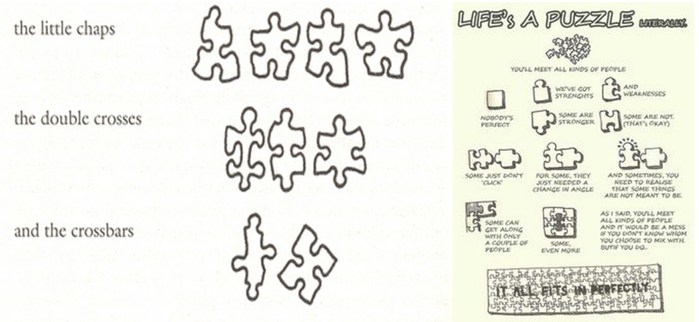


Figure 30 Georges Perec *The Little Chaps, Crossbars and the Double Crosses*

***Home and Housed* (Spectrum Gallery Perth Western Australia, 16–30 April 2015)**

Public Spaces, Imagined Places

The following sections discuss the assembling of new works across the three methods of production mentioned previously in relation to the audience and the venue.

Home and Housed was an invitational exhibition involving seventeen Australian artists who shared the theme of where we live in contemporary and historic contexts with urban and regional frames of reference. The exhibition displayed a number of approaches to home and belonging, including the work of a number of contemporary urban Aboriginal artists whose notions of land are quite distinct in terms of spiritual connection and within the frame of politics of empire and land ownership.

For this exhibition, I assembled two new jigsaws to work alongside *Flora, Fauna and the Ranger* and *Buffalo Drought* (Figures 21 and 23) in order to construct a meta-narrative between four images relating loosely to the theme of home and colony. The new works, *Lonesome Ghosts* (Figure 31) and *Picnic at Hanging Rocks* (Figure 32), focused on the construction of Australian landscape from the mythological position of European Arcadia, as an imposition on the natural world in the form of the mutation of colonial ideals within a contemporary context. The background images I chose included both natural and romanticised landscapes as portrayed by early European settlers and images of parkland settings as a means of introducing leisure as a product of capitalism (Molesworth 1998) and as a reference to the simulation of everyday in European Arcadian painting.

In this series of works, the theme of the public space emerges, a manufactured and controlled environment in which the tensions between the natural and constructed world and the dualisms of cultural division can be explored as liminal spaces in thirdspace dialogue. Central to these spaces is the thread of emotive nostalgia, particularly ‘restorative’ nostalgia, which Deleuze and Guattari define as a nostalgia that focuses on *nostos* and aims to reconstruct the lost home, often in association with religious or nationalist revivals (quoted in Legg 2004). Swetlana Boym discusses the spatial association of nostalgia that is of particular relevance in the scope of defining a trialectic space for these works, in that the emotive capacity of nostalgia gives it both a past and future relevance. As Legg asserts:

> Nationalist ideologues have attempted to utilize nostalgia, and to institutionalise it in museums and urban memorials. This is an interesting alternative to Pierre Nora’s suggestion that state backed historical narratives *produce* social memory through *lieux de memoire*. Boym suggests instead that nostalgic memories exist independently of a state that attempts to harness them. (2004, 100)

Public spaces are full of state-commissioned memorials to the colonial past, playing their part in the reconstruction of Arcadian imaginary places linked through historical figures of power. In contrast, the beach, a ‘natural’ public space in Australia, serves as a metaphorical non-space in terms of ownership and as a powerful symbolic space in which European settlers first set foot, through which the established the myth of *terra nullius* was constructed. Of significance to this research, the beach is also an in-between space, an “anomalous category between land and sea that is neither one nor the other but has characteristics of both” (Fiske 1983, 120). Because the beach is seen as a public space, it has evolved as a democratic shared space for multicultural Australia, although this is contested by Fiske in his comments about its contemporary usage: “the meanings of the beach that serve the family are contested by sub-cultures such as youth in general and surfers in particular” (1983, 121). Whether it is Anzac Cove, the European fleet landing, or the ‘invasion’ of the boat people, the beach conceals a potent underbelly of confrontation and contestation amidst the veneer of leisure and tranquility.

Consistent with Fiske’s proposition about usage of space (1983, 131–132), British theorists Knox and Warpole’s (2007) study on public spaces claims that it is the usage rather than

the ownership of a space that is important, a thorny proposition in the context of *terra nullius* and the ongoing issue of land rights in Australia. They say, “To members of the public, it is not the ownership of places or their appearance that makes them ‘public’, but rather their shared use for a diverse range of activities by a range of different people” (2007, 4). Knox and Walpole site the beach as an un-owned territory that connects us to the natural world, a point of irony when considering that war and conflict have become somewhat ‘naturalised’ within Western history. Segregation and inclusion are therefore juxtaposed on the beach, as Leone Huntsman suggests in her book *Sand in Our Souls*: “Generally people take it for granted that everyone belongs on the beach provided they don’t interfere with anyone else” (2001, 178).

The dynamics of the beach as a liminal space are made more powerful when it is used as a backdrop for change, and in particular, change brought about through conflict. This is powerfully represented in Fiona Foley’s work *Nulla 4 Eva* (2009) that juxtaposes the optimism of the beach scene with a series of photographic works inspired by the Cronulla riots in 2005[49] at one of the most contested sites in Australia, the Kurnell Peninsula. Foley’s images directly reference the inherent racism spurred by the Tampa crisis in 2001[50] in which fear within the Australian subconscious was inflamed by the government in a conscious effort to forge stricter immigration policies based on the recurrence of ‘invasion’. The seemingly passive nature of the beach and the bush are loaded backdrops to scenes of war and conflict, made more powerful by constructed political narratives that erase such selected events from our histories. The use of beach sand in my more recent sculptural works (Figures 64 and 65) make reference to the liminality of this non-space while acknowledging its socio-political significance as a place of contestation.

49 See: https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/dec/09/cronulla-summer-simmering-tension-race-riots-10-years
50 See: http://www.abc.net.au/archives/80days/stories/2012/01/19/3412121.htm

In these cases, the simulation of the natural world reinforces Arcadian ideals that create controlled and gentrified environments based on Euro-classical proportions that have little to do with the inconsistencies of nature or the local characteristics of place. Across the meta-narratives in *Home and Housed*, I created oppositional scenes as visual commentary on nation formation. Ernest Gellner’s observation that “nationalism invents nations where they do not exist” (1964, 196) is perhaps no more clearly stated as in our public spaces, as replicas of Arcadian scenes in which anyone can enter and walk through as a ‘journey of nation’ (Rowley quoted in Gunner, Nuttall, and Darian-Smith 1996, 135). Richard White asserts:

> There is no ‘real’ Australia waiting to be uncovered…a national identity is an invention. There is no point asking whether one version of this essential Australia is truer than another because they are all intellectual constructs, neat, tidy, comprehensible—and necessarily false. (quoted in, Gunner, Nuttall, and Darian-Smith 1996, 131)

Maintaining Arcadian visions through nostalgia is a way of standing still while the rest of the world moves on. Public spaces therefore play an important role in establishing lasting colonial references to European classicism even when, in some cases, Europe ceases to do so. In a conference entitled *Arcadia Revisited* held in the UK in 1997, a number of artists were asked to contribute to a vision of change for a large open expanse called Norbury Park, which contained Georgian buildings, woodland and lakes. The brief was to design a new modern public space while paying homage to the Arcadian ideals on which it was originally built. The accompanying essays revealed a number of counter arguments to how parks reflect the needs of modern society, and ones that most often counter the assumptions about nostalgic spaces. The feeling by many artists involved was that the park was becoming a “theme park” and as such a Lacanian non-space. In her preface, Vicki Berger connects Arcadian ideals to Disneyland by stating “The theme park is a European, not only the British, version of Disneyland. But worse, Disneyland does not pretend to be what it isn’t—a shameless pretence, a rip roaring sequence of fakes. English theme parks are neither one-thing-or-the-other” (1997, 25).

In the works I included in *Home and Housed*, I symbolically invite Lacan, Disney, and Bhabha to a picnic in the theme park to enjoy a nostalgic view of the past alongside a humorous and ironic proposition of the present. These works collectively cement the idea of An-Arcadia,[51] a space where the separation of man and nature, reality and illusion, and us and them share the passive democracy of place. While it is a picturesque place, it is one in which anarchy, chaos, and conflict might prevail. In Kenneth Frampton's essay "In Search of the Modern Landscape", he discusses the separation of man from nature in a post-Baroque age and quotes Jean Starobinski's 1964 essay "The Invention of Liberty":

> The baroque interpretation of man and nature was now replaced by a separation, this establishing the distance between man and nature, which was a prerequisite for nostalgic contemplation. Now…this contemplative separation arose as a compensatory or expiatory reaction against the growing attitude of practical men toward nature. While technical exploitation tended to wage war on nature, houses and parks attempted reconciliation, a local armistice, introducing the dream of an impossible peace. (1991, 42)

To express the reality of man's dislocation from nature within the illusion of Starobinski's "dream of an impossible peace", I utilise Disney characters because they expose the underlying issues of race and othering behind the mask of innocent play. The 'path' on which we journey is also picked up in these early jigsaws as both a visual tool to lead the eye, and as a narrative thread. Gillian Darley discusses pathways in the design of country gardens, and states, "The path in the landscape—urban or rural—is destined to be a narrative thread, the connection between spaces and events, ensuring, if appropriate, the link between beginning middle and end" (1997, 48).

The classical references that have underpinned the gentrified landscape in Britain can be traced back to the early eighteenth century, some forty years before the first landing by British colonisers in Australia in 1770. A move away from classicism to a looser interpretation of nature was typified by the transitional late designs of Capability Brown, who had been the main proponent of classical Arcadian landscape design in Britain:

> By about 1730, the fashion had radically changed. All those qualities—regular, symmetry, and the perfection of geometrical forms—were replaced by their precise opposites, as landowners and professionals combined to move in the direction of a more natural environment in which nature could be allowed, within limits, a little more freedom to express her personality. (Appleton 1997, 62)

It is almost as if the colonising of Australia allowed the continuation of the formal and classical traditions of European landscape at a time when Britain was in the process of transforming to a new way of thinking, a return to nature as wilderness. The Arcadian ideal therefore was out of date even before it was constructed and, of course, out of place. In the context of the ever-shifting and shared trialectic space in which my artworks attempt to operate, this aspect of time-slip—past, present, and future—becomes more dynamic than in a singular state. Jane Howarth points out:

> Arcadian imagery harkens back to the imagined comfort of a slow moving society. Slow moving societies have common values, rules and conventions about sharing space… fast moving societies threaten the notion of Arcadia. By contrast they have blurred and clashing values, rules and conventions. We may feel as if we are hovering on the brink of a future in which settled identity is disrupted. Our skills about how to share public space are at risk. There may be no 'us' to whom public space belongs. (quoted in Berger and Vasseur 1997, 157)

Australian Arcadia as encountered in public spaces might purposely contribute to the idea of a non-owned space. The enduring construct of Arcadia therefore adds value to the collective consciousness of maintaining European ownership of land well after the fashions of formalised landscape have passed. Within the realities of a faster moving society and one that is quickly globalising, the image of Arcadia should now assume a completely different form (as visualised in Figures 24, and 37-40).

51 An-Arcadia is a word play combining 'anarchy' and 'Arcadia' to suggest that all is not what it seems in Arcadia.

Kings Park in Perth is a wonderful example of Berger's reference to a borderland theme park. The southernmost tip of the original sacred meeting place of the Noongar peoples overlooking the Swan River has been taken over and carefully reconstructed to reflect Arcadian principles. While this has become the meeting ground for multicultural leisure under the pretense of a nostalgic longing for the past, the real past of natural bush (representing some sixty thousand years of spiritually significant Aboriginal meeting places) is concealed. While this could be argued to be a policy to protect sacred sites, it serves also to establish hegemony and priority as a space that signifies the dominant Western power of colony.

Despite the innocent and inclusive appearance of public spaces, they reflect the growth of power, political independence, the development of military might and most importantly, the consolidation of territory (Giddens 1990). The formation of a state-nationalism requires the nurturing of ideas and myths as the "emotional and sentimental glue" that binds people together (Holsti quoted in Osbourne 2001, 7) in the formation of a geography of identity, based on the assumptions that people identify with particular places, often as nostalgic references to their original lands, and in the formation of a new national identity. This, as Osbourne suggests, occupies imagined terrains that serve as mnemonic devices contributing to collective memories. Osbourne's (2001) central tenet is that space and time are metaphysically neutral and that there is no inherent identity to place; rather, people produce places and derive identities from them through which an ongoing reciprocal relationship is built between people and the place they inhabit. Nostalgia, as a central ingredient to these new and imaginary spaces, is "shown in its expressions as well as causes, and must be investigated using a dual archeology of memory and place, and a dual history of illusions and actual places" (Legg 2004, 100). The construction of the landscape of memory and place therefore is socially and politically loaded in postcolonial Australia, an element of political and cultural construction that is predominant throughout my artworks.

Artworks Made for Home and Housed

The two new jigsaws made for *Home and Housed* focus on the idea of home. In the formation of a larger body of work, I expose the reclassification of race difference to "species boundaries" (Glassmeyer 2013, 111) within my British-Australian-Chinese nexus by purposely placing 1950s' Disney characters in shared environments and in proximity to Chinese characters. This locates my jigsaw works in both a specific period in time when the propaganda of East–West politics was at its most virulent[52] and within a futuristic and theoretical thirdspace of social contestation and cultural incommensurability. While the rapid expansion of the Disney empire cannot be held solely responsible for the indoctrination of generations of children in terms of dominant cultural values, it does stand as possibly the most powerful and lasting example of mainstream high culture[53] where the complexities of polarity and prejudice are masqueraded through innocence and play.

Racist depictions through drawing can be traced back to the work of caricaturists such as Arthur Frost and Edward Kemble in the mid-1800s. Caricaturists, and later Disney, "made the largest impact by normalizing these caricatured perspectives largely due to the accessibility of the media" (Willetts 2013, 11). In a survey of the origins of racist depictions through various forms of drawing, Willets comments on the significance of visual representations of blackness:

> A large majority of the images continued to highlight the differences between Africans and Europeans and create a dichotomous relationship that presented Europeans as good, pretty, intellectual, refined and driven, commonly articulated as *whiteness*, juxtaposed against bad, ugly, emotional, savage and lazy Africans, representing *blackness*. It was the racialization of humanity that served as the foundation for many theories related to the validity of inherent *inhumanness* of black people, thereby grounding the argument for enslavement, segregation oppression and genocide. (2013, 11)

52 The early 1960s witnessed an escalation of the Cold War partly as a result of the Sino-Soviet split in 1956 and the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. The construction of the Berlin wall on 13 August 1961 segregated West and East Berlin and contributed to a stark redefinition of the Capitalist–Communist divide.

53 The term 'high culture' is often used, not as a superior form of culture in itself but rather one that is reflective of, but often removed from, everyday living societies and communities. This can often contradict the notion of popular culture in which Disney's animations are often referred to in this study.

In terms of the power of Disney's influence on generations of people like myself, and in reference to the hidden nature of characterised signifiers and visual codes embedded within his animations, Willetts refers to the globalisation of Mickey Mouse from the early 1930s and the acceptance of inherent racism by an unsuspecting public:

> It is his swift rise to international iconic status that makes Disney's visual commentary on Blackness so complicated and problematic. Mickey's world-wide appeal spread perspectives about black people that went unchallenged because a counter narrative did not exist…It is clearly impossible to compete with hundreds of years of propagandist portrayals of African diasporan people as a justification for oppression and enslavement. It is that understanding coupled with the subtlety of these images that result in them remaining largely unnoticed or ignored in mainstream society, from the very beginning until today. (2013, 15)

The symbolising of a culturally established "blackness" informs my sculptural practice, as is discussed later in this chapter (Figures 59–65). While my jigsaw works are full of colour and displaced optimism, my sculptural works are intentionally predominantly monochromatic to emphasise the various cultural and dystopian readings of black and white as polarities and as racial signifiers. The perpetuation of this dichotomous relationship through centuries of anthropological drawings and propagandist caricatures connects the underlying prejudices and established views of race engendered through popular culture from the 1930s to contemporary hybrid communities. This positioning materialises in my most recent art practice as oppositional commentary to Disney's racialisation strategy (which contributes to a national identity) in which I attempt to create a new and imaginary Arcadia that is inclusive rather than divisive. This creates new tensions both narratively and visually but refers more in spirit to Benedict Anderson's 1991 statement about imagined communities in which "Nation-States have made every effort to promote a sense of national and cultural identity in order to limit communitarian divisions" (Dervin 2014, 1)

The use of Disney characters throughout my jigsaw series refers predominantly to the early animalisations of Donald Duck, Bugs Bunny, and Goofy in the 1940s and 1950s—a time when American nationalism was rife. As Parasher observes:

> The figures–braves, squaw, chief, princess—are immediately recognisable as Disney which in itself displays a caricature history that was at inception specifically racist (Little Black Sambo, et al.) and then transformed into animals (Goofy, Bugs, Porky) as the animal bodies which embedded stereotypes were subsequently written. (2013, 43)

Wartime propaganda relied heavily on zoomorphism within a fantasy world that acts as a stepping-stone between reality and simulation (Glassmeyer 2013, 99–114). Animalisation first appeared in my artwork entitled *Lonesome Ghosts* (Figure 31), which refers to the title of a Disney classic of 1937 in which the central character of Goofy is hired to exterminate ghosts from a haunted house. The ghostly scene transfers to the park in this artwork and is made more dreamlike as there are no public displays of family, which is a direct reference to the stolen generation, an emptiness that Berger (1997) mentions in her critique of a walk in the Arcadian park. Furthermore, discussing absence as an issue within the gallery space, Brian O'Doherty (1976) makes a pertinent observation that parallels absence within the picture narrative itself, "The [gallery] space offers the thought that while eyes and minds are welcome, space occupying bodies are not—or are tolerated only as kinesthetic mannequins for further study" (1976, 15). This Cartesian paradox is reinforced in *Lonesome Ghosts*, in which bodies are excluded, particularly those of Aboriginal owners of the land (more specifically, the Stolen Generations).

In terms of the representational imagery and communicative capacity of *Lonesome Ghosts*, Goofy is depicted admiring an Arcadian rose garden, a symbol of European flora imported into Australia, a sentimental signifier of time gone by. My placement of the cactus, a symbolic reminder of the actuality of a dry and arid climate that is made more unsustainable by our need to constantly water our imported plants to maintain our colonial heritage, is an attempt to disrupt the out-of-place, out-of-time garden. Furthermore, the cactus represents the incompatibility of the colonies in its attempt to be inclusive. Artist Richard Wentworth discusses the 'game' of appropriating plants both inside and out:

> We are sophisticated enough to distinguish public from private, and the weather still tells us which is in and which is out, but we are very busy blurring these things. It is worth reminding ourselves that it is us who named 'nature'. It didn't name itself. So we can have tame cacti and we can have captive cats. These are all part of that game we like to play. (quoted in Berger and Vasseur 1997, 89)

Lonesome Ghosts aims to illustrate the taming of nature through the transplanted European garden, whose classical illusion is accentuated by the addition of a painted surface, a tactile addition to give authority and authenticity[54] through references to classical eighteenth-century painting. Structurally, the addition of the cactus is left hanging outside the picture, a device I often use to amplify the awkwardness of the ill-fitting and unfinished image, as displacement is an important signifier of an incommensurable space. This strategy also acknowledges the removal of the picture frame, and how this suggests continuity and transformation as a removal from absolutism into a space that suggests three-dimensional space with physical as well as pictorial readings.

Picnic at Hanging Rocks (Figure 32) takes this fracturing of the image further to propose a space that seems to be disintegrating while in the process of being constructed. The title refers to the film *Picnic at Hanging Rock,* an Australian drama shot in 1975 and written by Peter Weir. As with *Lonesome Ghosts*, the plot refers directly to aspects of loss and absence but in the Australian natural landscape, as young schoolgirls go missing during a picnic, resulting eventually in the death of one of the girls while others remain missing through to the conclusion of the film. The film is one of many Australian films that pit humans against nature; in this case, pitching the innocent femininity of the schoolgirls against the harsh masculinity of the Australian landscape. Rocks appear very little in Arcadian landscapes because they have religious and symbolic references to death. As Jay Appleton points out:

54 The term 'authenticity' is often applied to painting as a dominant form of art, privileging painting over the plastic arts.

> Throughout the middle ages a different theology (later so dramatically expressed in Holman Hunt's painting *The Scapegoat*) equated the wilderness with a Judeo-Christian tradition of evil. Rocks and cliffs were seen as the expression of a failure of divine workmanship, that is to say a success for the devil. (Appleton 1997, 59)

In my *Picnic at Hanging Rocks*, Snow White sits on the devil's rock.[55] However, the seven dwarfs are absent, and she is seen conversing with the local animals. As Aboriginal people were classified as flora and fauna until 1967, there is a layered reference in this scene to the dialogue between white settlers and Aboriginals, but again through the poignancy of absence. Snow White, as the settler, looks out over an out-of-time and out-of-place beach taken from the Grand Canal in Venice (a man-made nostalgic theme park in the European Arcadian tradition, as re-supposed in Las Vegas), displacing time and place as a reference to the dream sequence in the original film Lonesome Ghosts.

Similarly, the dream qualities in Weir's *Picnic at Hanging Rock* offer moments when reality is shattered and where the unconscious enters, linking the conscious to the unconscious. In an attempt to establish a second voice within the work, I sought out collaboration with writer and artist Craig Hudson. This approach has become increasingly important in my creative practice as a means to involve multiple voices and interpretations of the themes surrounding shared identities. Hudson responded to the basic themes within *Picnic at Hanging Rocks* by writing a short story from his perspective and practice. His interpretation was sympathetic to the central theme:

> Too often the things that we all worry about and hence the realities of day-to-day existence we are all forced to contend with, are magnified for the migrant, particularly those from non-English speaking countries, where such obstacles as commonplace as signage and directions become contentious and perilous points of difference and separation. Perhaps there is a utopia, but it is unlikely to appear where we most expect it to. (Hudson, artist statement 2015)

55 Snow 'White' represented purity in early Disney animations, while black signified threat (negro slaves, dogs, etc.), a clear sign of Disney's racial prejudice and attitudes toward the 'other'.



Figure 31 Clive Barstow *Lonesome Ghosts*

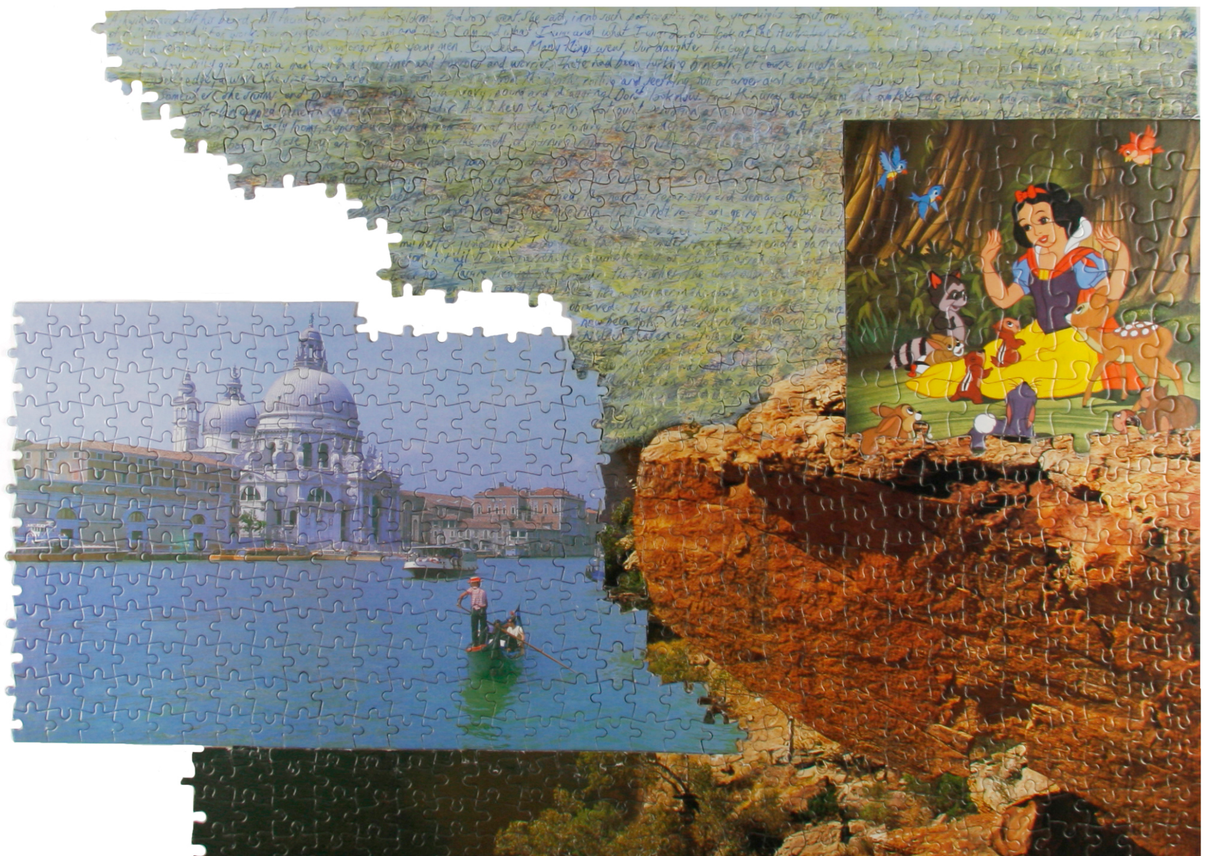


Figure 32 Clive Barstow *Picnic at Hanging Rocks*

Hudson's story was handwritten onto the jigsaw on a painted surface over the sky section of the landscape; this structural decision was intended to act as a transitionary device from the conscious to the unconscious, with further layers of symbolic reference to heaven and transcendence. Text in this case suggests a literal reading in line with Kant's objective truth. However, the text is delicate and almost unrecognisable, and consequently offers a subtle in-between subjective meaning that is more consistent with a Lacanian non-space.

In the curated exhibition *Home and Housed*, the four works were presented in pairs on low-hanging shelves positioned at 45 degrees to the wall in order to reflect the child-like nature of the jigsaw as a toy, and consequently to make the adult viewer bend down to observe them. The intention was to manoeuvre the viewer into 'seeing through the eyes of a child' through which they would encounter the veil of simplicity that conceals the many layers of complexity behind the narratives of colonialism and hybridity. This approach makes reference to the work of KAWS (Figure 33). The jigsaws work on both a metaphorical level (symbolising ongoing social construction) and as a pretense to the innocence of play, paying homage to many contemporary adult cartoons, such as *The Simpsons*[56] and *Spitting Image*[57] in which complex and serious issues are embedded within seemingly simple and light-hearted narratives.

56 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Simpsons
57 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spitting_Image



Figure 33 KAWS *Small Lie* (left). Clive Barstow *Low Shelves for Jigsaws* (right)

The exhibition also presented an unforeseen narrative in that the works were positioned closely to visually interact with *Colonial Grab* (2013), an animated film by Joan Ross that shares similar concerns (Figure 34); specifically, the same dark and ironic humour in its criticism of colonial power. Perhaps more importantly, the placing established a dramatic tension between our shared themes and values, but from the polarities of the colonised and the coloniser. Ross's animations appropriate the colonial paintings of John Glover and Joseph Lycett, and depict a flouro-vested aristocracy playing slot machines to win the rights to land. Furthermore, *BBQ This Sunday* invites early settlers to picnic with the Aboriginals, a theme of leisure that is shared in the images presented in *Home and Housed*.

The positioning of these works suggested a new form of collaboration of sorts, one through association. The narratives of these works combine and interact to present deeper meta-narratives across the works, and consequently present a powerful and interactive view of colony that share a position of critique but from two very different positions, thus establishing a broad viewing space for discourse. Through their placement, my works share with Ross's the common narrative thread of the river as metaphorical carrier of the fluidity of history and as a way of walking together (Stasiuk 2016)[58] into a shared landscape of practical and spiritual reconciliation.

This serendipitous association is significant as it presents alternatives to the accepted notion of collaboration between artists, bringing into play curatorial decisions that involve the creativity of thematic intent rather than a direct collaboration between artists at the making stage of the work. Both forms of collaboration in this exhibition have introduced aspects of the unknown and the unpredictable; this important liberating aspect allows other voices to contribute. In the spirit of representing a broader dialogic space, collaboration as part of this creative research offers a dynamic space that best reflects the unconscious aspects of Bhabha's (1990) "place of splitting" as one of unpredictability.

58 This references the collaboration between Aboriginal elder Dr Noel Nannup of ECU and Professor Stephen Hopper of UWA (2016) in which the Swan River in Perth is described as a carrier of the spirit of the Noongar peoples through time and place.



Figure 34 Clive Barstow *Works Positioned in Relation to Colonial Grab by Joan Ross* (left). Joan Ross *Still from Colonial Grab* (right)

Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow (Hu Jiang Gallery, Shanghai, China, 28 October–27th November 2015)

Background

This exhibition *Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow* was curated by Dorothy Zhu and came about through an invitation by artists and academics in China, familiar with my artworks and writing. The opportunity to exhibit in Shanghai with this particular body of work that fuses Chinese and Australian cultural traditions offered me a stage on which to test assumptions across the cultural contexts in which I operate. A particular position within postcolonial theory resonated with this exhibition from the outset—that of Edward Kus' (2008) commentary around Chinese identity and its reliance on Western perceptions in its formation. In relation to the central research question of this doctoral research, this exhibition afforded me the opportunity to test the external perceptions of cultural hybridity in situ. To establish this, I purposely avoided a singular position of commentary; rather, I attempted to present an almost nomadic and floating space in which "position" was shifting and more difficult to determine.[59]

The title *Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow* derives from a quotation by Le Corbusier in 1927 (Swissinfo.ch 2012) in which he speaks optimistically about the virtues of colonialism as a means of spreading and sharing the aesthetic values of modernist social spaces in a growing machine age. In his later life, Le Corbusier offered a less hegemonic view of the colonised space by stating "nothing is transferable but thought" (1989), a segue into Lacanian transference theory, which I expand upon later in this section. Although Corbusier was referring to a particular time and place, his optimistic and later more realistic reflections on the globalising of ideas draws parallels with Said's and Bhabha's contemporary cultural theories, which in many cases reach the same impasse. In this sense, the exhibition also did not offer any solutions; rather, it re-constructed the pieces of complex interrelationships in a way that celebrates the aesthetics of the unresolved, the unfinished, and the incommensurable. The title of the exhibition also makes reference to Paolozzi and Hamilton's seminal exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery London in 1956 entitled *This Is Tomorrow,* the exhibition that arguably marked the beginning of the Pop era in Britain (Wilson 1974, 36).

Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow was the third exhibition I participated in in Shanghai, and I produced a number of new works for it during 2015 based around the theme of constructed parklands and iconic landscapes that made comparisons and interjections,[60] that in turn posed questions about personal and national identities as seen from multiple cultural viewpoints. This was my first attempt to present works that directly responded to Lefebvre's trialectics of spatiality as an extension of Lacan's non-space and beyond the two-dimensionality of thirdspace theory. The intention for this exhibition was to present recognisable iconic scenes but within a theoretical model of a timeless and place-less space, in turn prompting responses that were partly determined by the audience's individual lived experiences.

An influencing factor when forming the context of this exhibition was my shifting identity, made more acute for me by Banksy's exhibition *Dismaland*,[61] which had opened earlier in 2015 in Western-Super-Mare in the UK. *Dismaland* borrowed from Disney in a similar way to my jigsaw works by presenting a similarly ironic world view but in a rundown and derelict public space not normally associated with visual art. Banksy's context of a pessimistic and dystopian world was socially contextualised in a failed winter wonderland of a British seaside town in decline. My challenge therefore was to present similar notions of a delusional theme park but through a colonial lens in which the narratives of hopelessness, failure and isolation have been transported to completely different cultural situations.

59 This is beyond Lacan's in-between non-space; it attempts to create a more neutral three-dimensional space that is not determined by two opposing points of view. This space is more in keeping with the complex neutralising of space brought about through hybridity and Diaspora.

60 I use the word 'interjections' because it best describes the way in which the fragments of images disrupt a single notion of time and place and in many cases in a provocative and 'in your face' manner.

61 See Banksy (2015) http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2015/08/dismaland/

Social Isolation

In the construction of a notional social space in this exhibition, I assumed that young and old Chinese audience members would not necessarily share the same nostalgic references, unlike their counterparts in the West. The jigsaw in Chinese Shanghai culture assumes a *higher art* status as a plaything of the growing bourgeois middle class, a reference to wealth both in terms of money and privileged leisure time, a resonant reflection perhaps of China's growing middle class. The jigsaw therefore carries references to class and wealth in the Chinese context. In addition, the found object, a central element of twentieth-century contemporary art in the West, does not have the same value meaning in China. This is perhaps due to the fact that outside of the contemporary international art scene the traditional processes of drawing, painting and sculpture are still heavily privileged as a way of maintaining and respecting tradition and history through art. The large number of traditional brush and paper shops in China are testament to the continuation of traditional crafts, while jigsaws are more difficult to find beyond the Western tourist markets and high-end game shops.

Found objects in mainland Chinese contemporary art, adopted by artists such as Ai Wei Wei and Lu Bolin, are often used as tools to criticise the state systems that control free speech and creative expression—a central theme within thirdspace theory and diaspora and one that most minorities can identify with—in a subversive and veiled manner. Bolin in particular uses the destruction of urban buildings originally used by artist communities as a metaphor for his own hidden identity as a professional artist, an expression of his devalued status in a modern and globalising China. His series of works entitled *Hiding in the City* (Figure 35) establish a position of alienation within one's own land while at the same time offering critique about Disney consumerism sweeping through China. Thus, the found object has a particular meaning in China that is more political than nostalgic, which has the effect of framing my jigsaw works in a more heightened arena of political and social critique. Although this does not surface explicitly in this exhibition, the notion of social isolation as seen through Bolin's invisible status connects contemporary artists in both China and Australia and particularly with urban Aboriginal artists such as Brenda L. Croft, who I make reference to in my sculptural works that are discussed later in this chapter (Figures 56–59). Croft was one of the first artists to work within the newly formed Open Bite Australia project in Perth in 1998. Her series of photographs *Man about Town* (2003) (Figure 36), taken in Sydney and Perth, pertain to the feelings of alienation experienced by those within the city, particularly by urbanised Aboriginal people.

Croft's (2000) questions "Do you know where you are? On whose land you stand, whether here or when you travel over vast distances? Or whose bones were ground underfoot into fertilising stolen spoils? Do you know where you are from? Going to? Been?" challenge our belonging to time and place and resonate with the central theme and title of *Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow*. The exhibition made a broader reference to Marx's theory of alienation[62] but substituted the worker (and their inability to determine their destiny within a social class system) with the Indigenous (in their inability to determine their destiny as a result of state power or colonisation). While Croft refers to lost identity within her own land, Bolin refers to his disappearing identity in China for similar reasons. Photographs of lone figures in deserted urban spaces are more graphically overt than my reconstructed jigsaws, isolation being a bi-product of my own focus on reconstructed Arcadian spaces and values. The sentiments, however, are strongly related as a commentary on contemporary society that professes integration through the guise of multiculturalism but in practice offers only isolation and alienation for the disenfranchised and powerless.

62 Marx's theory of alienation as an estrangement from the self was developed in his 1884 text *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and later developed by the Situationist group in the late 1950s as a form of advanced capitalism (Cox 1998).



Figure 35 Lu Bolin *Hiding in the City*



Figure 36 Brenda Croft *Man About Town*

The Missing Pieces: A Psychoanalytical Perspective

To develop the themes of this exhibition, certain elements of psychoanalysis can offer a useful perspective in the area of narrative meaning and particularly in the understanding of the transference and interpretation of symbolic meaning between artist and audience. In his book *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling*, Peter Brooks approaches the criticism and analysis of poetry and creative literature as a conduit to unravelling Freud's dream theories through the connections between the conscious and unconscious state. He proposes that:

> Psychoanalysis matters to us as literary critics because it stands as a constant reminder that the attention to form, properly conceived, is not a sterile formalism, but rather one more attempt to draw the symbolic and fictional map of our place in existence. (1994, 44)

There are two elements within psychoanalytical theory that I find most productive in contextualising my perception of space, place, and time in my current jigsaw works, moving into Lefebvre's trialectics of spatiality: (1) those of the chronological transference of meaning; and (2) and the culturally specific interpretation of missing information (or erasure). While assembling the jigsaws for this exhibition, I was acutely aware of the cultural implications of the missing pieces, particularly within the context of the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal people in Australia and the erasure of Aboriginal culture in the early settler paintings I regularly use in my jigsaw assemblages. As Langton (2003) points out:

> The very idea of an 'Australian' landscape is based on erasure. This erasure is not simply that of nature subsumed and recast by culture, but that of the distinctly Aboriginal, autochthonous spiritual landscapes obliterated by the recreant settler visions which literally followed the frontier in the canvas bags of artists who came to paint the new land. (52)

While this reference is particularly poignant to me as a British migrant, it was significant to gauge the perceptions of the Chinese audience in the formation of new narratives outside of this context. Assuming there are cultural differences at play within the transferential models of meaning within psychoanalytical theory, I make assumptions, albeit framed critically by my research, about storytelling that might be pertinent for the British, Australian, and Chinese triangular relationship with which I am currently working. Within my doctoral works involving the British-Chinese-Australian nexus (such as *Entering An-arcadia,* Figure 44, and *Otherview* Figure 45), the notion of transference through absence (represented through missing jigsaw pieces) is conveyed within Daoist (and Buddhist) philosophy as emptiness, having "existed from the beginning of Chinese thought" (Cheng 1994, 94). Daoism explains this emptiness as being the connecting space between the physical and the spiritual world, a common element that has consistency of meaning across all aspects of this trialectic cultural model as previously discussed.

The Psychological observations of what is missing in Freud's silent absence, as a metaphysical and ultimately disorienting construct of space, has connections to what Frank White (1987) termed the 'overview effect', where astronauts experience a cognitive shift in their sense of space while viewing earth from a distance. From this removed position, according to his interviews with returned astronauts, national boundaries disappear and the conflicts that divide people and nations become less significant. As White observes "Although feelings of awe and self-transcendence associated with the overview effect are episodic… these changes seem primarily to entail greater affiliation with humanity as a whole, as well as an abiding concern and passion for the wellbeing of earth" (1987, 39). Repositioning oneself therefore, either psychologically in this case or theoretically in the case of Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics, I suggest promotes a reflexive revisioning that is more sympathetic to our human condition and our relationship to space and place, one of the central aims of my creative works and of this research study.

In terms of psychoanalytical theory, Brooks turns to the Lacanian theory of transference in his explanation of the relational aspects of the analyst (the psychoanalyst) and the analysand (the person being analysed) through the presence of interactive dialogue. Brooks suggests: "If the transference necessarily elicits interpretation, it is equally true that the potential and the promise of interpretation, on the part of 'the subject supposed to know'—the analyst—triggers

the transference relation" (1994, 54). Brooks's position is based on twentieth-century Freudian psycho-analyst praxis in which the analyst attempts to retrieve lost information based on both retained evidence and through the construction of new narratives, an aspect that is central to the reading of the jigsaw pieces, both individually and collectively. Freud explains, "His [the analyst's] task is to make out what has been forgotten from the traces which it has left behind or, more precisely, to *construct* it" (1937, 258). When this story retrieval is coherently shaped and chronological, or as Paul Ricoeur describes "at the crossing point of temporality and narrativity" (1980, 171), it is the intervention of the analyst that pieces the jigsaw together rather than the idea that lost narrative is simply not there and waiting to be uncovered or disclosed. The new jigsaw works in this exhibition align more closely to the Lacanian theory of transference in their triggering of interpretive solutions as a result of a more intuitive and subjective interchange. Brooks explains this in these terms:

> As in most dialogues, the relation of the teller and the listener is simultaneously one of collaboration and struggle over its interpretation and indeed over its very constitution, the elements of which it is made, their ordering, their shape. (1994, 57)

My role as artist in the transference of narrative meaning through my artworks is unlike the psychoanalyst in that rather than acting as a conduit for the construction (or reconstruction) of memory and meaning, I play a more contributory role in presenting interpretive narratives often unrelated to single meaning, chronology, or actuality. However, the way in which transference seems to operate suggests a reliance on a two-way or multidirectional dialogue that sometimes results in a completely new meaning, as is the case with artistic collaboration. This would be the case for both psychoanalyst (facilitator) and artist (creator). In terms of the missing pieces of my jigsaws, the intended meaning of suggesting both absences of information and of a future yet to be placed has interesting associations with Lacanian (1997) transference theory. Brooks refers to Walter Benjamin's "Der Erzahler: Betrachtungen Zum Werk Nikolai Lesskows" translated from *Illuminations* in which Benjamin suggests that the art of storytelling is dead in its ability to exchange experiences ([1955] 1969, 409). Brooks comments:

> Our reading of Benjamin suggests that what may need to be scrutinised in narrative is less its "message', less its ostensible affirmations, and much more its interstices, its gaps, its moments of passage, the moments where something falls silent to indicate a transference, the moment where one begins to be able to hear other possible voices in response. (1994, 86)

The use of the fragment and white space has proven to be a powerful device in my work in terms of inviting the audience to invent the missing information (as a form of transference), either through the puzzle of reconstructing the whole or through the imagination in terms of inventing new truths and meanings from what is absent. I tested the juncture of Brooks' transference relation and Lacan's transference theory in Perth in a previous exhibition as part of this doctoral research, entitled *Thirdspace* in June 2015,[63] where I exhibited eight jigsaws in which the negative spaces of the unfinished jigsaws started to interlock. The audience response, gained through workshops and presentations, was consistent in their understanding of the unfinished narrative and to the idea that to some extent the narratives were the responsibility of the audience to complete. Transference, in this respect is, a cerebral and for some a subconscious act, reliant on various aspects of memory, experience, and subjective judgement, relating to the way we have been constructed both culturally and as individuals. Gaps and intersections therefore have a deeper and more significant role to play in their association with the transference of meaning across this body of work.

New Works Made for China

When assembling new jigsaws for the exhibition in China, I was conscious of the criticisms of Bhabha's and Hall's early theories of hybridity as "an extension of the celebratory and state sponsored multicultural discourses that invest in 'feel good' stories of 'happy family' of cultural diversity and ignore the harsh politics of migrant social history" (Papastergiadis 2003a, 159). As a way of reflexively gauging the unconscious involvement of an audience that have been raised in a very different cultural system, I chose to present the illusion of the happy family at play (as a shared value experience), but in line with more contemporary critique, offering an alternative dystopian interjection of potential conflict and anarchy, both explicitly and implied.

63 See the exhibition review in Appendix 13.

The exhibition started with a thematic connection to *War* and *Piece* by working extensively with paired images that relate to each other and create additional meta-narratives as a consequence. Using the Arcadian idyllic park setting as a basis, *Cabbage Crates over the Briny* (Figure 37) and *Innocence Lost* (Figure 38) are both versions of a scene of a melancholic Sunday afternoon in paradise disrupted by the overfly of a war plane returning from a very different reality. The dual images make reference to early nineteenth-century Daguerreotypes that through the process of reprinting the negative image as a positive, presented mirror images that had a lasting and subconscious effect of self-reflection. The presentation of scenes in these early photographic mirror images suggested both absence and presence in a subconscious form that would be realised a century later by Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, and later by the neo-Dada Fluxus movement in the form of photographic collage and psychoanalytical performance. Working with twinned images also amplifies our belief of truth and reality, a reassurance that allows the artist to play the 'trickster' role within and outside of the work itself. The images have painted additions in acrylic washes to disrupt the photographic quality of the surface by which an interruption of space is intensified.

Developing this theme further, *Watching and Waiting* (Figure 39) and *Jellystone* (Figure 40) are post-apocalyptic scenes where normality is restored and where a new multifaceted Arcadia has been reformed. In these works, cartoon characters, animals and humans exist happily side-by-side each with their own symbolic values and contexts. The path and the bridge offer a "narrative thread" (Darley 1997, 48) throughout the works, both as an illusionary device to lead the eye through the picture plane and to symbolise transition from reality to non-reality in line with Daoist theory, a device used heavily in traditional Chinese art as a transition from working life to eternal happiness. While Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park is now devoid of Indigenous Arapaho Indian inhabitants, two Kookaburras watch on from the adjoining image awaiting the moment when their laughing birdsong can pierce the silence as a comment on this postcolonial and post-apocalyptic world. My intention for *Watching and*



Figure 37 Clive Barstow *Cabbage Crates Over The Briny*



Figure 38 Clive Barstow *Innocence Lost*



Figure 39 Clive Barstow *Watching and Waiting*



Figure 40 Clive Barstow *Jellystone*

Waiting and *Jellystone* is to offer commentary and self-reflection by establishing a Lacanian non-space that is geographically unspecific and yet located both in Aboriginal and Native American homelands.

As a direct reference to Arcadian ideals, *Et in An-Arcadia Ego* (Figure 41) imitates Nicolas Poussin's classic painting *Et in Arcadia Ego* from 1637. Whereas Poussin presents a monocultural idyllic space of pastoral harmony, I chose to present the anarchic reality in which the ongoing tensions within complex multi-race societies are unavoidably revealed. The focal point of both images is at the point of near contact between the hands, a point of tension that suggests a potential connection of time and space, but one in which the context is quite different. In *Et in An-Arcadia Ego*, my intention is to reveal the enduring colonial attitudes toward the noble savage and "Othering" (Dervin 2014) to contribute to our re-reading of the classical interpretation of Arcadia—in this case, a new mythology full of racial tension. *Et in An-Arcadia Ego* involves a chance meeting between white holidaymakers and a romanticised Native American, suggesting a tense stand-off in sharp contrast to Poussin's idyllic monocultural dream. For me, the addition to the unsettling transition from an idyllic scene to one of contest and anarchy is the caravan, implying an element of the nomad, passing through a land that is contested, a sacred space now lost to a white man's theme park.

The shared themes of searching are further developed in *Gone Fishin'* (Figure 42) and *Uncool Britannia* (Figure 43), and are highly political in their commentary on the expansion and control of borders, a theme that in itself is full of irony in the context of recent politics surrounding refugees in Australia (Orner and Glass 2016). In terms of its multiplicity of cultural references, *Uncool Britannia* aims to create a dialogue across the three positions that are central to this body of work, namely British, Aboriginal and Chinese, fused by the glue of colonial expansion. The badge of the carp on Queen Elizabeth's dress was my intention to reveal the trickster at work, as the character for carp (*li* 鯉) is pronounced the





Figure 41 Clive Barstow *Et In An-arcadia Ego* (left). Nicolas Poussin *Et In Aracdia Ego* (right)



Figure 42 Clive Barstow *Gone Fishin'*



Figure 43 Clive Barstow *Uncool Britannia*

same as the character (*li* 利), meaning profit, and the character (*li* 力), meaning strength and power. Chinese homonyms offer the trickster entry into these works by engaging in humour and multiple meanings across cultural languages that are usually invisible outside of the language itself. Mixing metaphors and with help from a bilingual trickster, these images create new meaning between languages that is both playful and interpretive.

Gone Fishin' portrays an early settler who now has to deal with an influx of illegal immigrants arriving on the shores of Australia. Former Australian Prime Minister John Howard's famous quote "We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come", given as part of the Pacific Solution immigration policy in 2001, resonates in this image in which Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck attempt an illegal landing. The physical connections of pieces in this image are left relatively disconnected, as for me they act as a signifier of an increasing protectionism and distrust and of the politicising of the 'new invaders'.

As a departure from the normal format and structure of my previous jigsaw artworks, *Entering An-Arcadia* (Figure 44) and *Otherview* (Figure 45) attempt a triangulation of positions in line with Shan-Shui-Hua painting. These works and *A Chinese Whisper* (Figure 51) are the first works that achieve what I perceive to be the "spirit" of Lefebvre's trialectics of spatiality in that they transcend the Cartesian mind–body binary separation and offer a visualisation of social embodiment. *Entering An-Arcadia* and *Otherview* imitate the structure of a Chinese scroll, revealing multiple scenes within a field of view that is difficult to absorb in a singular reading. These works also attempt to establish the trialectics of spatiality through a complex interplay of landscapes, iconographies and cultural references that disrupt our sense of singularity, hegemony and laws of perspective space. These images are composed of the three cultural positions within this study, those of Aboriginal, Chinese and British, which are each represented by recognisable iconic photographic landscapes woven together to present a hybrid place that retains identifiable cultural markers within a new multicultural Arcadia.

The three works discussed here make reference to Bakhtin's (1992) dialogic theories on infinite time and space where meanings are never closed; rather, they interact and inform each other. In his description of the chronotope, neither time or space are privileged over each other but are interdependent elements that work with and for each other. In a discussion about Bakhtin's notions regarding "the time/space continuum that gives shape to a novel", Shumway observes "As the novel shifts from one chronotope to another, the gaps and silences that are a necessary part of the representation of an ideology will become increasingly noticeable to the perceptive reader" (1994, 182). The connections between the complex narrative chronotopes in Bakhtin's dialogics and Freud's observations on silence and erasure in psychoanalysis are brought together to form a disorienting narrative through an emphasis on what is *missing* in these works.

Structurally, and within the confines of using the jigsaw as a found object, *Entering An-Arcadia* and *Otherview* also attempt to emulate Shan-Shui-Hua landscape brush painting and its underpinning characteristics of multi-point and multidirectional perspective as a culturally specific reference to Daoist truth. The link to Daoism materialises in the three main elements of Shan-Shui-Hua art: the path, the threshold, and the heart. As mentioned above, painters who work in the style of Shan-Shui-Hua do not present an image from what they see; rather, they attempt to paint what they *think* about nature, reflecting not the viewer's eye but the mind. Shan-Shui-Hua therefore is more a vehicle of philosophy and as such fits with my own art practice, which accommodates various aspects of reality and non-reality across multiple positions, spaces and points of time. The Chinese scroll does not deliver a moment in time, but rather a time span that I assert aligns with my interpretation of trialectic space as an accumulation of time and place. In her paper on reinterpreting Shan-Shui-Hua painting as a moving digital visualisation, video artist Christin Bolewski discusses the differences between Western Cartesian perspective and the multiple vanishing points within Chinese landscape painting in respect of reconstructing digitised three-dimensional space as a continuity montage.

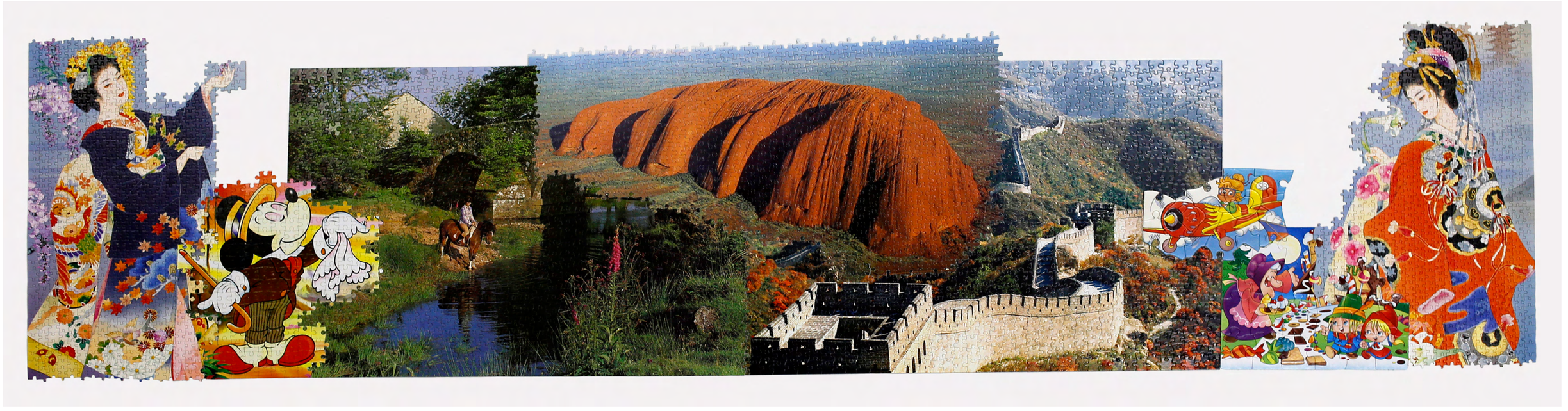


Figure 44 Clive Barstow *Entering An-arcadia*



Figure 45 Clive Barstow *Otherview*

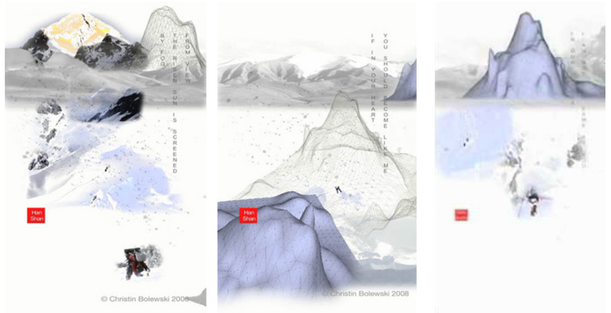


Figure 46 Christin Bolewski *Video Scroll Shan-Shui-Hua* (reproduced with kind permission of the artist)

She asserts:

> …multi-perspective as well as temporality are important features for both East Asian aesthetics and the medium of film, and the Chinese horizontal hand scroll is referred to as the first motion picture: it unrolls in time and space and is enjoyed as a progression while the painting is revealed foot by foot. One could say that film montage, specifically 'continuity montage' - the montage of time and space as an addition of shots taken from different viewpoints in a sequence, is assembled in a single picture; the temporal plain is composed within one image. (Bolewski 2008, 2)

The multiple perspectives and the resulting virtual camera movement in Bolewski's *Video Scroll* (Figure 46) have been—as much as the jigsaws will allow—imitated as a basis for the construction of *Entering An-Arcadia* and *Otherview*, acknowledging the fact that Bolewski's intentions are for a time-based sequence plotted through a 3D mapping software for use in movie production.

While the physical perspectives can be mirrored structurally to a point, the representation of time in my construction is an implied time span across centuries, and is my attempt at tracing the ownership of sacred lands from pre-history to the present day. This notion of time being timeless within the reconstructed static image together with the multi-positional aspects of cultural geographies in this body of work starts to connect with the social production of time and space as expressed by Lefebvre. This abstract concept of space and time, for me, offers a new plurality in which a predominantly two-dimensional postcolonial dialogue could reposition itself beyond the East–West dialogue and beyond the paradigms of polarised cultural difference. The visual representation of this shifting space, more in tune with Araeen's broader explanation of multiculturalism, is perhaps best represented not by a system or formula of resolution, but by a structure that suggests an ill-fitting awkwardness. This emphasises Marcus's "legitimates fragmentation (1986, 191) in the true spirit of flux and hybridity as seen from within its own transition rather than at its conclusion.

The horizontal scroll in Shan-Shui-Hua painting is a left-to-right system that informs a chronological narrative, usually in a relatively short timeframe. Chinese scrolls also operate vertically and contain embedded symbolic references to heaven and earth by which a mind–body transformation is implied. In the work entitled *God's Country* (Figure 47), I have focused on the relatively recent separation of church and state by suggesting a re-joining of elements that were fundamental to the construct of Arcadia, those of religion and place. Through the use of local aerial photographs,[64] I have 'jig-sawed' together new landscapes with the embedded impression of the cross as a suggestion of the influence of religion on our formation of Arcadian landscapes on traditional Aboriginal land. These images use

64 Supplied by the Department Of Land Management (DOLA) Perth, Western Australia, 2011.

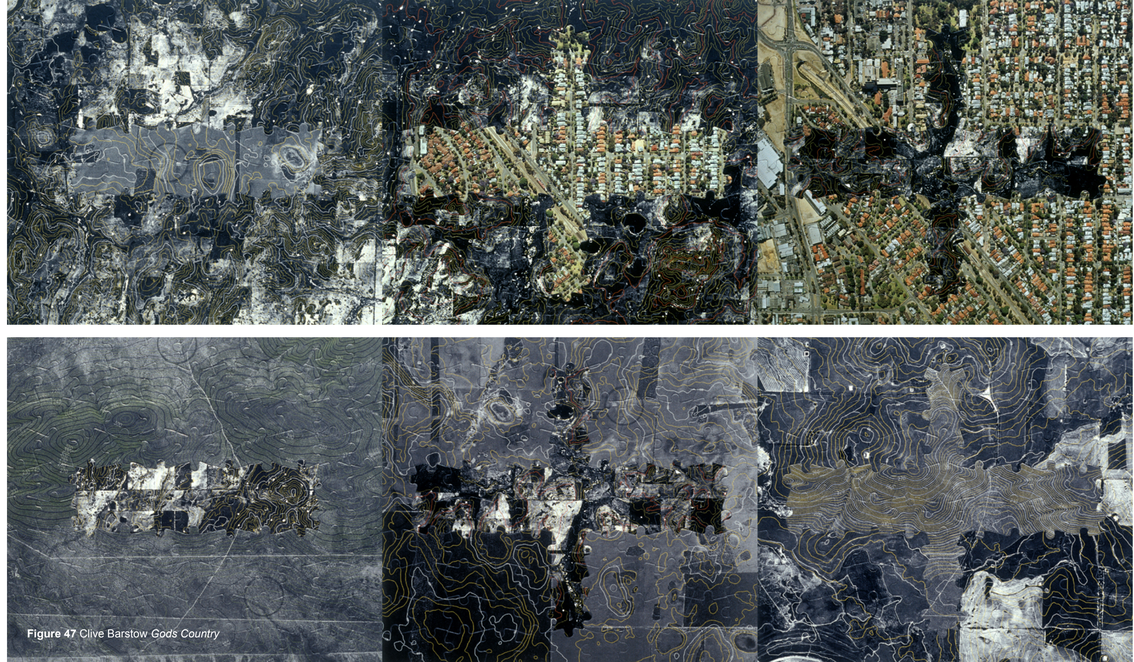


Figure 47 Clive Barstow *Gods Country*



Figure 48 Photographer Unknown *Kamilaroi People* (left). Reko Rennie *Big Red* (middle). Clive Barstow *Gods Country* section (right)

original aerial mapping photographs rather than found objects as a source, questioning the way that we perceive reality and non-reality, a play on the notion that the camera cannot lie. The embedded cross motif in these 'Australian scrolls' symbolises not only the presence of religion but also how this belief system has driven a fundamental shift in our attitudes to land management since feudalism and in the context of colonisation and urbanisation.

While *God's Country* implies a post-feudalist snapshot of a landscape in transition, there are two elements of contemporary Aboriginal and Chinese cultural languages at play in the formation of this work. Through working with a number of Aboriginal artists in the Open Bite Australia program, I have become acutely aware of how contemporary urban artists maintain and transfer symbolic language. An example is the work of Reko Rennie, an untrained Aboriginal artist from the Kamilaroi people of northern NSW. Rennie has grown up in the urban environment of Melbourne as a journalist and writer, and his graffiti work examines his identity as an Aboriginal street artist while maintaining timeless symbolic references to his culture. Translated through an immediate and vital form of visual protest, his graffiti work carefully maintains references to his land that are in themselves transcendent. Marking the land as a form of identity of his race and place has been echoed in *God's Country* but in a propositional and postcolonial situation. The cross in this case asserts itself on Aboriginal ground, bringing with it a conflict of cultures through a new human presence on this sacred land. This highly political statement on my part adds fuel to the fire in many respects, but serves to express the shared feelings of imposition in which Western religion plays a central role in defining and establishing the new political and cultural hegemony through the urbanisation of Aboriginal land, as shown in Figure 48.

Chinese artist Xu Bing also brings a similar representation of a living philosophy and its transference within contemporary culture into question, but in a different sense. Bing was a founding member of the 1985 new wave movement of post-Tiananmen exiled artists and whose work *A Book from the Sky* (Figure 49) has been exhibited extensively throughout the

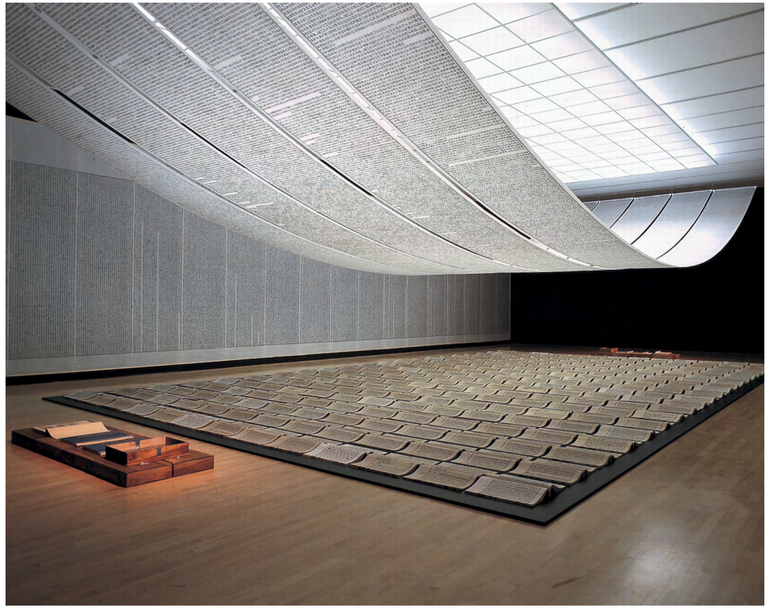


Figure 49 Xu Bing *A Book From The Sky*

world, including in the USA, Canada, and Australia. I first came into contact with this work when I visited the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris in 1989. The exhibition *Magicians of the Earth,* curated by Jean-Hubert Martin, was on at the time, a groundbreaking show that presented the 1985 new wave movement as an "opening up of China", after which multiculturalism, globalisation, and postmodernism began to be discussed with a more East–West focus.

Bing's work is composed of bound books that cover the installation space, displaying thousands of characters carved by the artist and then printed using a traditional printing press in Beijing. The artist invented all the characters as a form of non-writing as a critique of the "sacred texts of antiquity" (Jiehong 2007, 14), creating an incomprehensible language. In *A Chinese Whisper* (Figure 51), a nine-minute animated sequence based on the making of a jigsaw, I have also created an incomprehensible language, inferring that the aim of printing—which is to spread knowledge—has been subverted. The work critically questions the notion of power and the collapse of political dialogue through the written word: a symbol of history and culture in China. Bing's work, I assert, also brings into play Lefebvre's definitions of representations (practical in their contribution of the construction of social space) and representational (symbolic) space in which he argues that the two are co-dependent in the production of space. While discussing the idea of unity and co-dependency between the two definitions, Lefebvre reflects:

> It is indeed quite possible the Chinese characters combine two functions in an inextricable way, that on the one hand they convey the order of the world (space-time), while on the other hand they lay hold of that concrete (practical and social) space-time wherein symbolisms hold sway, where works of art are created, and where buildings, palaces and temples are created. (1991, 42)

When text is re-designed and reformed as indistinguishable language in Bing's case, the representational code within Lefebvre's relationship increases as the meanings decrease, through which meaning gives way to symbolic impact. Adding to this shift in reference, Bing's work creates both a physical and spiritual space between the carved type characters on the floor and the print suspended high to the ceiling of the gallery. Opening up a physical and spiritual space in which the viewer can apply their belief system, and as a result his or her own reading, has become an important aspect in my approach to *God's* Country (Figure 47). The notions of heaven and earth, body and soul, physical and spiritual are opened up in a nothing space, a space in which transference takes place. While Rennie's works attempt a preservation of tradition, I would suggest that Bing's installation *A Book from the Sky* suggests a Hegelian *end of history* in its undoing of written order and symbolic language. Lefebvre suggests that through this process history is replaced:

> This product of a process of production[65] which is animated by knowledge (the concept) and oriented by consciousness (language, the Logos)—this necessary product-asserts its own self-sufficiency. It persists in being through its own strength, what disappears is history, which is transformed to memory; from production to contemplation…[through which] it loses all meaning. (1991, 210)

Within this reading, nostalgia again plays an important role in the reconstruction of meaning when history is lost. *God's Country* refers to a specific place that suggests a physical location of Christianity in Western Australia. To develop further this specific snapshot of time and place, I decided to re-work an older series of images that used the British flag as a common structure, to reference where I am *from* rather than where I *am*, offering a balanced reflection of Papastergiadis' (2003) observation about identity being determined by the present rather than the past, as discussed earlier. *Double Crosses* (Figure 50) is a reference to Perec, re-constructed from my original scans of food for an exhibition at the Span Galleries in Melbourne in 2002,[66] in which the multicultural food hall acted as a primary metaphor for

65 Lefebvre's commentary is in the context of the abandonment of a unitary theory that flourished in European culture between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, founded on a classical perspective of Euclidean space. Unitary theory is where space (in its broadest definition) is broken down into fragments of meaning but work practically in unison, as was evident in the Italian Renaissance, for instance.

66 *2000 Years* was exhibited at Span Galleries Melbourne and Fremantle Arts Centre in 2002/3.

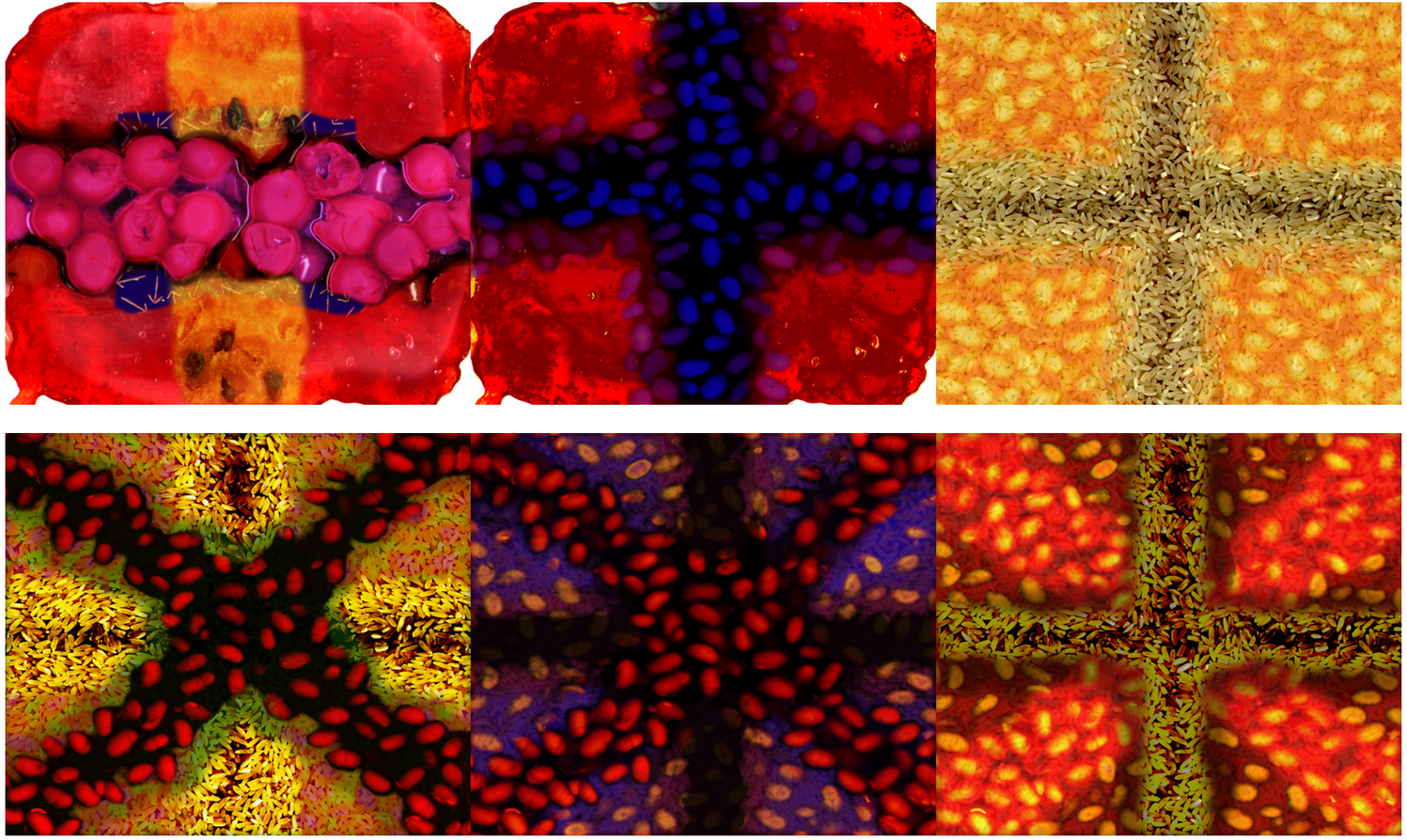


Figure 50 Clive Barstow *Double Crosses*

a shared and seemingly inclusive social space. As Chan observed in his catalogue essay for the exhibition entitled *2000 Years*, “The multicultural food hall is, as such, a study in the sociology of admission and social visibility within the corpus of the nation-state” (2002, 2).[67]

Juxtaposed with *God’s Country*, *Double Crosses* makes reference not only to the past and present but also to the de-establishing of religion and the move toward secular societies in modern hybrid communities. In these new jigsaws, there is an attempt to fix a moment not in time, but in our collective consciousness, a worldview made up of a lifetime’s accumulation of events, both experienced and learned. This disruption of senses intends to communicate to the audience that learned information is fixed while our perception of it might change.

As referred to earlier, *A Chinese Whisper* (Figure 51) utilises iconic pictures of Australian flora and fauna that are a reference to Indigenous categorisation by white settlers, and as recognisable stereotypes of Australia as regularly seen by the Chinese. The importance of perceived stereotypes connects to Kus’s (2008) commentary on the perception of Chinese identity being partly formed by the West; in this case, it is reversed to form an external view (or other view) of Australian identity.

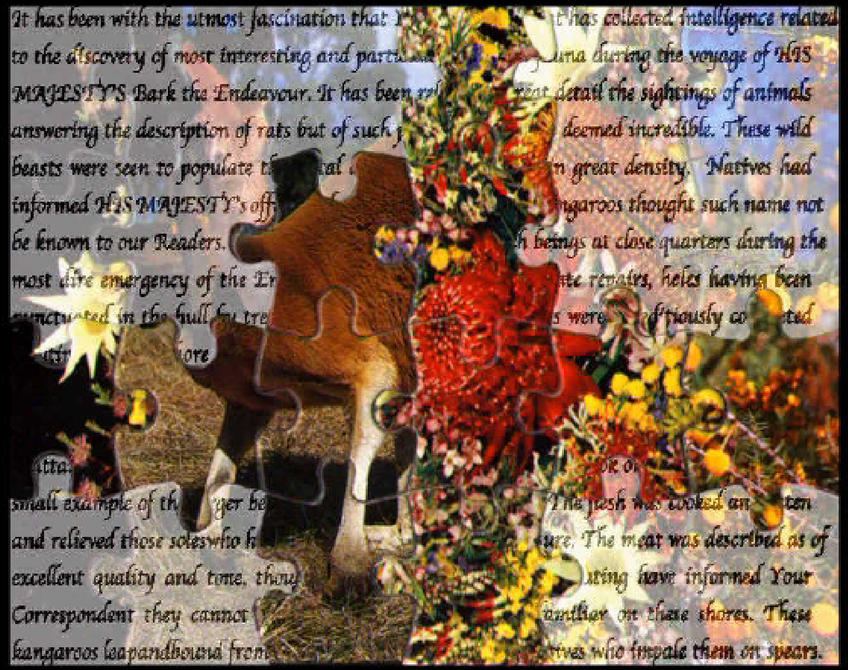
In this animated sequence, the jigsaw pieces slowly remove and replace themselves to reveal text in both English and Chinese as a literal translation (as opposed to translating meaning, or Lacan’s *other*) so that an unconscious nonsense is created. The text (an extract from a letter by Captain Arthur Philip that was first published in the *London Chronicle* on 17 October 1788)[68] is taken from Captain Cook’s first dispatch on arriving in Australia in which he attempts to describe the strange and exotic animals and plants by comparing them to known flora and fauna in Europe. In the context of this study, this use of comparative descriptive literatures is a poetic example of the limitations of meaning through language and the futility in our attempts to communicate between them.

67 See Appendix 11.
68 See Appendix 8.





Figure 51 Clive Barstow *A Chinese Whisper*



click image to play video

The work has no beginning or end, with the loop effect emphasising the continuous and circular nature of change within the formation of hybrid cultures. These cultures cannot be identified by their momentary representation, but by their ability to adapt and change as a constant reminder of the shifting nature of hybridity (Dervin 2014; Said 1985; Bhabha 1994).

The time I spent in the studio in Shanghai in preparation for this exhibition proved invaluable to my research in terms of reflexively responding to the works already completed, and to the intention of extending the work into film and object. For instance, many of the jigsaws I had already completed in Australia were remade in the Shanghai studio (Figure 52) to adapt to the specific cultural context of the exhibition. The suggestion of the unfinished and ever-changing image is an important factor in addressing the central research questions in regard to representing a shifting cultural situation, and in particular in its resistance to time as a fixed concept of history. The jigsaws in this case align with both trialectic theory pertaining to a more complex perception of space, and Moxey's thesis on heterochronic histories in which he states "that the discipline [of art history] should have been tempted to treat the image as something dead and inert…if the theme of the work is not restricted to the horizon of its creation, its status as an agent in the creation of its own reception…shines through" (2013, 3). A non-fixed visual narrative in this respect presents its own aesthetic, a meaning-making that is alive and dynamic, and adaptable to particular cultural situations.



Figure 52 Clive Barstow *Re-working jigsaws in situ for the Shanghai exhibition 2015*

The Exhibition in China

Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow was an invitational exhibition at the Hu Jiang Gallery in Shanghai. I had exhibited in a number of joint exhibitions in Shanghai previously and had worked extensively at the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, which administers this gallery space.

The artworks, most of which were pre-made in Australia, took many forms, both conceptually and materially. Thematically, the work made for this exhibition opened up new ground, particularly in the relationship between religion and land, and aspects of poetic language translated between English and Chinese language. Exhibiting serves as a reflexive part of the creative cycle, and this exhibition[69] presented the opportunity to examine a large and extensive body of work, from which a number of connected themes have emerged, both consciously and unconsciously. Throughout this exhibition, I reflexively engaged with my audience through exhibition openings, artist workshops, and media interviews in order to form an understanding of how I might plan my final exhibition for this study at the Turner Galleries in Perth in 2017.

The Exhibition Install

The installation of this exhibition was meticulously planned, and involved three visits to the Shanghai studio prior to the exhibition. The production of shelves to accommodate the jigsaw works and the building of the spaces was planned prior to the exhibition in response to the limitations of the exhibition space, and constructed by my assistants over a period of three months (Figures 53–54).

In previous exhibitions, the jigsaw images had been presented in pairs as a way of creating additional relational meanings both across and within the twinned narrative images. This

69 The exhibition was advertised and blogged on Wechat before, during and after the exhibition (See Appendix 14).



Figure 53 *Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai China October 2015* (appendix 14)



Figure 54 Clive Barstow *Movie: New works pre exhibition, exhibition install and final exhibition*

exhibition was presented in such a way that this cross-referencing occurred through the entire body of work and across three disconnected gallery spaces. As a result, new relationships were created *in-between* the images, which formed a series of complex meta-narratives that were at times unplanned and unpredictable. Propositional images of the present and future were thus positioned within a nostalgic reference to both Chinese and Australian colonial histories, creating an elongated scroll-like time reference in which the hybridised narratives could resonate in relation to the individual viewer. The reference to Chinese traditional scrolls is a direct attempt to link cultural languages and systems with particular reference to the multidimensional readings within Shan-Shui-Hua painting.

The exhibition presented an opportunity to engage in a cross cultural dialogue that was unpredictable, through a spontaneous collaboration on the opening day of the exhibition. On the previous day, I discussed this particular space with the artist Xu Shanxun, one of China's most renowned painters and calligraphers. I invited Xu Shanxun to collaborate and extend my work through a performance that involved ceremony and ritual consistent with the theme of the Dao, as referred to in the exhibition catalogue as "the illusive and intangible" (Barstow and Jiang 2015, 8). Xu Shanxun prepared that evening by researching traditional Dao calligraphy to find symbols that reflected the transformation from yesterday to tomorrow in keeping with basic Dao philosophy that explains this journey as the process of reality itself (Figure 55). This spontaneous collaboration on the following day created a contact zone, a performative version of thirdspace within postcolonial literature in which "the boundary between self and other blurs… a transcultural text where both writer and reader are changed in constitutive collusion" (Ashcroft 2014, 22).

Traditional Chinese calligraphy was written from right to left, whereas modern Chinese text is written from left to right, a transition that is consistent with the nonlinear aspects of trialectics space where time and direction are presented as multidirectional. Xu Shanxun then performed the writing of the symbols on *God's Country*, as this work, out of all my works, most resonates with him because of his experiences of his family's displacement during the Cultural Revolution. Xu Shanxun then invited me to write the words in English as a symbolic gesture of connectedness and collaboration across histories and across languages, as shown in Figure 55. The spontaneous addition of Dao text over images of Aboriginal land symbolically replaced through Christianity produced an emotional and poignant moment and one in which the articulation of cultural continuity and reconciliation was for me the most clearly and poetically displayed. This unplanned collaborative performance came close to answering the central research question of this study, in that the moment was transcendent in its ability to represent the complexities of multicultural positions despite, and beyond the limitations of language.

Papastergiadis' commentaries regarding the collaborative processes suggest, "The flow of the world is not deduced from the movements of one person. Nor do the historical and cultural ensembles that the artists construct yields a coherent model" (2006, 41). This particular moment was an example of *gestalt*, a solution that was greater than the sum of the parts (Green 2001), a rare moment of true collaboration in which the individual experiences of both artists gave voice to others. This spontaneous collaboration also referenced the argument that within the trialectic model I am adopting: artistic collaboration adds an element of the unknown and unpredictable, an important aspect of history-forming that is not always logical or rational.

Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow offered me insights into how the narratives embedded within the works presented could carry poignancy across cultural languages and traditions. Perhaps more importantly, it suggested that the physical element of the works contained more power and articulation that I had previously thought. Through this reflexive process, I started to plan new sculptural works for the Turner Galleries exhibition in 2017, partly in response to the differing cultural situations of the two exhibitions, but more importantly to approach the secondary research question of this research, that of how to visualise cumulative trialectics.





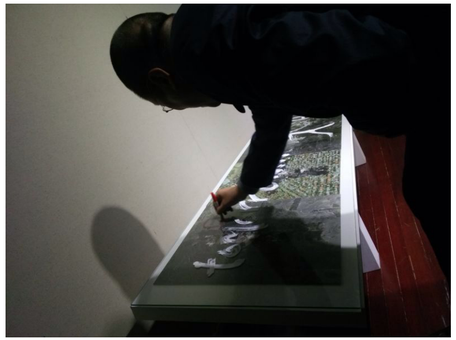


Figure 55 Clive Barstow *Collaborative Performances with Xu Shanxun*



click image to play video

Tomorrow Is History **(Turner Galleries, Perth, Western Australia 28 July–26 August 2017)**

Framing and Connecting New Works

This section frames new and current works in progress for exhibition at the Turner Galleries in Perth, Western Australia, entitled *Tomorrow Is History*. The title continues on from *Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow* in establishing time as a non-linear construct in which historical elements and references in my work can be projected into future situations. The work being made for this exhibition is in direct response to the more interactive works exhibited in China in an attempt to involve the Australian audience in both tactile and cerebral responses to the themes and concerns that are central to this doctoral research. The exhibition *Tomorrow Is History* is a culmination of my practice over the three-year period and will enable me to reflexively conclude this body of work in a single exhibition.

Thematic Links to Previous Works

Starting from the identified position of a disenfranchised cultural thirdspace for Aboriginal groups in Australia (discussed in Section 2 of Chapter 2), I have based the first sculptural work for this study on Brenda L. Croft's photographic work *Cook Who? Australia Day Protest* (1998) (Figure 56) following on from my previous research regarding the symbology of birds. The current political agenda on restrictive and selective immigration toward refugees in Australia gives new life to the White Australia policy of 1901 (Ronalds 2016) and suggests a thematic connection to the socio-political commentary of my current work.

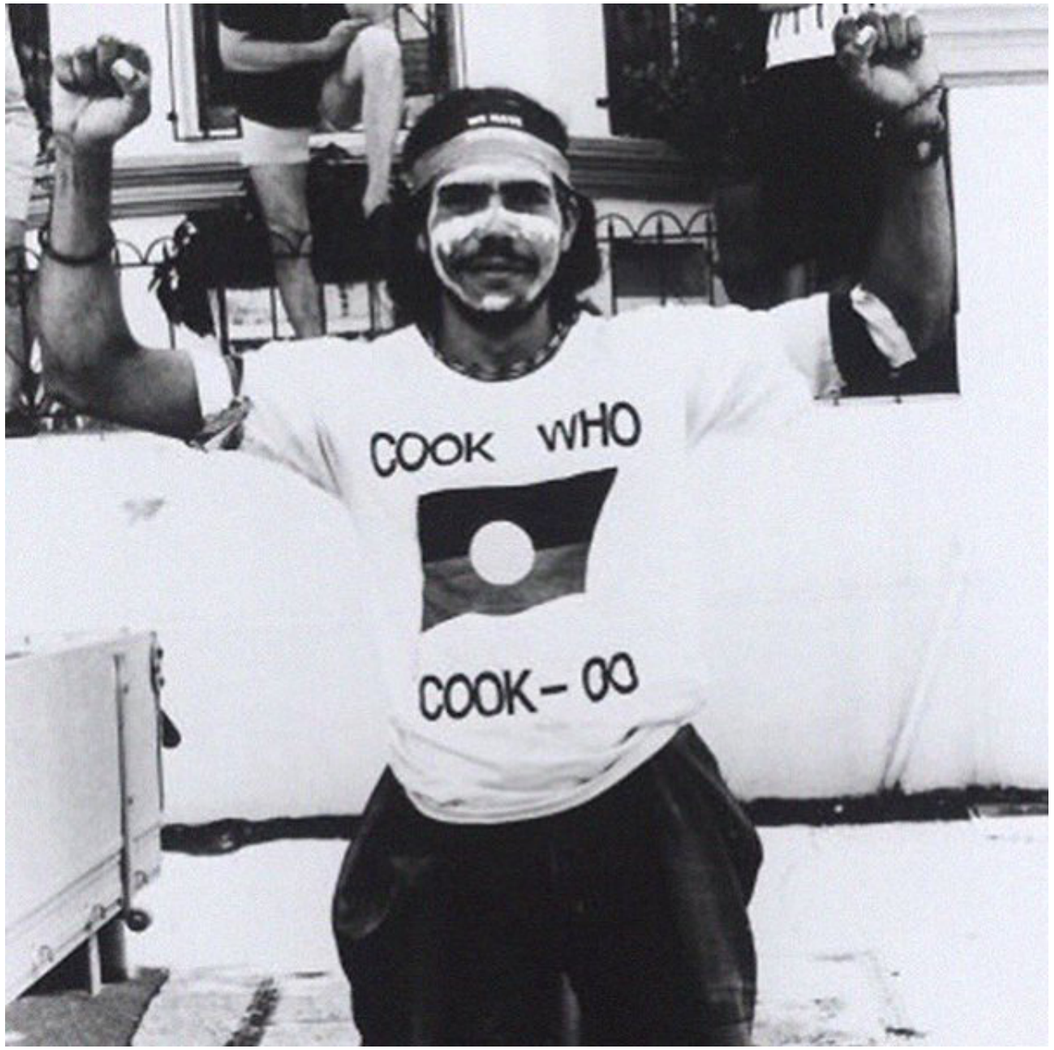


Figure 56 Brenda Croft *Cook Who?*

The first assemblage works adopted the title *Crow-Ded* (Figure 57), a double reference to the rhetoric around our crowded land and to the relevance and symbolism of the dead crow in this context. Both the cuckoo and the crow are referred to as deceptively intelligent birds, and display analogous references to the politicisation of human colonisation and migration. As such they offer powerful extended metaphors for this new body of politically loaded work. While both bird sub-species are migratory, the cuckoo is essentially a trickster (mimicking other birds through deception), a coloniser (laying its eggs in other bird nests), a deceiver (cuckold), and an absentee (devolve responsibility to the surrogate) (Morton and Farabaugh 1979). By contrast, the crow is a parasite (feeding off others), a scaremonger (scarecrow), and a racial mediator, connecting black races to death (representing the transition between life and death as one of lost souls) (Sax 2007).

The intention at this stage of the developing work is to connect the meta-narratives I have previously established taken from the natural world (birds, flora and fauna) to those of the constructed myths around early settler art (farming, buckets, diggers[70]) and the underlying grand narratives around othering and bordering. These are presented within the primary theme of educational indoctrination (school desks, chairs, texts). In these works, I re-enact children's stories, merging truth and fantasy as a metaphysical language in which good and evil are inextricably linked across time and space. While these works make reference to the Surrealist and Dada works of Max Ernst and Meret Oppenheim and the text-derivative version of the cut-up culture put forward by William Burroughs,[71] the initial stimulus to these hybrid objects was partly sourced from Disney rides in shopping centres and amusement arcades where animals and technology are openly morphed as an ongoing reality-fantasy celebration of American popular techno-culture (Figure 58). Through the extended palette of

70 'Diggers' has a double meaning as it refers to Australian war heroes but originates from the gold rush.

71 The cut-up technique uses cut-up text to reassemble new meaning, based on the early collages of Max Ernst and the Surrealist and Dada movements of the 1920s. The technique had been published in an issue of *391* in the poem by Tzara, *dada manifesto on feeble love and bitter love* under the sub-title, *TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM* (Clements 2016).



Figure 57 Clive Barstow *Crow-Ded* (work in progress)






Figure 58 *Children's Pleasure Ride*. (right) Clive Barstow *Hybrid Animals* (middle and left)

objects and texts, I now assume the role of the Semionaut[72]—the artist who links disparate elements together across images, objects and texts to form new meaning, drawing together past works and fusing them with new ideas consistent with a remix culture in which the medium of production is also multifaceted.

In the completed version of *Crow-Ded* (Figure 59), I have used a structural device found in traditional Chinese parallel perspective in which key elements are displayed as floating fragments, schematically and hierarchically positioned in a transitional and illusionary space between two and three dimensions. This corresponds to Levebvres symmetry of high and low as an extension beyond art and into social space (1991, 273). *Crow-Ded* references a series of woodcuts depicting the *Oath of the Peach Garden*,[73] an ancient Chinese story from the novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Kuan-Chung 2002) (Figure 60), in which the complex connections and inter-relationships between the real and imagined and social and physical spaces are central to its theme and to this study. The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is an early example of a trialectic fictional space involving three characters and three kingdoms where the illusion of time and space are re-presented from multiple positions, consistent with Shan-Shui-Hua painting.

The animals and birds in *Crow-Ded* refer to Aboriginal totems and are deliberately blackened as a reference to the whitewashing of Aboriginal histories in Australian education, and as a connecting reference to death represented by the extensive display of racialism through animalisation in Disney animations of the 1940s. As Langton states:

> If I were to speculate as to why the history of Coranderrk[74] is not taught in schools or universities in the way that it should be, perhaps all I can say is that this history is so shameful that most Australians could not admit that this is the origin of their state and their nation. (quoted in Coslovich 2008, para 9)

72 The term 'Semionaut' derives from the word 'semiotics', where new meaning is created through a remixing of language and symbols (semiotics).

73 *The Peach Garden* is an extract from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, written by Luo Guanzhong, set at the end of the Eastern Han dynasty in the 1800s (see Internet Archive, n.d.).

74 Coranderrk is an area of land on the Yarra claimed by Simon Wonga, William Barakof (of the Wurundjeri clan) and John Green without approval of the Aboriginal Protection Board. The land was provided by the government between 1863 and 1924 for Indigenous people who had been disposed of their traditional lands through European settlement.



Figure 59 Clive Barstow *Crow-Ded*



Figure 60 Clive Barstow *Crow-Ded* (left) and Artist Unknown *The Peach Garden* (right)

Absence therefore is a growing focus in these new works as a way of involving a cross cultural audience in the imaginative reconstruction of lost or selective histories and the restoration of stories that have been inconspicuous by their absence.[75] Working in three dimensions on a human scale amplifies the function of the white spaces in the jigsaws to a point of embodiment, offering a more physical entry into the cross section between Langton's (quoted in Coslovich 2008) selective whitewashing of history and Freud's (1994) forgotten and recalled memories. Involving the body as an extension of the mind also makes direct reference to Mark Johnson's (2007) thesis on the aesthetics of embodiment in which he opposes the Cartesian mind–body separation.

In Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* (1978), the main character Bartlebooth spends his later life obsessively making jigsaws of images from his travels around the world. Bartlebooth dies while completing his 439th and final jigsaw, holding the one remaining piece in his hand. Ironically, the last hole in the jigsaw is the letter X, while the piece he is holding is the letter W. Irony, futility, and humour therefore continually surface throughout these artworks as a way of making new meaning from the poetics of language, and as a reminder that reality is a product of what we choose to believe and what we subconsciously choose to retain.

I embark on a different series of works to extend my model of praxis into new territory, by way of expressing the 'cumulative' in cumulative trialectics, as previously mentioned, through and across a broader body of work. The extension into cumulative trialectics through the use of multiple materials and methods attempts to visually answer the central research question of this study. In this respect, the insight—and to some extent, the contribution—of the viewer becomes the missing piece of the jigsaw in terms of making sense of the greater puzzle while moving across and within multiple visual codes.

75 A media storm erupted in 2016 over the misrepresentation of UNSW in its "rewriting of the history books to state Cook invaded Australia" when in fact UNSW did no such thing. See Aly (2006).

As in Perec's (1978) novel, one of the unexpected consequences of making and exhibiting unfinished jigsaws, brought to light through feedback from audiences and critiques of the previous exhibitions, was the impact of the missing pieces. The white spaces in these jigsaws serve the function of avoiding didactic closure, but more importantly they offer the viewer an imaginary pathway into the narrative social space, making direct reference to Darley's (1997) *narrative thread*. The main aspect of this approach is to engage the audience to perceive the grand narrative through their own lens, to walk their own path, and to avoid what Hal Foster (2012, 7) terms "fetishistic technique". He states, "phenomenological reflexivity of *seeing oneself see* approaches its opposite: an installation or a building that seems to do the percieving for us". My intention is that the viewer, once engaged in the imaginary completion of these works, negotiates the many forms of timeless space—real, imagined, cerebral and propositional—and to varying degrees is complicit in the idea of change and transformation. As Jacques Ranciere suggests, "Critical art is a type of art that sets out to build awareness of the mechanisms of domination to turn the spectator into a conscious agent of world transformation" (2009, 46–47).[76]

To experiment in transformation, I have chosen to mirror the processes inherent in the reconstruction of the jigsaw works and apply them to sculpture. I regard this as a *misfit* (X and W in Bartlebooth's case), in which a tension is consequently created through which I attempt to physically and practically resolve in the same way that the misfit pieces of the jigsaws, in my case, were made to fit. The shift into objects brings into play elements of Situationist theory surrounding the spectacle and the relience on comodified objects as an expression of social standing in modern societies. In their countering of this, the Situationists' manifesto states "The situationists' goal is immediate participation in a passionate abundance of life, through the variation of fleeting moments resolutely arranged" (Debord 1958, 61). The Situationist manifesto is developed further by Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) discourse on dialogic imagination in which fragments of meaning, time, and space are connected through various dialogues

76 Hal Foster (2012) suggests that this statement is in itself fetishistic and non-transformative in his critique of Ranciere (5).

that re-frame as relational components of a new whole. The position of these newly formed languages I contend, fall into Bhabha's thirdspace, or more precisely Lacan's (1997) void (or vel), which, according to Bakhtin, all present particular and justified points of view. Bakhtin states "The whole matter consists in the fact that there may be, between 'languages', highly specific dialogic relations; no matter how these languages are conceived, they may all be taken as particular points of view of the world" (1981, 293).

Arranging these fleeting moments as new dialogic relations as a result of the reflexive praxis of my doctoral work has led me to embark on a series of wall objects and, as such, offer only a constricted and incomplete view for the audience, prompting a "reawakening" (Debord 1958, 23) through viewer interaction. These constructions focus on the façade; the wall therefore plays an important dual role by making a structural connection to the wall-mounted shelves in the jigsaw works and by referencing the white space in the jigsaws. Within this assembling of information, the importance of erasure, as investigated in the previous jigsaw works, presents an alternative entry into the social space I have created. As Levebvre observes, "The notion of the façade implies right and left (symmetry), and high and low. It also implies a front and a back—what is shown and what is not shown—and thus constitutes a seeming extension into social space" (1991, 273).

I am adopting the same approach to assemblage[77] in the making of these sculptural pieces to integrate found objects that have some historical, visual or thematic connection to the meta-narratives created within the jigsaws, re-cast in the form of hybrid sculptural works that propose a similar incomplete state. I have revisited Poussin's *Et in Arcadia Ego* in which death is symbolised within the classical Arcadian ideal. These first objects extend the themes within *God's Country* by constructing new monuments that link death as represented in the high church (clergy, monarchy, noblemen) (Figure 61), with that of travellers as early examples of diaspora (seafarers, explorers, colonisers) (Figure 62). These new works derive

77 An open-ended approach pioneered by Joseph Cornell in which the arrangement and integration of found objects imply multiple narratives and interconnections between images and objects.









Figure 61 *Winchester Cathederal UK*









Figure 62 *Dutch Church Malacca Malaysia 17th Century*

from gravestones in Winchester Cathedral, UK, and from a Dutch hilltop church ruin in Malacca, Malaysia, and fuse iconography from multiple times and places as a reflection of Shan-Shui-Hua painting and of a multidimensional trialectic space.

By adopting this hybridised process, I intend to transform these newly formed physical objects into a socio-metaphysical space. This occurs by transcending physical matter or the laws of nature, toward what Abbott describes as “the shape of time” (2002, 11). Metaphysics, in this sense, connects Habermas’s (1989) lifeworld, (describing the environment in which we live), to the principles of cumulative trialectics as a re-evaluation of this environment in which time, space, and existence are re-presented as an extension into the social space. The basic premise of metaphysical art—that of “painting that which can not be seen” (Morris 2007)—is being reinterpreted in these sculptural works as an extension of the major theme of this research: constructing that which has not been experienced.

Methods of Production

In the spirit of open-ended assemblage and with the knowledge gained through the construction/ making of the previous jigsaws, I do not pre-plan these new works; rather, I start collecting and forming elements that at a later stage become connected to form new spatial narratives. In this respect, the narrative development in my jigsaw works become the ‘sketches’ for my sculptural works rather than drawing or planning the objects to be formed in the traditional sense. I define the process of making these facades as one of drawing in space as a form of transformation, from image to object, allowing changes to be made up to and including the exhibition install, and in line with the various commentaries on the non-fixity and fluidity of cultural formation (Clifford 1988; Spivac 1998; Fink and Perkins 2005). In keeping with the theme of cumulative trialectics, and adopting the three basic forms of sculptural production—casting, carving, and construction—I have chosen three key thematic elements from the jigsaw works: Disney characters and animalisation; religious figures from Arcadian paintings; and found objects that give focus to educational and religious indoctrination of constructed histories.

These disparate and eclectic elements are by-products of my visual and written research and offer a pathway into new work. These new sculptural works are in direct response to the exhibition in China where it was evident that the audience response to the more physical works was greater than that to the graphic works. I aim therefore to create a number of sculptural works that demand a different reading and ones that will extend the narratives in the jigsaw works. Again, this is to attempt to answer the research questions in terms of what type of visual language is most appropriate in conveying cultural complexity, and what theoretical model can be adopted to align to my practice. This initiates a broadening of the scope and language beyond two-dimensional narratives and enters into a physical space in which the relational elements of the forms become more spatial and more acute.

To this end, I designed and built a system for plaster casting that would allow various forms to be produced from a single jig. This process of casting allowed me to form fragments that could be re-cast and re-assembled at a later stage in a similar fashion to the construction of my jigsaws. This simple casting module allowed me to produce small objects in resin and plaster that could be combined with found objects, often picked up in the same second-hand shops I had been using to source my jigsaws. Casting resin and plaster demands a high level of planning, often resulting in objects that negate the open-ended process of assemblage through which chance and serendipity can operate. I took the position therefore that the casting process was not to be an end in itself; rather, it was a way of producing fragmented objects that would later contribute to a three-dimensional puzzle, the design of which was left open to a point where I felt I had enough elements to work with. These works are not pre-planned; rather, their completion only comes about through a refinement process, both in terms of content and in terms of the way the materials work with and respond to each other. The *Conception and Making of Bartlebooth’s Double Cross* is presented sequentially in Figure 63.

Therefore, I developed an antithetical relationship between a process that is essentially closed and a methodology that is essentially open. Constructing such a tension can be problematic, particularly in a technical sense, but the challenge of practically resolving these



Figure 63 *Methods of Production for the Sculptural Work Bartlebooth’s Double Cross*

issues are consistent with the overall themes of a conflicted space *between* (Bhabha 1994). However, resolving awkward intersections that offer a sense of connectivity to the viewer is where the craft of assemblage is truly tested. The final assemblages are consequently highly re-worked and often consolidated by the use of a common surface colouring that serves the role of unifying the materials being used.

The work *Bartlebooth's Double Cross* (Figure 64) has resulted in a complex narrative, combining elements from the jigsaw works with new themes around religious indoctrination. I have retained the dual structure from the display of my jigsaws in Figures 19-21, 23, 24, 26, 31, and 37- 43 in China to offer cross-referencing and interplay between the works. Perhaps more significantly, this work offers tactility beyond its narrative as a form of sensual nostalgic memory. The plaster casts are cold and pure, referring to the Catholic Church and its depiction of hierarchy and death through monuments and tombs; the white sand references Fiske's (1983) anomalous category between land and sea that is neither one nor the other; and the shiny plasticity of the Disney inclusions suggest the superficiality of mass consumption as a counterpoint within this cultural and historical trialectic.

The end point of this common process of re-assembling fragments, whether these are jigsaw pieces or found objects, is the presentation of absence. The missing pieces are the spaces provided in which the viewer can complete the picture, as "the collage…encourages fragments to speak to us about the absent wholes whence they originated its understated utterance has all the quality of a whisper made paradoxically more urgent the more it is muted" (Cardinal 1994, 91).







Figure 64 *Clive Barstow Bartlebooth's Double Cross with details*

The Viewer's Contribution to Bartlebooths Missing Piece

My exhibitions involving transitional and interconnecting responses to image and object and, perhaps more importantly, references to past experiences as stimulants to the reformation of narratives, try to touch on elements of both recollections within psychotherapy and predictive responses to visual stimuli in cognitive psychology. In the preamble to this section, I mentioned in the context of metaphysical art, that I am attempting to construct *that which has not been experienced*. This is not to assume that constructing new experiences does not include past memories; in fact, it can be argued that the formation of new meaning is totally reliant on past knowledge by which to contextualise it (Kesner 2014; Clark 2013). This is where Debord's "reawakening" (1958, 23) becomes more meaningful in the reading of my exhibitions as they slowly accumulate more varied and interconnected messages about past, present, and ultimately a proposition about the future.

In terms of prompting an audience response at these exhibitions, a psychodynamic approach to therapy has relevance in its explanation of memory and future meaning-making (Crouch 2007). Psychodynamic theory and practice view problems as originating in past experiences and events that are stored at an unconscious level (Wilson 2009). This is particularly pertinent to this thesis in terms of conflict, the central tenet to Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace theories and to the images of war and colonisation as points of tension in my political artworks. Rogerian[78] theory points to individual symptoms as "the result of unresolved conflict and impairments in ego function" (Leichsenring 2007), where there is a long-established focus on resolution of patterns from the past, and the integration of unconscious impediments to healthy functioning in the present (Wilson 2009). Pearson and Wilson (2009, 2) argue that experiences with a similar emotional charge, such as loss or bereavement, become stored together within the unconscious, and form a condensed repository of experience. Conflict, therefore, is a latent emotion that can be unlocked through engaging with artworks that often refer to situations outside of our past experiences, but re-engage through emotional or thematic stimuli. Conflict, in this case, becomes one of many shared experiences that the audience will bring to the work, and my aim is that these experiences will stimulate emotions that often seek a form of resolution both in a psychological and a narrative sense. However, it is not my intent to offer resolution; rather, I offer the viewer a different way of viewing their past experiences and knowledge (as suggested in Figures 21, 24 & 41), as my central research question states, in order to re-evaluate the present and to re-determine the future in a new model of engagement.

A related issue to the unconscious in my work is the notion of predictability, particularly in the sense of predicting a future beyond our understanding of the past and the present. Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics offer a way of viewing these elements as connected and beyond our normal classifications of time and place. The role of the unconscious in the reading of my artworks also includes prediction, which is built on cultural knowledge and experiences. A person's mindset, that determines what top–down expectations and predictions are generated, is co-constituted by culture-relative skills and knowledge, which form hyperpriors[79] that operate in the perception of art (Kesner, 2014, para 4). In the case of my artworks, images and objects from the past and present, through which we might imagine our future, stimulate these hyperpriors by questioning and revisiting our constructed histories and norms.

More recently, the longstanding notion of perception being unconscious and knowledge driven (Helmholtz 1867) has been revisited through the idea of the Bayesian[80] brain, "a probability machine that constantly makes predictions about the world and then updates

78 Rogerian theory is named after the psychologist Carl Rogers (1902–1987) and focuses on person-centred therapies and counselling.

79 Hyperpriors are mathematical algorithms used in the restoration of images in Bayesian mathematics (Berger 2005).

80 The Bayesian approach constitutes the "grand unified theory of mind as perception, action and attention are all in the same business of reducing sensory prediction error resulting with our exchanges with environment" (Clark 2013, 21).

them based on what it senses…where the brain does not passively register sensory input but actively anticipates it" (Kesner 2014, para 1). My approach, as is the case with many other artists, is to assume the role of provocateur in this equation, offering humanised sensory incongruities that are not possible in the natural visual environment, or, as Kesner remarks, "artists intuitively attempt to strike the optimal balance between predictability and surprise" (2014, 4). Predictive coding theory in this respect offers rules that are purposely broken in the visual arts in order to involve the viewer in the completion of the equation.

Ultimately, it is my aim for the viewer to assume the role of Bartlebooth, engaging in the futility of imagining a resolution in the form of their jigsaw piece in the shape of X. Predictive coding theory and its relationship to political doctrine sits at the heart of the final sculptural work made for the exhibition at the Turner Galleries. As a completion of the full circle of themes underpinning this exegesis, the forms used in this highly political work *We Shall Decide* (Figure 65) borrow from early settler paintings such as *The Foundation of Perth* in its references to white settlement, juxtaposed with John Howard's divisive war on terror election speech on 28 October 2001[81], as referred to in my previous work *Gone Fishin'* in Chapter 2. Casts of buckets and shovels sit alongside the cultural imports of animalised Disney characters as a reference to a selective cultural colonisation both real and imagined. These are set in the context of the beach as an in-between space (referenced through the use of sand) above which an incoming aircraft signifies absence within Howard's singular focus on the boat people; that this is a military aircraft also serves to represent the political rhetoric that associates the wrong kind of immigration with conflict and the threat of invasion. *We Shall Decide* exposes the irony within the Bayesian probability and possibility model reframed within the political rhetoric of the day.

81 Full speech accessed at nspeeches.moadoph.gov.au/speeches/2001-john-howard





Figure 65 Clive Barstow *We Will Decide*

Exhibition Install

The aim of the exhibition *Tomorrow Is History* at the Turner Galleries is to bring together a selected number of previous jigsaw works and exhibit them alongside new sculptures and animations, and to extend the experience for the viewer as a presentation of intertextuality.[82] The inevitable clashing of cultures in this multidimensional exhibition "turns the reframing of understandings into a dialogical necessity" (Schorch 2013, 73), thereby prompting a conversation between the artworks and through interaction with the audience.

The British-Chinese-Australian trialectic model I have utilised through this research proposes a three-dimensional viewing arena in which time and space start to be experienced rather than seen. In some respects, the viewing stage I am creating is analogous with virtual reality in its proposition that two-dimensional space is limiting and that a three-dimensional environment demands the viewer to participate through the mind *and* the body in a world with seemingly no boundaries. A connection now surfaces between the acclaimed originator of virtual reality, Antonin Artaud (who was a member of the Surrealist group and close collaborator with Breton), and my proposition around the limitations of written and spoken language. Artaud established the Theatre of Cruelty in 1914 in opposition to the passive audience involvement in traditional theatre by assaulting the audience's subconscious feelings through a more three-dimensional use of space and interaction. As well as having similar interests in conflict and war, Artaud believed that language was an insufficient means to express emotions such as personal trauma, promoting the Theatre of Cruelty as one that involves "emotions and experiences that we all attempt to proscribe and are unwilling to acknowledge, but which nevertheless occur" (Vork 2013, 321). This thesis promotes a similar position by focusing on the thematics of conflict, race, division and inequity as a collision of cultural positions that incite viewer emotions through their individual memories and experiences.

82 Intertextuality is a literary device that creates an 'interrelationship between texts' and generates related understanding in separate works. ("Intertextuality" 2015). In my case, I extend this beyond text into materials and imagery.

The final exhibition aims to stimulate similar inner emotions through the aesthetics of embodiment as outlined in Mark Johnson's (2007) thesis by involving a journey through image and object in this boundless mind space. This will test the proposition that mind and body are co-dependent and able to effortlessly assimilate between a cerebral, physical and metaphysical response to the real and to the imagined.

The layout of the gallery (Figure 66) offers three distinct spaces: an entry, an open middle room, and one rear partially enclosed room. Using Bakhtin's (1981) chronotopes as involving fragmented information representing particular points of view (which I articulate through materials and narratives), and the gaps and silences (as necessary parts of narration), I plan to separate my artworks into three distinct and thematic bodies of work. The first room negotiated by the audience will contain images that establish the religious foundations to conflict, including *God's Country* and *Double Crosses*, to introduce the viewer to a heightened eye level (looking down on mapped landscapes) as a tool of empowerment. The second exhibition space will present a suite of jigsaws as an introduction to the two-dimensional narratives that emphasise fragmentation and the missing pieces. I intend that once experienced, these complex images will draw the viewer into the imaginative space described by Lefebvre as a "mental space" (1991, 6). Once this is established, the viewer then enters a physical space of objects and animations in which the body becomes activated. The three spaces accumulate and offer a journey through the gallery that represents the key tenet to this thesis, that of a cumulative trialectic space. The spatial planning of the exhibition in this case is carefully ordered to offer the audience an encounter with three distinct spatial experiences that together form the experience of cumulative trialectic space as defined by Lefebvre (1991).

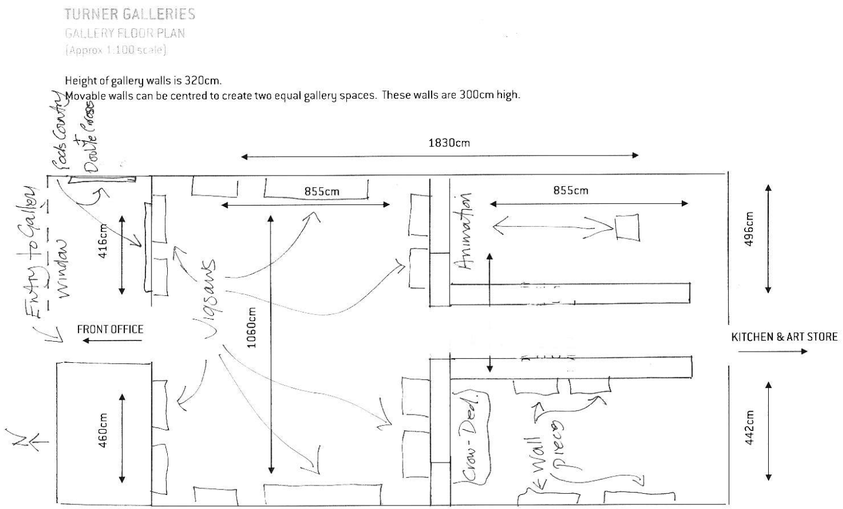


Figure 66 *Turner Galleries Floor Plan*.

Conclusion

This research journey has uncovered ways of interpreting hidden information and re-presenting it visually in order to immerse my audiences in an embodied experience of knowledge forming and new "meaning-making" (Crouch 2007). The revealing and re-imagining of information as a way of interpreting the unknown sits at the core of my reflexive praxis as an artist and educator as a way of influencing a change in attitudes towards the historicising of culture as a Western ethnographic construct. The primary research question in this reflexive model has served as a reference point to direct and focus my creative praxis throughout this doctoral research.

How can a modern and shifting Australian multicultural society be visualised through creative praxis to represent the complexities of cultural hybridity as an agent of change?

My attempts to answer this question are regularly evidenced in the production of artworks and my participation in international exhibitions, academic conferences, artistic collaborations, and through the thrust of Open Bite Australia as a means of augmenting change. The fundamental issue of representing a multi-layered and shifting state suggests that traditional textual systems of recording history and transferring meaning are limited in their ability to communicate across languages and in representing the important in-between transitory spaces of modern hybrid cultures in flux. I develop the argument that in reality, a poetic visual language full of multiple readings and interpretation might better communicate the incongruities of Bhabha's thirdspace contestation in practice.

The introductory section of this exegesis started from a position of hybrid languages existing between cultures, before establishing new parameters in which the idea of an imagined physical and mental space could be created that exceeded the boundaries of polarity. As a singular and nostalgic vision of complex contemporary societies is questioned in this exegesis, my research began to construct a disorienting and boundless space through exhibitions and interactive performance as a space of non-fixity (Kus 2008; Spivac 1998; Frink and Perkins 2005). Collaborative practices became central to this aim as a way of introducing the unknown and the unpredictable, along with an understanding of how reconstructed narratives can play a role in reimagining lost histories and, perhaps more importantly, how these histories can be reinterpreted as imaginary and speculative environments.

As a visual artist, I assert throughout this research and in a number of published papers[83] that visual art pushes the poetics of language to a point of mass communication across languages and cultures, forming a new shared language that is reliant on visual interpretation, intuition and humour. Exhibiting in different countries and through collaboration with artists who at times do not share spoken or written language, I have tested this theory. In a creative sense, my collaboration with Chinese artist Xu Shanxun in the *Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow* exhibition, was a single moment when the proposition became a reality; a unique moment when a third language of understanding was performed live in front of an audience and where image, object, and text communicated complex issues clearly and succinctly as a presentation of the past, present, and future.

I have emphasised within my methodological approach that collaboration forms an important part of this research investigation. Collaboration in my case has involved visual artists, spontaneous performances, poets, writers, designers, translators, negotiators and studio assistants many of whom have worked without a common language. Communicating visually has been tested in a practical sense with my studio assistants in China. As I discussed, I work with assistants on a regular basis and we have had to develop a visual language by which to communicate the methods and processes that form the basis of my studio practice. Pictures often speak louder than words and through this project, I have attempted to prove the point that working with images and objects (including in the intersections between reality and fantasy) enables the formation of common understanding across different languages

83 Refer to Publications below, and Appendixes 3 & 7.

and cultural contexts in a way that text alone cannot achieve. Through related research into psychodynamic analysis and the predictive unconscious toward the later part of this research, it became clear how visual stimuli under the control of the artist could break the rules of perception through incongruities that are rarely possible in the natural environment. It is within these poetic incongruities (as evidenced in the Xu Shanxun collaboration) that a thirdspace language starts to offer connectivity and a new way of sharing complex ideas. The feedback I received from exhibitions of visual artwork regularly validated the claim that the general themes of the collective works were shared and understood across languages and cultural divides. This became clear in the exhibition in China where I received consistent feedback about the intention and reading of the works in the exhibition.

During the creative research study in which this stimulus proposed a deeper investigation into a transferable model for collaboration and engagement, a model of social trialectics surfaced. From this, a further question was posed:

Could an interpretation of Henri Lefebvre's cumulative trialectics be used to generate artworks through reflexive praxis, that redefine the multidimensionality of social and cultural space?

By interpreting Lefebvre's model of cumulative trialectics at the mid-point of this research, I developed a theoretical model of praxis where the autoethnographical approach to creative research seeks to include the embodied self. In my situation, the self becomes an integral component in a triangular debate that extends Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace of contestation into a more fluid three-dimensional dialogue in which time and space are more mobile, and where the artist contributes as a counterpoint to the polarities of othering. Creative practice and its communication in this respect goes well beyond a distant criticism of others through ethnography; rather, this reflexive model defines the role of the artist as one immersed *within* the culture of critique, as a way of positively contributing to the on-going dialogic

surrounding cultural hybridity. As discovered through the process of this research, cumulative trialectics offers a number of dynamic frameworks in which both theory and practice can be re-articulated. For instance, the British-Chinese-Australian nexus offers a broader view of a shifting and merging cultural space, while in my artworks, Benjamin's (1935) working-making-telling is put into practice through my text-image-object trialectic, allowing a sensory and interpretive experience across histories and timeframes. The accumulation of these ideas will be synthesised in my final exhibition at the Turner Galleries in Perth.

I used the construct of Arcadia as a point of departure for this research as a way of viewing the present by interrogating the past. Eisenstadt's "Multiple Modernities" offers a broadening transnational approach to viewing the complexities of modern hybrid cultures within a globalising world. In Australia, however, as is outlined in this exegesis, the nostalgic remnants of European classicism still underpin a socio-political agenda that distorts the realities of inequity and marginalisation particularly for Aboriginal and immigrant groups. While I expected the theme of Arcadian landscape to maintain a presence through this project, my praxis took a different path once my work became more deeply immersed in the relationship between the theoretical and physical domains, and in the search of an alternative model of time and space. Certain elements of Arcadia were maintained throughout the study, such as the premise of restorative nostalgia and the urban park setting as a politicised canvas on which to rebuild new and more multidimensional situations. Trialectic space (as a mind space discussed in Chapter 1) was used to generate artworks through the model of reflexive praxis to redefine a more interpretive canvas on which to stimulate the audience in the process of completing the narratives, particularly through the use of negative and unfinished spaces. The audience in this case becomes a contributor in a trialectic model of communication involving the artist, the artworks and the viewer.

Through the co-dependent process of writing and making, a number of unexpected contributing factors support the hypothesis of communicating complexity through visual

language. As mentioned previously, absence, signified through the extensive use of fragments and unfinished images, makes a major contribution to engaging the viewer in the imaginative completion of the work, through contributing personal memories and responses, as an important contributor to my lifeworld. This interactive element of the artworks and exhibitions succeed in transcending the communication *of* the work by offering a sense of dialogue *within* the work. It is the emotional engagement that I purposefully emphasised in the construction of the artworks, that connects individuals with the themes and issues regularly received in mediated form in the media, but experienced in an embodied and engaged way in the focused environment of the gallery.

The artworks, and particularly the jigsaw works, imply racial stereotypes and othering through signification, and as such push the boundaries of multiculturalism toward a broader term of multidimensionalism. The inclusion of Disney characters and animated figures from sci-fi cartoons extends the current understanding of a static culture frozen in time to one of a shifting culture *across* time. This construct was achieved in the jigsaw works *Entering An-Arcadia* (Figure 44) and *Overview* (Figure 45), in which the three elements of a cultural trialectic (British-Australian-Chinese) involved the piecing together of varying time sequences, in line with the Daoist philosophy of Shan Shui painting. Through extensive reflexive development of previous creative works, the success of this strategy will be made explicit in the final exhibition where the audience will be prompted to view the histories in the works more critically, in a greater developed multidimensional manner, in line with Moxey's heterochronic model of time.

As I am an experienced multimedia artist who works regularly in different cultural situations, the influences brought to this research are extensive. Because the central themes to this research are based around the construction of history and the resulting postcolonial debate in Australia, my background in Britain prior to my move to Australia is significant in a number of ways. My socio-political views were formed and expressed by social realism at a time

when the arts were being taken more seriously as a mirror of society, an important aspect of my lifeworld. The particular links I have chosen to past works in this exegesis (Chapter 2, Section 1) are ones that have influence and meaning to the theoretical and technical concerns within my current research and practice. Many of the socio-political situations that formed my identity in Britain are still relevant today and form an important context and underpinning to this research. The recent resurgence in right-wing extremism, the disillusionment with authority, the political rhetoric around selective immigration and global conflict are all re-emerging, as Marxist theory pronounces (Araeen 2013). The inclusion of these key experiences are therefore crucial in reframing an out-of-place and out-of-date Arcadia in a relocated, contemporary, and future context.

The exegesis develops around the model of Lefebvre's trialectic model of space. I attest that these experiences, re-contextualised within a contemporary postcolonial debate and applied to visual practice, start to contribute to my personal interpretation of cumulative trialectics as defined by the multiplicity of influences, situations and experiences that are key components of hybridity and identity forming. The intersections between my socio-political interests and my artistic methodologies and processes that are discussed throughout Chapter 2 offer content and context for the exhibitions of current artworks in Chapter 3 as a way of positioning my exhibitions within a more international and historical context. The artworks *Crow-Ded*, *Bartlebooth's Missing Piece* and *We Shall Decide* (Figures 59, 64 and 65 respectively) achieve a visualisation of cumulative trialectics through their assemblage of multidimensional ideas, materials and thematics as a physical and cerebral experience.

I utilised Lefebvre's (1991) cumulative trialectics as a way of expanding Homi Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace theories beyond that of cultural polarities into practice. The inclusion of my practice in China introduced an element of the unknown, a cultural association in which I struggled to communicate where language was not shared. It was through this association that an unpredictable and rich association developed through performative collaboration.

The inclusion of Disney characters throughout my work acted as a common and identifiable link even though the darker side of this narrative was not always understood. The Sino-Australian model was successful in stretching the postcolonial dialogue into the Oriental–Occidental debate that changed the position of view, and through its similarities in externally constructed cultures of both Chinese and Aboriginal identity forming.

I assert that cumulative trialectics goes beyond a re-imagining of space in this research by suggesting that time is also freed up from its linear model, expressed as a fixed moment from Arcadian principles, but one that is liberated through trialectics. This is disorientating in the literal sense, something I always intended as a repositioning of Orientalism, as discussed in Section 3. This expression of time as a non-linear concept is investigated more explicitly in my recent artworks described throughout Chapter 3, and aligning more closely with Keith Moxey's (2013) reconceptualising of chronological history making, in which artworks create their own time within history. My recent jigsaws and sculptural pieces as demonstrated, promote a multidimensional theatre for the audience in which Lefebvre's (1991) space between the mental and physical can be experienced.

In a practical sense, my training as a sculptor and printmaker has resulted in an inherent way of thinking through the craft process that has become more apparent as the research has developed. Working with found objects for the first time and researching and writing around their meaning has been a liberating experience for me, and one that has enabled me to articulate cultural histories by implication rather than through an explicit or didactic language. The craft of making is an important factor in how these new artworks manage to convince the viewer that the hybrid is more than simply a sum of the parts. Technically, I rely on my abilities to bring diverse elements together and represent them in a way that communicates a unified idea while at the same time leaving the raw elements of assemblage as evocative touch points as a conduit to past memories and experiences. This is particularly

the case in the sculptural constructions Figures 59, 64 and 65. A physical interpretation of the trialectic model extends our understanding of constructed histories by the use of images and materials, prompting experiential, sensory and imaginative responses from the audience that in turn promotes a questioning of the validity of current textual systems of understanding and knowledge transfer.

Working with an interpretive theoretical framework has affected my art practice considerably over the period of this research journey. While my resulting artworks might have a limited impact in the gallery situation, related publications and conferences have given me the opportunity to express a broad range of socio-political issues through both text and image. Through my praxis, my artworks have become more political through this research journey, a direct result of my academic and artistic life becoming one of an embodied lifeworld in which I express my position as a migrant within a highly complex multidimensional situation. Visual art collaboration, as demonstrated in Chapters 2 & 3, have enabled me to cut through the language barriers by sharing visual codes that enable local and global issues surrounding Indigenous rights to be communicated and shared.

It is clear that the representing of the complexities of modern hybrid culture, as posed in my primary research question, cannot be answered in a single statement, either textually or visually. I have had to be careful throughout this research to avoid the situation where I simply illustrate my theoretical concerns in my artworks; rather, my reflexive methodology has developed into a two-way interdependent process whereby theory and practice have fed each other through interchange. My strategy to push the boundaries of this has included the audience as a participator, in regards to the secondary question involving Lefebvre's theory of cumulative trialectics. This strategy utilises the exhibition situation as a "theatre of memory" (Fabian quoted in Clifford 1986, 12) as a way to stimulate the imagination of the audience beyond a literal translation. The final exhibition at Turner Galleries in Perth uses three spaces to correspond to the triangulation within my trialectic model through which I

attempt to stimulate the audience into an imaginary trialectic space where their individual lived experiences play a contributory role in the equation, that of memory–interpretation–imagination. The situation I have created redefines Said's "imaginative geography" (1985, 2) by prompting the viewer to piece together a complex narrative that aligns with my research focus of Shan-Shui-Hua painting where a more multidimensional and metaphysical space is defined by what we think rather than what we see, or an "object for the viewer's mind" (Chen quoted in Maeda 1970, 16). The complexity of this final exhibition in its use of image, object and animation and the range of materials used interprets the cumulative trialectic model that contributes to a physical and cerebral experience, an embodied experience that better represents the fragmented and incomplete nature of cultural hybridity.

Offering an externalised view and one that includes a British-Chinese-Australian triangulated model is important in re-setting the established dialectic between Indigenous and non-Indigenous art (Grishin 2013), which, I argued, continues to echo the outdated model of the binary polarities of thirdspace exchange. I contend that a sophisticated and developed model of cumulative trialectics, through which the future can be expressed as a broader three-dimensional view of our past and present, can contribute to the formation of a more inclusive cultural identity. Within the academic context, this creative research contributes to the ongoing dialogue around dominant languages and the representation of multicultural communities in Australia.

The research has an impact in three main areas. Firstly, when I commenced this research, I assumed that the scope of Open Bite Australia as an agent of change was limited to those participating in the program. Through this research journey, I have developed a more reflexive and creative model in which the practices of Open Bite Australia affect and influence my personal praxis in a way that reaches a wider international audience. The ongoing issues surrounding Indigenous rights in Australia have been re-contextualised and re-communicated within the trialectic model of engagement and creative praxis.

Secondly, I have influenced my assistants, student interns and audiences through engagement at exhibitions, through numerous guest lectures and artist talks and finally in the academic sphere through conferences and peer reviewed publications. Exhibiting at major international art galleries in Australia, China, Turkey and Cuba and the associated exhibition catalogues and on-line / print marketing materials as part of this doctoral study has ensured that the impact of this creative research has a broad international reach.[84]

Finally, I have challenged traditional research models by uncovering an interpretive theoretical model for praxis that is adaptable for artists who approach their research from an autoethnographical position (Marcus 1986). By adopting this reflexive methodology of praxis involving cross cultural collaboration as a key component of a triangulated dialogic, the often-privileged view of ethnography is transformed into a more embodied critique from within, involving an often-unpredictable participation by other artists and writers. The research model of cumulative trialectics in this respect can be an agent of change, making a unique contribution to the ongoing dialogue regarding the representation of cultural hybridity in Australia and beyond.

As an extension of this research, I intend to expand Lefebvre's (1991) production of space through the construct of multidimensional and predictive (Kesner 2014) VR environments that engage the viewer through a different form of dialogic and spatial imagination. Applying my model of reflexive praxis will serve to infiltrate the social spaces in which this practice is located, beyond the boundaries of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty into a Theatre of Prediction. The challenge in this environment is to introduce a sensory experience that extends my own practice beyond that of the physical and beyond Johnson's (2007) description of the aesthetics of embodiment. New research will also include a broadening of the scope of Open Bite Australia to include investigating ways of engaging with the international art markets through more self-managed and independent working practices that advantage young Aboriginal artists from remote communities.

84 Refer to appendix 14 and list of exhibitions following this section.

Exhibitions, Projects and Publications as Part of This Research

Exhibitions (in chronological order)

An-Arcadia: Solo Film Screening. Perth Cultural Centre Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, 5–25 January 2015.

Home and Housed: Group Exhibition Spectrum Project Space Perth, 16–30 April 2015.

Third Space: Group Exhibition Spectrum Project Space Perth, 12–25 June 2015.

Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow: Solo exhibition Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai, 28 October–27 November 2015. Curated by Dorothy Zhu.

Fraternity and Aesthetics Group Exhibition, Cetin Emec Art Gallery Istanbul Turkey, 15–20 February 2016. Curated by Reyhani Akan.

Double Click Group Exhibition Li Gallery Shenzhen China, 30 September–16 October 2016. Curated by Peng Jei.

Third Space: Group Exhibition Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai ,10–23 October 2016.

The Australian Connection: Taller Grafka Experimentale Gallery Havana Cuba and e Santiag De Cuba Havana, 6–11 July 2016.

Tomorrow is History: Solo Exhibition Turner Galleries Perth July-August 2017

Publications Written Throughout the Candidature (in chronological order)

Barstow, Clive, and Paul Uhlmann. 2015. *Embodied Learning: Towards New Models For Engaging With Art Within The University*. Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS) RMIT. http://acuads.com.au/conference/article/embodied-learning-towards-new-models-for-engaging-with-art-within-the-university/

Barstow, Clive, and Jiang Junchen. 2015. *Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow: New Jigsaws Of Social Construction*. edited by Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai China. Shanghai, China: USST Press.

Barstow, Clive. 2016.*Towards Trialectic Space: An Experiment in Cultural Misunderstanding and Misinterpretation.* Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS), Queensland University of Technology.

Barstow, Clive, and Rehyani Akan. 2016. *Fraternity and Aesthetics*. Exhibition Catalogue, Emec Art Gallery Istanbul Turkey

Barstow, Clive. 2017. *Towards a Trialectic Space: A Revisioning of Multidimensional Diasporas.* Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University of Technology. http://humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/inasa-conference-2016/

Barstow, Clive, Lyndall Adams and Paul Uhlman. 2017. *What Does ERA Measure?* Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS), Queensland University of Technology

Open Bite Australia Collaborations and Projects

Jimmy Pike Trust: Dora Griffiths, Louise Malarvie and Anita Churchill through Waringarri Aboriginal Arts 2015.

Jimmy Pike Trust: Lorraine Daylight and Roseleen Park from Turkey Creek WA. 2015.

Jimmy Pike Trust: Pampila Hanson Boxer and Edwin Lee Mulligan from the Central Kimberly WA. 2015.

Jimmy Pike Trust: Leah Umbagii and Dean Smith 2016.

Pickett Foundation In conjunction with Mossenson Galleries. Trevor Pickettt Artist in Residence 2016.

Research Residency, Parliament House Western Australia. Nicola Kaye and Stephen Terry Artists in Residence 2016.

Invited Artist Lectures Undertaken as Part of this Candidature

2017 University of Shanghai Science and Technology USST China

Jian Qiao University China

2016 Curtin University Australia

Zhejiang Normal University China

Nanjing University of the Arts China

Guandong Baiyun University China

University of Shanghai Science and Technology USST China

2015 Shenyang Normal University China

University of Shanghai Science and Technology USST China

Shenyang Normal University China

Weinan Normal University Xian China

Shannxi Normal University Xian China

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Appendix 1 Ron Banks, "Jimmy Pike and Peter Skipper," *The West Australian* 3rd June 1998, 24



Picture: MOGENS JOHANSEN

Printmaking co-ordinator Clive Barstow and Fitzroy Crossing artists Jimmy Pike and Peter Skipper check some of their work.

Triumph over odds

IN THE past couple of years Aboriginal artist Jimmy Pike has strayed a long way from the familiar water holes and desert landscapes of his home country around Fitzroy Crossing.

A few months ago he was in London for the opening of an exhibition of his works at the Rebecca Hossack gallery and managed to be invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

He has also travelled to China, the Philippines and even Namibia in recent times, mostly with artist delegations to these countries.

These days Pike's home base is Broome, but last week he made another trek — south to Edith Cowan University's School of Visual Arts in Mt Lawley to become artist-in-residence for two weeks.

Joining him in the residency is his uncle and fellow artist Peter Skipper, who has also made a name for himself in indigenous art.

This week the pair head off with a group of visual arts students for a few days of work in the South-West from a base at Lewana Park near Balingup.

Pike and Skipper were invited to the School of Visual Arts by its head of print-making Clive Barstow, who this year set up a printmaking program called Open Bite.

The idea behind the program is to allow artists access to the campus's wide range of printmaking facilities so they can experiment with various techniques.

The Open Bite program also offers print enthusiasts — who need not be enrolled in the school's art courses — the chance to come on campus and work with the artists in residence.

"The idea of bringing down Jimmy and Peter was so that they could get the chance to work with the sort of print-making equipment that remote areas do not possess," Barstow says.

In the first week of the residency Pike and Skipper experimented with a variety of techniques, including lithography, dry-point etching and relief printing.

They have already created a number of print designs, pressing them out on a big old London-manufactured press that belongs to the school.

Pike's designs for fabrics are well-known through his long association with the Desert Design company.

Both artists were brought to Perth under an Aboriginal art sponsorship scheme by Western Mining Resources Ltd.

This week's trip to the South-West may yield further print designs for both artists as they interact with the environment and share their skills with students.

It probably comes as a surprise to those who know Pike for his desert paintings that his trips overseas have also produced their share of images of the new country he has visited.

According to Pike's English-born wife Pat Lowe, his keen eye has produced sketches of scenes in Britain, China and the other places.

"Jimmy was particularly fascinated by the Great Wall of China," she says.

Pike and his wife have already created four books about art and the North-West, the most recent being Jimmy and Pat Meet the Queen.

It tells the story of the native title issue from an Aboriginal point of view.

Originally intended as a children's story, it stemmed from Pike's wonder at the white man's description of his home country as "crown land".

Inspired by Pike's perspective on events, his wife wrote a humorous text for all ages in which the Queen visits the north to establish whether she should really own it.

Pike's development as an artist is one of the more inspiring stories of triumph over adversity to emerge in the past 15 years in indigenous art.

Whilehe was serving a jail sentence in Fremantle, Pike's talents as an artist were discovered by Desert Design's David Worth. On his release from prison Pike began to create designs for the company, and soon blossomed into a full-time artist.

He married Pat Lowe, whom he had met when she visited him as a social worker in prison, and for several years on his release they lived literally under a tree at their own camp 200km from Fitzroy Crossing.

In his youth Pike had led a nomadic existence in the desert, where he learnt the deep-seated love of country that permeates most of his painting.

Now Pike's work is an integral part of the international market for indigenous art, and his works are eagerly sought by art lovers everywhere.

Peter Skipper comes from the same region of the Walmajarri country as his nephew Jimmy, and began painting in the early 1980s.

Ron Banks

Appendix 2 Clive Barstow, "The Jimmy Pike Experience," *Object Magazine* 1999, 72–73.



Jimmy Pike and Peter Skipper working in the Open Bite Lithography Studio. Photo: Peter Green.

The Jimmy Pike experience

CLIVE BARSTOW REPORTS ON A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH ARTISTS JIMMY PIKE AND PETER SKIPPER AT THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED OPEN BITE ACCESS WORKSHOPS.

I RECENTLY HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING ON A COLLABORATIVE PRINTMAKING PROJECT with two of Western Australia's most well known and respected artists—Jimmy Pike and Peter Skipper—within the Open Bite Access Print Workshop. The OBAPW was established in 1998 as an extension to the printmaking program at Edith Cowan University's West Australian School of Visual Arts in Perth.

The program aims to provide practising artists with access to the School's extensive print making facilities. This type of program affords the professional practitioner in other media an opportunity to learn and explore the disciplines and techniques involved in contemporary print making practice, or use of the resources required to produce and publish their own work. It also offers enthusiasts the chance to work on campus and work with members of the School's artist-in-residence program.

The notion of working with professional indigenous artists developed through a conversation I had with David Wroth, Director of Desert Designs. This company has a long history in commercial fabric design with a strong reputation for working with artists from north and central Australia. We discussed the possibilities and potential of providing artists with access to the type of equipment not readily available in remote areas. We also discussed how this might, in some small way, influence the stylistic character of indigenous art in the regions. We invited Daisy Napaltjarri from the Hass Bluff Women's Art Community to work with us for one week to produce prints within a print room environment, her first access point to resources of this kind. The success of the trial lead to this more ambitious project with Jimmy and Peter.

Jimmy, who is originally from Fitzroy Crossing, had just returned from the opening of his exhibition at the Rebecca Hossack gallery in London and a brief trip to China and Namibia. Peter, Jimmy's uncle, who is best known for his paintings of the north west landscape, and Jimmy's wife, Pat Lowe—who penned the well known story *Jimmy and Pat Meet the Queen*—were asked to collaborate with Jimmy on the project.

We agreed on a strategy of working with the artists within the print room for one week, introducing them to a particularly industrial approach to the medium which relied on both traditional and contemporary print technology to reproduce their work. This included the use of developmental equipment such as photographic or digital processes as well as utilising presses to print the work. The second week would be spent working with the students at Leewana Bush Camp, under the type of conditions that Jimmy and Peter are used to, without the luxury of plant and equipment. This approach proved to be very successful and informative for both the visiting artists and the students alike, providing a free ride on the learning curve for everyone involved in the project.

The first studio week saw the artists generate an enormous body of work which included experiments in steel and zinc etching, stone lithography, relief printing and a day working in clay. Jimmy and Peter would produce an image swiftly with a directness and beauty that had to be seen to be believed. It soon became apparent to both artists that the similarities between processes would act as a link rather than a barrier for their work, whether the technology was high or low.

While Jimmy's images concentrated on traditional figurative and narrative themes, Peter developed the patterns and structural elements that form the basis of his painting. The first week also focussed on the monochromatic character and graphic elements of both artists' work so that these could be adapted at a later date into either design for fabric or colour prints on paper using screen technology.

The week on camp with the students from the printmaking department saw a return to technical simplicity and provided the time and space to appreciate the particular skills that Jimmy and Peter have developed as a result of their culture. Their deep-seated love of the desert permeates most of their landscape paintings. The artists would work all day on plates and lino blocks while slowly revealing the narratives that lie behind their images.



Acrylic painting by Jimmy Pike.



Relief print by Peter Skipper.

The return to the studio saw the artists laying down a series of textures to be used at a later date within the screenprinting process. The artists were quite happy for me to run a series of proofs with the raw material and, as a printer, make both aesthetic and technical decisions about how the print might develop. It is refreshing to see that artists of this standing are excited about the idea of collaboration at all stages of the process. It was also interesting to see Peter choosing potential sequences from a colour swatch, favouring fluorescent yellows and bright cerise over ochres and primaries. The proofs are to be completed early in 1999 so that decisions can be made as to which images will be developed or editioned. The Open Bite studio is now entering an agreement with Desert Designs whereby they will act as printer and publisher for the work created from this project.

The whole experience of interaction between artists and their environment marked an important transitional journey for every participant and the collaborative process proved to be both productive and educational. Above all, the project gave us the privilege of working, for a brief time, with two unique individuals and important Australian artists.

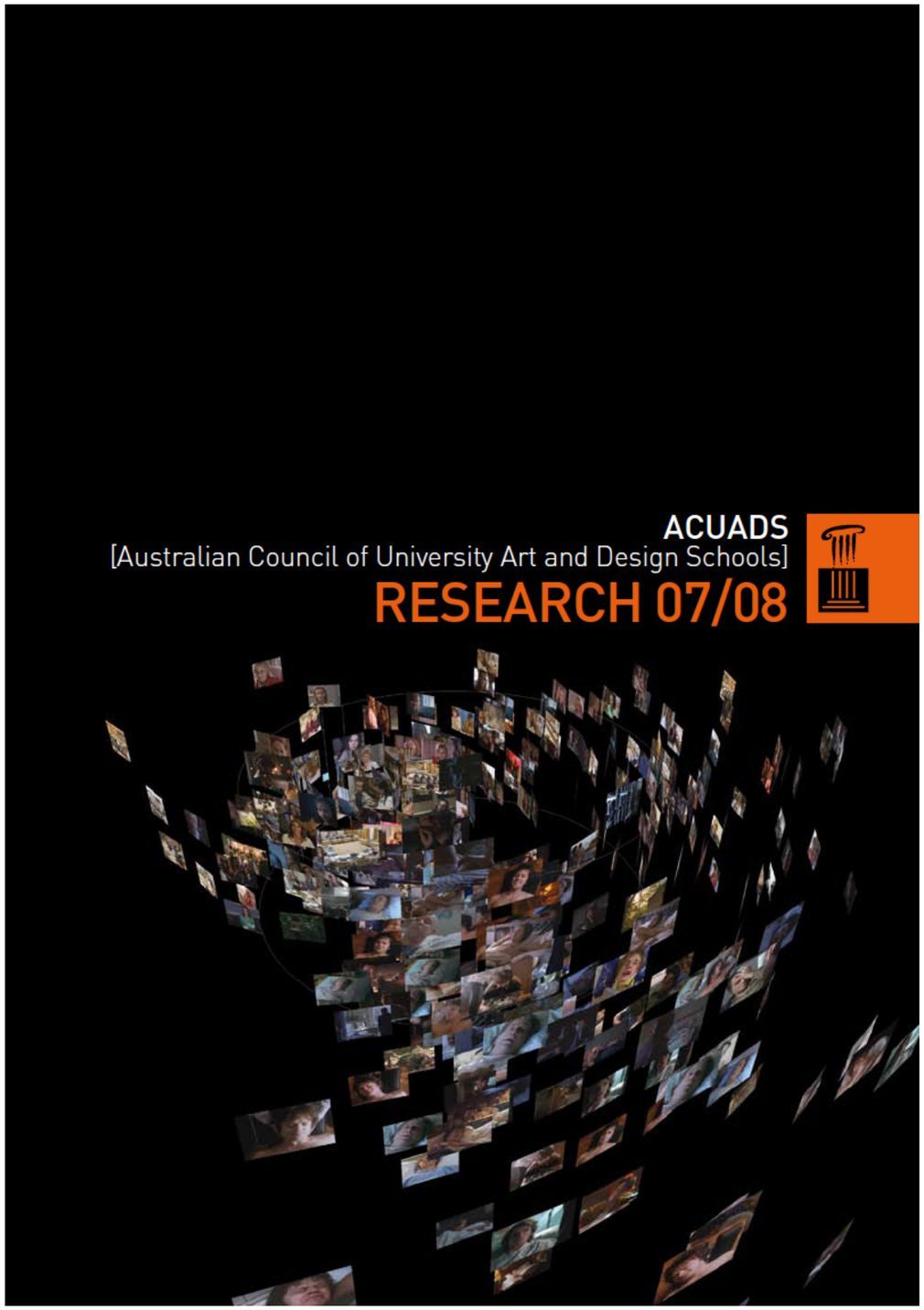
endnotes

This project was supported by financial sponsorship from Western Mining Resources Ltd.

Clive Barstow is Senior Lecturer and Co-ordinator of Printmaking at the School of Visual Arts, Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia.

Object magazine gratefully acknowledges the support of Arts WA towards the publishing of articles on WA in this issue.

Appendix 3 Su Baker, *ACUADS Research 07/08,* edited by Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2007), 4–5.



Open Bite Australia →

Open Bite Australia was established in 1998 to facilitate and publish a range of printmaking projects by regional and international artists, and to form professional and cultural links to the visual arts curriculum at Edith Cowan University. The workshop fulfils a number of pedagogic, cross-cultural and creative research needs and offers students a unique opportunity to work in collaboration with internationally renowned artists and researchers.

With a focus on the relationship between arts education and its related industries, the workshop has exposed a number of ethical, commercial and cultural issues that serve to frame our philosophy and broaden the parameters of our research and creative practices. The workshop attempts to offer an alternative relationship between artist and agent, particularly in response to cases of exploitation of Australian Indigenous artists in the areas of reproduction and copyright.

Open Bite is taking advantage of its privileged position as part of an educational program to establish an equal and inclusive relationship with its artists. Through an association

Createc
Faculty of Education and Arts, Edith Cowan University
http://createc.ea.ecu.edu.au



Jimmy Pike, *Water Hole Man*
painting produced at Open Bite



Mary McLean
signing *The Seven Sisters*
edition of prints published by Open Bite

with local artist agents Desert Designs, and more recently Indigenart WA, the workshop has developed residency programs for Indigenous artists already involved in the West Australian and international art markets. Artists are invited to work in the studio, in many cases alongside and in collaboration with local artists and students. This unique relationship allows the artists to work in a completely uninhibited way and allows the development of lasting relationships based on trust. Working closely with agencies such as Kurongkurl Katitjin (Centre for Indigenous Studies at Edith Cowan University) the workshop seeks to promote an awareness of Indigenous customs and protocols through its teaching programs and community engagement.

Any profits from publishing activities are fed back into technical research, community workshops or local arts sponsorship. The prints produced by Open Bite are strictly limited and distributed through a number of recognised agencies, such as the Australian Print Network in Sydney.

Open Bite activities are not limited to working with contracted Indigenous artists. The project page of the website acts as an archive for our activities, and demonstrates the breadth of international artists who have worked with us since 1998. Artists from America, Europe, Africa and Asia have undertaken a number of diverse projects, which in many cases, reflect our unique position both geographically and philosophically. The global attraction of Open Bite has fostered a number of collaborative projects in which international artists have worked alongside local Indigenous artists.

James Bryans, *They*
As part of "Project POP" a virtual collaboration
with the University of Humberside UK



The research arm of Open Bite supports projects that advance the discipline of printmaking, such as our extensive technical research into non-toxic printmaking processes for use in the remote desert regions of Western Australia. In conjunction with co-researcher Professor Susan Groce at the University of Maine USA, Open Bite is developing a hybrid acrylic etching process for use in the extreme conditions of the Western Desert. The development of portable synthetic grounds and inks have long term implications for remote arts centres throughout Australia by addressing the problems normally associated with traditional petroleum based chemicals and processes.

This type of technical research and development contributes to a wider project in which the breadth of contemporary printmaking processes and techniques have been mapped. As a result, an on-line technical manual for printmakers has been published as part of the Open Bite website to support both our outreach programs and our studio-based activities. The technical manual has also been adopted by the Printmakers Council of Australia and by a number of local and international institutions.

Open Bite's involvement in both practice led and technical research has influenced the teaching program at both Edith Cowan University and at the Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey USA. Open Bite represents the oceanic region of their on-line Global Education program, where socio-political issues within contemporary arts practices and comparative literatures are discussed. This on-line program centres on the international art market and the broader implications for synchronic communities such as Aboriginal and North American Indian cultures. The project uses the Open Bite workshop as a case study to encourage dialogue on a number of ethical, social and cultural issues that are common to Australian and American contemporary society. This four-year project has involved research into Indigenous histories in both Australia and America, producing a number of related publications for international conferences and national peak bodies such as The Australian National Gallery and the Australian Council of University Art & Design Schools (ACUADS).

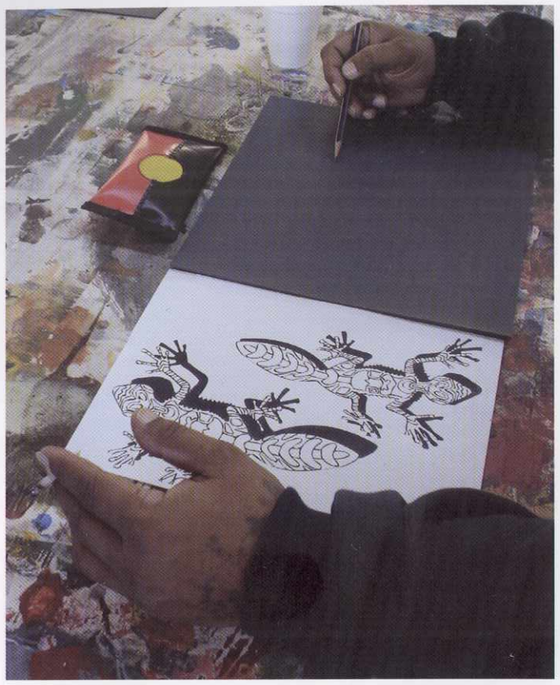
Open Bite has developed an inter-dependent and self-generating position in which educational philosophy works hand in hand with commercial activities, in turn funding industrial research and development projects and community workshops to strengthen its educational base. By its nature, Open Bite produces regular traditional and non-traditional research outputs through exhibitions, publications and critical texts. Its future lies in an ongoing and respectful relationship with its artists, and through maintaining both its ethical and educational focus.

Professor Clive Barstow
Head of School Communications and Contemporary Arts
Edith Cowan University
Director of Open Bite Australia

Open Bite Australia web pages
www.scca.ecu.edu.au/projects/openbite/openbite.htm
Outline paper National Gallery of Australia
www.australianprints.gov.au/Default.cfm?MnuID=5ym1/Barstow

Appendix 4 Paul Uhlmann, "To Hear Voices Distant and Close," *Imprint* 44 (4) 2009: 30–31.

feature story



These are the hands of B

to hear voices distant and close

A personal account of a NAIDOC printmaking project



Casuarina Education Centre Art Room
Photography: Robert Cleworth

by Paul Uhlmann
Artist and Lecturer in Visual Art, Coordinator of Printmaking Studio, School of Communications and Arts, Edith Cowan University, Perth

IT is early in the morning as I pace the front of my house. I am waiting for my lift to Casuarina prison. I am a little edgy. It is to be my first experience of working within an educational facility in a prison environment. As I will be well out of my sphere of knowledge, I am planning to listen. Listening is a particular form of active-engagement, which builds bridges between strangers. My role will be to instruct the Indigenous, mainly Nyoongar, prisoners on lino-block printmaking techniques. I am working on this project through the Open Bite Program[1], which runs out of the Visual Arts Program at Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley Campus in Perth. Robert Cleworth, the initiator of this project, has skilfully coordinated a three-way partnership between his employer at City of Joondalup (where he works as curator), Open Bite and Correctional Services. Facilitating our access to the prison will be Prison Arts Project Officer, Michelle Bourne. We hope that the inmates will warm to this project to create unique works in print for NAIDOC week.

Robert arrives and I jump into his old Ford. We gun through the streets into the vastness of a crisp Western Australian summer morning. When we arrive forty-five minutes later, I am taken aback by the razor wire. It sits in enormous swirling ribbons and curls above the perimeter of the wire fencing. The fencing must be over ten metres high.

Passing through the main entrance, guards enter into gallows humour. 'Sign here,' says one. 'Once we have you, we have you'. We then move through a series of chambers, holding bays with heavy doors, and pass along a matrix of walkways until we arrive at the educational centre. Inside the studio we find that the inmates are mainly Indigenous. All around the room are paintings that appear to be a fluent continuation of the Carrolup School[2]. I find myself wondering — are these works like a mirror held up, reflecting the past, or are they projections of a timeless dreaming? All around us are painted landscapes, the skies are gradated as if it is twilight or lit by an unseen moon. Many depictions of Xanthorrhoea feature with trees twisting up within unpeopled landforms. Some of the men are working on paintings of colourful birds. An eagle holds dominion over the skies. They all work quietly. Held within these prison walls, the works seem to speak of resilience, and to transport the men out of their confinement and away to times before settlement, before boundaries, gates and fences.

They acknowledge our presence as Michelle introduces us. I ask if we can gather everyone around so we can go from one person's work to the next. Michelle asks 'T' if this is a good idea[3]. He shakes his head. 'No, no, that won't work.' So we proceed to talk to them individually. I am introduced to 'K'. He is standing in front of a canvas that has two

children chalked onto the surface. He says they are the children of his cousin, pointing to a man who does not acknowledge us — he, rather, busies himself stretching a canvas. K informs us he will paint the faces and then his cousin will fill-in the skies, with stars. Later we learn that these children were tragically killed in a traffic accident.

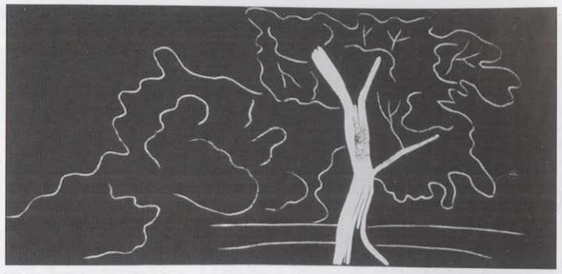
I bring out a book on South West artists.[4] — 'Yes,' he says matter-of-factly, 'that's my grandmother's painting on the cover.' The painting is by Bella Kelly. He then points out that he is also related to Reynold Hart and Parnell Dempster. I think that Hart may be his grandad; I am reeling from the coincidence. 'Did you ever ask him about his paintings?' 'No, he was always painting though — he was a Boss artist — he let the work talk for him.' As we move around the room I am stunned to realise how many of the prisoners are related to each other. These family ties stretch back across time, to the Carrolup School and beyond, as well as across this short stretch of room.

Over the coming weeks we work closely with the Nyoongar prisoners; however early on, the project seems destined to fail. The take-up of interest in lino-block printing is slow. We feel that the problem is most likely a lack of engagement with the potential outcomes of the project — none of the prisoners will be able to see their work hanging in the planned exhibitions. To add to our problems, the press we are using is awkward due to neglect. The turning point comes one day when Laurel Nannup*, a respected Nyoongar elder, works with us as guest artist. When I first meet her in the back studio of the Education Centre, she is visibly shaken. It is her first experience of being inside the centre. After a short while, however, she finds her composure, sits down and proceeds to cut a linocut of a small lizard — her own totem animal. Many of the young men gather around and proceed to work. It is deeply moving to see so many blocks being cut, accompanied by soft conversation and gentle laughter.

After Laurel's visit the energy in the rooms seemed to lift. Michelle kept this positive energy alive by ensuring that those who had shown interest in the project could keep coming back to the studios. Over a period of five months of sustained creative flow, seven Nyoongar men and one Yamatji man cut blocks for the NAIDOC print project. Near the end of the project a folio of eight prints entitled *Nyoongar + Yamatji* 2009 were printed at ECU in an edition of eight, providing something very special and unique for both cultures. During NAIDOC week these prints were exhibited at both Blender Gallery in the City of Joondalup and at Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research, ECU.

The men often related stories as they printed their blocks. This would involve dreaming stories or personal interpretations of their spiritual world-view, demonstrating the complex and multi-faceted meaning of their works. I realised that listening and engaging with these makers is crucial to understanding both their prints and Nyoongar culture. Unfortunately, when so many young Nyoongar men are tragically locked away in prison[5], few people on the outside will ever have the opportunity to listen or engage with them, or their art works.

One day early on in the project our guide, T, related his view on the works of the Indigenous prisoners: '...they are beautiful — but there is a lot of sadness here too,' adding '...it meant a lot when Rudd said sorry — it was a relief...' His bearded friend nodded in silence. •



T (Culture: Nyoongar) *Tree* 2009, linocut on BKK Rives paper, 15.5 x 31 cm



S (Culture: Nyoongar) *Landscape* 2009, linocut on BKK Rives paper, 15 x 31.5 cm



M (Culture: Nyoongar) *The story of Uluru the map of Australia, recognises the spiritual landscape which belongs to our culture* 2009, linocut on BKK Rives paper, 30 x 30 cm

Photography: Robert Cleworth

*** Laurel Nannup's** *A Story to Tell* was recently the inaugural exhibition at a new art facility in Rockingham — the Kent Street Gallery, Gary Holland Community Centre. Featuring woodcuts, etchings and photographs that reflect her memories of family life and mission life as a member of the stolen generation, the exhibition will be toured regionally by Art on the Move until June 2010.

References

1. Established in 1998 by Professor Clive Barstow, Open Bite is a not-for-profit organisation that runs access printmaking facilities. Many of its projects have included Indigenous artists.
2. This school is famous for providing the seed of Nyoongar art, which continues to reverberate through the South West today. A remarkable series of drawings were produced by children of the stolen generation, held on a reserve at Carrolup (approx. 290 kms southwest of Perth). During a short, fertile period of creativity, through the inspired tutelage of Noel and Lilly White (1945-51), the children were able to develop a distinctive visual language. (B. L. Croft and J. Gooding, *South West Central Indigenous Art from South Western Australia 1833-2002*. Perth, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2003, p. 24.)
3. In accordance with Department of Correctional Services guidelines, prisoners can only be identified by their first initial. T, a young Nyoongar man who commands respect from his fellow inmates, is to be our guide and mediator to avoid cultural errors.
4. B. L. Croft and J. Gooding, 2003.
5. N. Robinson, 'Indigenous jailing increases by average 37pc', *The Australian*, July 3, 2009. Retrieved October 21, 2009, from http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,25725905-5013172,00.html . 'Western Australia and the Northern Territory have far greater proportions of Aboriginal people behind bars than other states. In WA, for every non-indigenous person in prison, there are 20 Aborigines'.

Appendix 5 Paul Uhlmann, "The Jimmy Pike Trust: Reflections on the Imperceptiple Transference of Knowledge," *Imprint* 47 (1) 2015: 6–7.

The Jimmy Pike Trust

reflections on the imperceptible transference of knowledge

by **Paul Uhlmann,** artist and lecturer, Coordinator of Printmaking Studios, Edith Cowan University, WA



Jimmy Pike Trust scholarship-holder **Roseleen Park** in the ECU print studios. Photography: Tungsten

To learn more about Open Bite direct your enquiries to:

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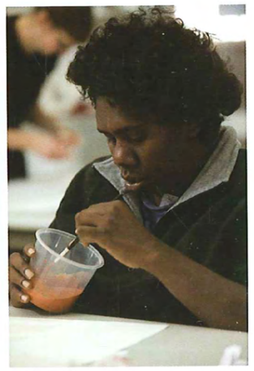
Open Bite: www.ecu.edu.au/schools/communications-and-arts/community-activity/open-bite-australia

Jimmy Pike Trust: www.wyemando.org.au/jimmypiketrust.html



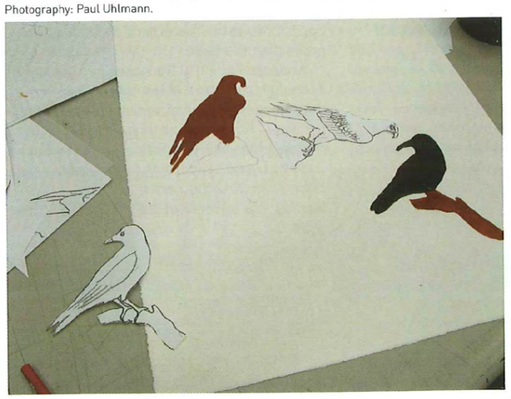
Jimmy Pike Trust scholarship-holder **Lorraine Daylight** mixing ochre pigment from Turkey Creek. Photography: Tungsten

Sometime during a residency in the print studios of Edith Cowan University, in April 2010, Indigenous artist Edwin Lee Mulligan began to imperceptibly change into a bird. His body rose up and his voice began to telegraph the topography of landmasses and forms of his homeland. The crowd of students stood transfixed as Edwin twitched and danced before his prints and in-progress paintings. There were many pauses and spaces between his movements, which compressed the intensity of his message, so that a series of vivid mental images conveyed layers of story and meaning to his work.

It gave me pause to wonder how knowledge too is a transformative experience, which may be gradually transferred during artist residencies of this kind. What kind of knowledge is passed on and exchanged, I wondered, and how does this occur?

Edwin together with his father, Pampirla Boxer Hanson, were both artists-in-residence in 2010, through the Open Bite[1] program which runs out of the print studios at Edith Cowan University. Their residency was made possible by a scholarship provided by the Jimmy Pike Trust. Not long before he died internationally regarded artist Jimmy Pike, together with his wife Pat Lowe, set up a foundation which aims to assist the education of emerging Aboriginal artists. One result has been a fruitful and engaging collaboration between ECU and the Jimmy Pike Trust, which thus far, has enjoyed two paired residencies over two years.

Studio documentation of work in progress by Roseleen Park and Lorraine Daylight, 2011. Photography: Paul Uhlmann.



Part of the benefit of these exchanges has been the uniqueness of each situation. The artists have all commented that it is a delight for them to work among interested students and to pass on their stories, while at the same time also learning themselves. In a way, there is a gap between the students and the artists, which has as its tension the deep curiosity to understand not only culture but aspects of the 'material imagination'. To breathe the imagination into materials, is for philosopher Gaston Bachelard, a key concept for creative practitioners. It is as if certain materials act on the mind in a universal way, which not only ignites wonder, but embodies the history of its associations. The pigment that the 2011 Jimmy Pike Trust scholarship holders, Roseleen Park and Lorraine Daylight, brought with them from Turkey Creek is a prime example of this, for all were fascinated to hear about how the pigment was locally sourced and was traditionally used as a body paint in ceremonies — a tradition which continues. Some were surprised to experience that the earth can have such a range of colour and that this colour, too, has diverse weights — the charcoal appeared weightless and brittle, while the white fine ochre was slightly oily and heavy.

Bringing these artists into the studios and assisting them to transform their paintings and sculptural ideas into prints seems to encourage open dialogue around print processes. Students were often casually engaged in these discussions at the very moment a fresh print was being revealed. Over the period of the residencies, as the proofs were being displayed within the studios, there was therefore a deepening of knowledge about the iconography of the works. For example, I was intrigued to hear from a student that Roseleen Park spoke to her about the importance of dreams within the creative process. Just before coming to Perth a deceased uncle appeared to Roseleen in her sleep and said that she must paint owls. Within the retelling of this story the student conveyed a sense of wonder, even though the message was not necessarily about happiness. But, this is something that I have noticed too — that learning something new, and transferring that to others, carries along with it an internal lightness — of joy. •

Note

1. Open Bite Australia, was founded in 1998 by Professor Clive Barstow as a research platform to develop printmaking and to work creatively with Indigenous Australians.

Appendix 6 Katrina Drayton, *The Jimmy Pike Scholarship Report* (Published by The Jimmy Pike Trust) http://www.jimmypiketrust.org.au/ 2014

JIMMY PIKE SCHOLARSHIP 2014

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

The annual Jimmy Pike Scholarship enables two Aboriginal artists from the Kimberley to attend a two week printmaking residency at Edith Cowan University's School of Communications and Arts each year. The 2014 scholarship residency ran from 9th to 18th of September. The successful applicants were Francine Steele, from Ngurra Art Centre in Ngumpan community, just out from Fitzroy Crossing, and Jennifer Dickens from Mangkaja Arts Resource Centre in Fitzroy Crossing.

Francine Steele is an emerging artist who paints her father's Walmajarri (Great Sandy Desert) country. She is the daughter of Edgar Pike, also an artist and brother to Jimmy Pike. She has been painting since 2008 and also works at Ngurra Art Centre. Jennifer Steele is an art worker from Mangkaja Arts. She has completed several courses related to this role. Short biographies of the artists are featured on the Jimmy Pike Trust website, at http://www.jimmypiketrust.org.au/previous-recipients/2014-francine-steele-and-jennifer-dickens/.

The journey from Fitzroy Crossing to Perth is almost 12 hours by bus and plane, and starts by boarding the daily bus as it passes through Fitzroy at 1am. This journey highlights the relative remoteness of Kimberley artists and the value of the experience offered by the ECU residency, not only advancing technical skills, but also providing exposure to different perspectives and new art theory. In return, ECU staff and students are offered a glimpse into the life and work of a Kimberley artist. This year, Francine brought the proof of an upcoming book, soon to be published by Ngurra Art Centre, which describes the plants in the land around Ngumpan, using English and Walmajarri words, photographs and images painted by Ngurra artists. This provided an initial starting point for conversation, as well as some of the work produced during the residency.



Francine Steele (left) and Jennifer Dickens in the ECU studio

Technically, the artists benefited significantly from the residency. Francine had had some previous exposure to basic printmaking techniques, such as paper stencil screen printing, but the residency introduced both artists to several new techniques, including lino cut printing and painted stencil screen printing. The artists produced five works each over the residency, enabling them to explore the qualities of each technique and develop their skills and ideas with each successive piece.



Jennifer (left) and Francine at the scholarship exhibition



Francine signs her work, watched by ECU lecturer Paul Uhlmann

The 2014 residency was deemed highly successful by ECU printmaking lecturer, Dr Paul Uhlmann, who coordinated the residency. He reported that the artists integrated well with students and staff in the printmaking studios. Their presence piqued students' interest and increased the 'buzz' in the studio. The artists worked consistently and efficiently over the eight days in the studio. The resultant output was significant in quantity and of high quality, as was evidenced at the informal scholarship exhibition, held on the evening of the last day of the scholarship.

In conclusion, Francine and Jennifer both reported that the residency was extremely helpful to their art practice and roles at their respective art centres. They enjoyed their time in Perth and commend the scholarship to any Kimberley artist who is seeking new techniques to freshen their art practice.

Katrina Drayton
Project Officer
Jimmy Pike Trust
October 2014

Appendix 7 Clive Barstow and Paul Uhlmann, "Embodied Learning: Towards New Models for Engaging with Art within the University," in *ACUADS Conference 2015*, edited by Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (South Australia: University of South Australia, 2015), 1–12.

Professor Clive Barstow and Dr Paul Uhlmann
Edith Cowan University

Embodied Learning: Towards new models for engaging with art within the university

Keywords: Aesthetics, Embodied-Mind, Meaning-Making, Change, Intercultural Learning

Introduction

This paper will outline the importance of embodied learning through case studies from two on-going cultural exchange programs within the context of the university sector. The authors make a position for multiple levels of educational engagement, which occur through these residencies and exchange programs: through studio engagement, exhibitions, and unexpected encounters outside of classrooms and timetabled lessons. In the current climate where Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS) are often touted as a general panacea for the transference of knowledge in universities, we present embodied learning as an essential cornerstone model to facilitate experiential learning. Our paper will draw out key understandings from the embodied mind thesis of Mark Johnson (2007) which makes a case for an 'aesthetics of human understanding' as the most important philosophy for the 21st century If this is the case, then art schools become more important than ever as they are well placed to contribute to this realm of knowledge. We aim to illuminate the dynamic nature of this approach as an active engagement where the participants interact and engage in problem solving both individually and through group interaction. Furthermore, we emphasise that profound changes can occur as a result of such engagement, which may also offer seed potential for life-changing experiences. Therefore, we make a case for the art studio as a key nexus for universities where different cultures and groups can meet and engage through the process of making, to develop shared experience which extends cultural understandings beyond the limits of common language.

In order to outline our case, it will be first necessary to define the embodied mind thesis and what we mean by embodied learning. The authors will then make clear why Johnson, in the light of recent revelations about the study of the mind, considers aesthetics to be the most important philosophy for the 21st century. Finally, we will consider two case studies as flexible models for embodied learning.

Towards an Aesthetics of Human Understanding

In his book *The Meaning of the Body,* Johnson traces the trajectory of why art and aesthetics have been traditionally viewed as lesser forms of knowledge and identifies two main historical sources with Kant and Plato. For Plato, art was a form of *mimesis* imitating the real and it is for this reason that he banished imitative poetry from his ideal state for he interpreted it as being a second-rate derivative understanding of reality and not a direct presentation of reality (Johnson, p. 210). Kant for his part made an rigorous critique and found that art and what he called "aesthetic experience" are not primarily sources of knowledge; rather they are sources of a certain kind of refined, intellectual feeling. For Kant, 'Nothing pertaining to taste can ever be the basis for universal concepts, propositions or knowledge' (cited in Johnson p. 218). Key to this evaluation of aesthetics as holding a lower, secondary status in relation to knowledge is that it is considered to be a subjective personal experience, which will remain enclosed within the personal realm as 'feelings' and therefore cannot be conveyed successfully to others. Part of the aim of Johnson's book is to overturn this view and to make the provocative claim that "insofar as aesthetics concerns the very conditions of meaningful experience and thought, philosophy must be grounded in aesthetics" (p. 213).

Mark Johnson (2007) draws on recent developments through cognitive science to develop his aesthetics of human understanding. Through these developments, he and others postulate that the mind and the body are not two separate entities; rather, they are one unified substance so that "the human mind is not contained within the body but emerges from and co-evolves with the body" (Johnson, p.279). This radical concept is a hammer blow to the still dominant paradigm of Cartesian dualism, which argues that the mind is separate from the body and thereby that humanity is separate from nature.

With the embodied mind thesis, the human mind is not only intimately entwined with the body. Importantly, the human subject cannot be understood without a connection to the environment. For Johnson, a human being is a "body-mind" which is an "organic continually evolving process of events" (p.279); it is intermeshed with the environment - the body-mind emerges from and continuously shapes the cultural, social and physical aspects of the environment that he or she inhabits. This process of active continual change and development begins within the womb and does not cease until the death of an individual. The desire to make meaning of one's world is elemental to human life and is experienced at a preconscious level through the most

visceral primordial bodily means of sensation, feeling, emotions, image schemas and concepts. In this way, before we have spoken language we are shaping meaning in our world through experience, which is recorded and produced through bodily engagement.

Johnson therefore asserts that human meaning is embodied:

> we begin our lives mostly by feeling or sensing this vast complex of meaning and we never cease to access it via feeling, even when we make use of culture's most remarkable tools of symbolic expression and interaction (p.279).

Everything for Johnson hinges on what Merleau-Ponty considered to be the 'porous' nature of the human body where information about the world seeps into the flesh and becomes part of the mind-body (1994, p 284) at preconscious levels – learning takes place like this continuously and we absorb information about our society, our environment and each other in complex multi-faceted ways. In recognising that embodied learning takes place in unconscious ways Johnson calls for an aesthetics of human understanding.

He says " Aesthetics must include the study of everything that goes into the human capacity to make and express meaning" (p.x).

A study such as this would be all encompassing - it would be relational, involving complex on-going exchanges between individuals, cultural groups and communities and the environments they emerge from. Art is a pre-eminent model for pursuing such goals; however, the dominant narrative from mainstream media has for too long misrepresented art as being an indulgent luxury item. In our example, art takes its proper place as a tool for deeper understanding of the nature of being.

Applying the theory of embodied learning into practice relies on the principles of reciprocity: a collaborative and engaged process by which both parties can gain, and in some cases the gains can be life changing. Importantly, the following projects are not tied to assessment processes and are not part of any particular curriculum requirements.

Case Study One – Jimmy Pike Trust and Open Bite Australia

Open Bite Australia was established at Edith Cowan University in 1998 to facilitate and publish a range of printmaking projects by regional and international artists. The workshop fulfils a number of pedagogic, cross-cultural and creative research needs and offers students a unique opportunity to work in collaboration with internationally renowned artists and researchers.

With a focus on the relationship between arts education and its related cultural industries, the workshop has exposed a number of ethical, commercial and cultural issues that serve to frame our philosophy and broaden the parameters of our research and creative practices. From the Aboriginal arts perspective, the workshop attempts to offer an alternative relationship between artist and agent, particularly in response to cases of exploitation of Australian Aboriginal artists in the areas of reproduction and copyright.

In recent years, the workshop has focused on providing opportunities for upcoming Aboriginal artist to produce work in a supporting educational environment free of the restrictions of the traditional agent / artist relationship. Working with long-term prisoners or with young artists from remote communities has enabled Open Bite to establish a political and social position in terms of empowering artists within a set of constantly changing cultural values.

Hanna Fink and Hetti Perkins description of indigenous art probably comes closest to defining the indefinable: 'Aboriginal Art is a protean phenomenon, a way of introducing change to maintain continuity' (2005, p60).

Change and continuity is expressed in another sense:Jimmy Pike was an inaugural artist in residence at ECU through Open Bite in 1998 and he continues to collaborate with us through his enduring legacy. Not long before he died, Jimmy Pike and his wife Pat Lowe established the Trust with the aim of assisting young Aboriginal artists. Since 2010 this Trust has been awarding two annual scholarships to fund artists to work with staff and students at ECU in the Print Studios. The annual scholarship supports travel and accommodation for the artists while Open Bite contributes studio facilities and technical support for the period of the residency.

From an educational perspective, the collaborations enable embodied learning experiences for our own students and the artists which transcend normative associations of academic learning. All of this occurs as bodies move around the

studios, interacting in multi-modal ways. It has been a life-changing experience, for example, to witness cultural stories being related to staff and students as the prints are being pulled on the Albion and intaglio presses. During the inaugural 2010 residency of Edwin Lee Mulligan and his father Pampirla Boxer Hanson, Edwin imparted a story where, before his surprised audience, he transformed into the shape and soul of a bird and flew over his homeland relating in real time an aerial perspective of topology and landmasses to the significance of his paintings and dreamtime stories. Birds too featured in the work of Roseleen Park who arrived in the winter of 2011 saying that her deceased uncle had appeared to her in a dream and asked her to paint owls. She made a series of barely discernable linocuts of white owls printed on white paper, their shapes reflecting the light as images of the invisible (Uhlmann, 2011). We learnt that knowledge is passed down through doing from generation to generation and Francine Steele, a Fitzroy crossing artist from 2014, related how she learnt to paint from her father, Edgar Pike, by copying his maps directly onto canvas.

Often, however, the exchanges are non-verbal and knowledge of a subtle and imperceptible nature is imparted – such as when the artists Lorraine Daylight and Roseleen Park shared traditional practice of their ground earth pigments. What kind of knowledge is imparted, for example, when someone from a western culture feels the waxy fineness of the white ochre whilst learning that this has been sourced from the same ochre sites for the past thirty to forty thousand years and that during this time this colour has been written on the bodies of these peoples as meaningful dreamtime stories?

This two-way learning model offers opportunities to Aboriginal artists to work in printmaking as a primary art language whilst developing self-sustaining practices in order to manage and control their work within what has traditionally been a very disempowering commercial art market. On the other hand, the students at ECU are exposed to ancient and traditional narrative story telling and art production that serve to disrupt their perceptions of euro-centric culture, process and language.

Case Study Two – The Third Space

China and Australia share the common ground of having long traditions of cultural heritage through synchronic Indigenous cultures that have been maintained within growing diasporic societies. However, whereas modern Australia often denies its Aboriginal heritage, China is debating how to preserve and celebrate its long-

standing Indigenous traditions within its growing internationalised and hybridised communities. This, at least in the short term, has created a cultural collision, a notional space between cultures or what Homi Bhabha refers to as *the third space*. While Bhabha proposes a third space that is incommensurate within social and political contexts, this case study examines the counter theories by which productive and creative spaces are offered to artists and writers through intercultural collaboration, privileging expressive language to re-propose perceived barriers of cultural difference. Bhabha explains the third space in these terms:

> The non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures opens up a cultural space, a *third space* where the negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences (1994).

This transformative space has been contested by such writers as Ien Ang, a Chinese-Australian theorist, in her comment on Felski's paper 'The Doxa of Difference' (Felski, 1995). In Ang's paper 'The Uses of Incommensurability' she discusses the meaning of identity and togetherness in the context of how we live together in the 21st century. Ien Ang points to the breakdown of cultural boundaries in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent globalised world, and suggests that the moments of incompatibility that occur between cultural groups play a major role in forming our new complex hybrid societies. For example, in her observation about language, often perceived as a barrier within this incompatible space, she suggests that a working space has been created where artists and collaborators might share fertile ground.

In addition to the role that miscommunication can play, the formation of cultural identity is perhaps more dependent on the present than on history. The book *Complex Entaglements: Art, Globalisation and Cultural Difference*, edited by Nikos Papastergiadis (2003), is an anthology of diverse positions on postcolonial theory. A central theme in Papastergiadis's text is that what we are is where we are *now*, rather than where we were *from*, suggesting that our cultural histories have little bearing on our current identity within a modern hybrid society. These oppositional notions of cultural space, both physical and philosophical, form the basis of several contemporary arts practices in Australia and China. However, the challenge of negotiating a future that is flavoured with the traditions of the past is one that seems to characterise Chinese artists and writers far more than the Australians. Edward Kus

suggests a provocative thesis on Chinese identity from the perspective of *othering* and, as such, touches on the central theme of third space. He states:

The West has played *some* role in shaping Chinese identity because of the role of the *other* that the West occupies in the Chinese psyche. An individual, group or society is most easily defined in terms of what it is not, and the Chinese-West division has traditionally served as an immutable dichotomy from which the Chinese could define from the project, their own conception of identity (2008 p101)

Using Bhabha's third space theory as a basis by which to examine both personal and national identities, the third space project was established between ECU and the University of Shanghai Science & Technology (USST) in 2013. A group of ten students from each institution were paired as collaborative partners to work on the production of new artworks that reflect a position between their respective cultures in order to test new languages that represent the notions of a positive and transitional third space. The idea of a *transitional* space pays homage to Hanna Fink and Hetti Perkins' description of Aboriginal culture, contesting the assumption that long-standing traditional culture is by default one that is fixed.

In the first instance, students were given a project brief supported by the underpinning theories and counter-theories along with examples of various forms of art that have attempted to bridge cultural polarity through collaborative practices. Students used a drop box site to share and images and as an archive of the project, along with a mobile group chat for real-time dialogue between the entire project group.

Third Space constructs a social space for creative communications and the Internet has a facilitating role in the collaborations. Due to the geographical dislocation of the participants, the Internet arguably acts as a mediated *third space* in Bhabha's sense – that is, a space of contestation. This *in-between* space is where the collaborators can exchange ideas, share visual work and ultimately build artworks together, in communication with each *other*. This is the philosophy of the *Third Space* exchange: to construct a creative context that encourages debate and collaborative interaction.

In the same way as sociologist Nick Couldry acknowledges Hannah Arendt's proposition that "sites are connected, through a multitude of links into a public space of shared significance and meaning", (cited in 2004, p12) we too wish to construct

collaborations that go beyond an uncritical exchange into a dynamic and critically reflexive space. This demands the adoption of a reflexive praxis that encourages respect, engages with ethics, and acknowledges difference. Foremost here, too, is the importance of embodied learning – encouraging a reflexive practice that attempts to interrogate visceral bodily unconscious understandings. What is learnt when first-hand experience overturns cultural preconceptions? How might the sensations of place – of a traditional Chinese garden for example – move from initial profound disorientation and foreignness towards deeper cultural engagement and understanding[1]?

In order to address such profound questions, it was vital to the success of the project to orchestrate two return study tours to enable the students to work together and to share each other's physical and social environments. In addition, the two institutions shared major exhibitions in Shanghai and Perth involving over fifty artists working within the related themes of the creative process *(becoming)*[2] and inter-connected language *(translations of space)*[3] to critically evaluate and materially manifest the projects main themes.

The ambitions and outcomes of the project extend much further than the production of new collaborative work. Through this project it has become clear that the notion of collaboration and embodiment within arts practice is *transferable*, suggesting that not just an informed, but also a *shared,* understanding of our identity can transcend the theoretical position of social and political conflict on which this project is built. In this respect, projects such as this can contribute to the seeding of new languages that might better reflect the positive aspects of our developing hybrid communities.

In conclusion, both case study examples of embodied learning enable reflexive comprehension of the importance of community engagement through focused projects that involve multimodal methods of working within art studios across diverse cultures. Only through real-life encounters with the *other* can cultural understandings deepen whilst simultaneously contributing to developing the importance of meaning making within an aesthetics of human understanding for the 21st century.

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[1] Research questions such as these currently inform the MAVA practice-led research project of ECU student, Jane Whelan.

[2] *Becoming: process in creative work in relation to the lived environment.* Exhibition at the art gallery of the University of Shanghai Science and Technology 18th October – 4th November 2013.

[3] *Translations of Space.* Exhibition at the Spectrum Project Space Edith Cowan University July 24th – August 1st 2014.

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SEE: http://www.wyemando.org.au/

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Figure 1: Natural pigments of 2011 Jimmy Pike Trust Scholarship artists, Rosleen Park and Lorraine Daylight.



Figure 2: Francine Steele (front) and Jennifer Dickens (rear), the 2014 Jimmy Pike Scholarship holders, working in the Print studios at ECU, Perth.



Figure 3: Students from third space project in Shanghai 2013.



Figure 4: ECU Visual Arts and USST undergraduate students interact with Dora Griffiths, one of the Jimmy Pike Scholarship holders for 2012.



Figure 5: Professor Xu Shanxun gives a lecture to ECU staff and students and USST students during third space project in Shanghai in 2013.

Appendix 8 Letter from Captain Arthur Philip to the editor of the London Chronicle 1788. Michael Flynn and Gary Sturgess, "New Evidence on Arthur Phillip's First Landing Place – 26 January 1788", History: Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society, (December 2014) 122, 3–5

(an extract from a letter by Captain Arthur Philip and was first published in the London Chronicle on 17th October 1788: Appendix 8)

It has been with the utmost fascination that your correspondent has collected intelligence related to the discovery of most interesting and particular flora and fauna during the voyage of his majesty's bark the endeavour. It has been related in great detail the sightings of animals answering the description of rats but of such proportion as to be deemed incredible. These wild beasts were seen to populate the costal areas of new Holland in great density. Natives had informed his majesty's officers that these creatures were kangaroos thought such name not be known to our readers. The party was able to observe such beings at close quarters during the most dire emergency of the endeavour being beached to facilitate repairs, holes having been punctuated in the hull by treacherous reefs. While these repairs were expeditiously completed scouting parties ashore returned to their commander with tales of grey animals in profusion, having large tails and the grace and speed of greyhounds. The beasts, it was earnestly reported, sped, not on all fours as do the dumb creatures we know but on their hinds and a prodigious speed is attained in terrain most testing. At the soliciting of lieutenant cook one was shot, being but a small example of the larger beast and in weight of 40 pounds. The flesh was cooked and eaten and relieved those soles who had for long been denied such pleasure. The meat was described as of excellent quality and tone, though those who took part in this eating have informed your correspondent they cannot relate the taste to those meats familiar on these shores. These kangaroos leap and bound from place to place and are fare for the natives who impale them upon spears (as cited in a supplement to the Daily Mirror 1969, 1)

Appendix 9 Luna Lin, "China Bans Wordplay in Attempt at Pun Control," *The Guardian*, 28 November 2014.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/28/china-media-watchdog-bans-wordplay-puns

China bans wordplay in attempt at pun control

Officials say casual alteration of idioms risks nothing less than 'cultural and linguistic chaos', despite their common usage

From online discussions to adverts, Chinese culture is full of puns. But the country's print and broadcast watchdog has ruled that there is nothing funny about them.

It has banned wordplay on the grounds that it breaches the law on standard spoken and written Chinese, makes promoting cultural heritage harder and may mislead the public – especially children.

The casual alteration of idioms risks nothing less than "cultural and linguistic chaos", it warns.

Chinese is perfectly suited to puns because it has so many homophones. Popular sayings and even customs, as well as jokes, rely on wordplay.

But the order from the State Administration for Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television says: "Radio and television authorities at all levels must tighten up their regulations and crack down on the irregular and inaccurate use of the Chinese language, especially the misuse of idioms."

Programmes and adverts should strictly comply with the standard spelling and use of characters, words, phrases and idioms – and avoid changing the characters, phrasing and meanings, the order said.

“Idioms are one of the great features of the Chinese language and contain profound cultural heritage and historical resources and great aesthetic, ideological and moral values,” it added.

“That’s the most ridiculous part of this: [wordplay] is so much part and parcel of Chinese heritage,” said David Moser, academic director for CET Chinese studies at Beijing Capital Normal University.

When couples marry, people will give them dates and peanuts – a reference to the wish *Zaosheng guizi* or “May you soon give birth to a son”. The word for dates is also *zao* and peanuts are *huasheng*.

The notice cites complaints from viewers, but the examples it gives appear utterly innocuous. In a tourism promotion campaign, tweaking the characters used in the phrase *jin shan jin mei* – perfection – has turned it into a slogan translated as “Shanxi, a land of splendours”. In another case, replacing a single character in *ke bu rong huan* has turned “brook no delay” into “coughing must not linger” for a medicine advert.

“It could just be a small group of people, or even one person, who are conservative, humourless, priggish and arbitrarily purist, so that everyone has to fall in line,” said Moser.

“But I wonder if this is not a preemptive move, an excuse to crack down for supposed ‘linguistic purity reasons’ on the cute language people use to crack jokes about the leadership or policies. It sounds too convenient.”

Internet users have been particularly inventive in finding alternative ways to discuss subjects or people whose names have been blocked by censors.

Moves to block such creativity have a long history too. Moser said Yuan Shikai, president of the Republic of China from 1912 to 1915, reportedly wanted to rename the Lantern Festival, *Yuan Xiao Jie*, because it sounded like “cancel Yuan day”.

• *Additional research by Luna Lin*

Appendix 10 Jacopo Sannazarro *The Magnificat* 1489.

https://books.google.com.au/books?id=m2vt2VL9pBUC&pg=PA207&lpg=PA207&dq

The magnificat (my soul magnifies ..*latin*)

Jacopo Sannazaro 1489

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid;
for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
Because he that is mighty,
hath done great things to me;
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is from generation unto generations,
to them that fear him.
He hath shewed might in his arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
and hath exalted the humble.
He hath filled the hungry with good things;
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He hath received Israel his servant,
being mindful of his mercy:
As he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

Appendix 11 Dean Chan "Mapping Cultural Incommensurability," in *2000 Years: Clive Barstow at Span Galleries Melbourne*, ex. cat. (Perth: Edith Cowan University, 2002), 3-4.

Chan

Mapping cultural incommensurability

Clive Barstow's re-workings of maps and flags testify to the necessity of unlearning what we have learnt. Central to this re-configuration of knowledge is the emancipatory potential of a politics of difference, where incommensurability is negotiated as an inescapable facet of globalised multicultural co-existence. A continual rhetorical commitment to the sameness of people only ignores perpetuated structures of privilege and oppression. Correspondingly, it has to be acknowledged that the organic hybridisation of cultures that occurs within the multicultural nation-state will not necessarily guarantee the creation of a new consensual culture of synthesis or amalgamation. The process of hybridisation cannot afford to be envisaged as yet another version of the assimilatory ideal that seeks to absorb formerly marginalised groups into the imagined mainstream. As the history of Indigenous people has palpably demonstrated for example, group differences, cultural politics and ideological specificities cannot simply be bred out of the multicultural-hybrid equation. Hybridisation is a lived process whereby such incompatibilities or incommensurabilities are continually highlighted. In this respect, hybridity is an on-going site of interrogation and alteration, ultimately placing pressure on a necessary relativising of dominant national cultural values. Barstow's current artistic project goes some way towards imag(in)ing a transnational understanding of one's history – and future – through heterogeneity, hybridity and incommensurability. The discontinuities and disjunctions in his maps and flags signify the incongruities of unassimilable differences. Disparate elements cannot simply be 'jigsaw-ed' together to form a coherent national or global picture. Harmony is seemingly only achievable through a disharmony of sorts, whereby stability or consensus is itself deliberately and permanently left open to contestation. Therein lie the possibilities for inscribing a condition of belonging without the fixity of policed national boundaries and standards. (Chan, 2002).

Appendix 12 Glen Philips, Every Road Has Two Sides. Poem. February 2013.

EVERY ROAD HAS TWO SIDES

(*Moving towards poetry and moving towards revolution…two sides of the same road*—Hong Zicheng)

It is well to remember each road
has two sides, two edges, two verges,
as a river has two margins or banks.
They face each other and give thanks.
Not thanks for sharing the same wide
expanse, being twin travellers together
with the road. They're opposing ranks—
they face each other and give thanks.
And so two brothers meeting each day
at family table, Cain and Abel, opposed
like soldiers in their armoured tanks
they face each other and give thanks.
A river slowly coursing towards the sea
like a road, bears burdens, held by cliffs
on one side, on the other forested phalanx.
They face each other and give thanks.
And two loving couples like a river
or running road, two souls entwined or
opposed in love's sobriety or pranks—
they face each other and give thanks.

Glen Phillips,

© February, 2013.

Appendix 13 Natasha Bloomfield, "Review: Third Space @ Spectrum Project Space," *Rotunda Media*, 24 June 2015.



Image property of Spectrum Project Space ECU.

Reviewed by: Natasha Bloomfield

Third Space is a ongoing collaborative project currently exhibiting at Edith Cowan University's Mount Lawley campus at Spectrum Project Space. Initiated in 2010, the project links up art students and staff from the School of Communications and Arts at ECU with those at the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology in China.

The binding theme of the artworks is an interrogation of Homi Bhabha's social and cultural theories of third space, in relation to modern hybrid societies and diaspora. In his theories, the formation of new hybrid communities within a rapidly globalising world are described as spaces of conflict and incommensurability. The third space becomes liminal, a shifting and dynamic space between identities, cultural ideologies, and environments. The artists in the program each toured to the other's home country, with some travels dating back as far as 2003. The resultant artwork became a visual response to this new world.

The first artworks that struck me were two collaborative pieces titled *Garden of the Nets 4* and *Hidden Forest*. *Garden of the Nets 4* utilises Chinese calligraphy on rice paper, the words translating to "The water reflecting. Pathways of shadow disperse, the rain dissolves the fluid shapes." *Hidden Forest* is a digital print that is largely black in colour with a crescent moon in the upper right corner, and a series of silver, purple and pink cacti filling up the majority of the lower half of the print. The print is inspired by elements of Aboriginal art; circles, dots, and repeated lines. It includes English calligraphy that runs along the lower section of the print.

What also interests me is the placement of the two separate artworks together. The linguistic differences in the cultures, and the effect of seeing the familiar outback turned into fantasy, is perhaps a little unsettling. However, it highlights language and cultural history as systems of cultural identification; systems that appear to be all at once inclusive and dividing. Here, the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity. The same signs, here language and history, are translated, rehistoricized, and read anew.

Another engaging piece was titled *The Flourish of Friendship*. It incorporated seven separate pieces which alternated between squares of rice paper and silk, all of which were suspended from the ceiling with fishing wire. The artists interacted with their environments, incorporating outlines of different flowers from their respective countries. The rice paper's flowers are burnt in by Tibetan incense, the dyed silk's embroidered and boiled over a campfire. Hung flush in front of each other from smallest to largest in proportion, each piece slightly obstructs the subsequent piece, requiring one to stand side-on to view the next in its entirety. The artworks suggest a progression and expansion of production and experience as a result of the collaboration. They open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, not based on exoticism or the multiculturalism of the diversity of cultures, but rather on the articulation of culture's hybridity.

Curators Claire Bushby and Donna Franklin have ensured that the large and open exhibition space is free from the familiar boxes that list the artists' names and the prominent features about their work – for this exhibition, that information is hidden away in the program. The exclusion is disconcerting at first for the expectant viewer, but it allows for the works to have a presence of their own. *Third Space* thrives on exploring visual art as a language in itself. The amazing output in the exhibition pays homage to a common form of understanding and a language that transcends culture, history, and ideology. Essentially, the artworks, which include everything from etchings and jigsaws, to photographs and sculpture, speak for themselves. And with that, I must encourage you to see the artworks for yourself.

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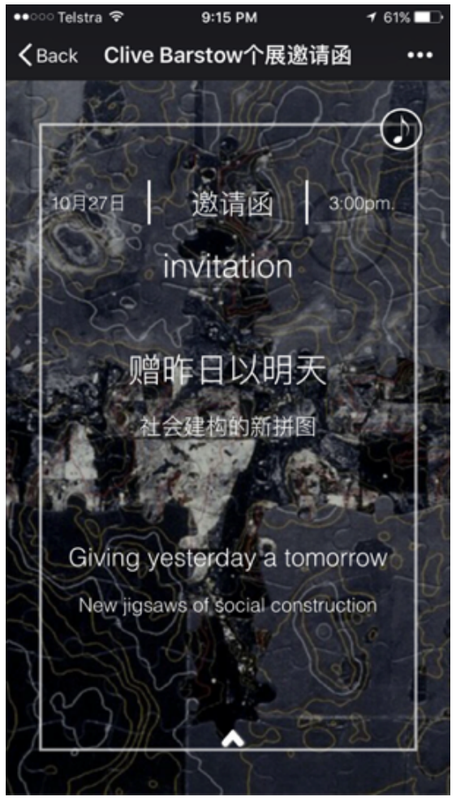
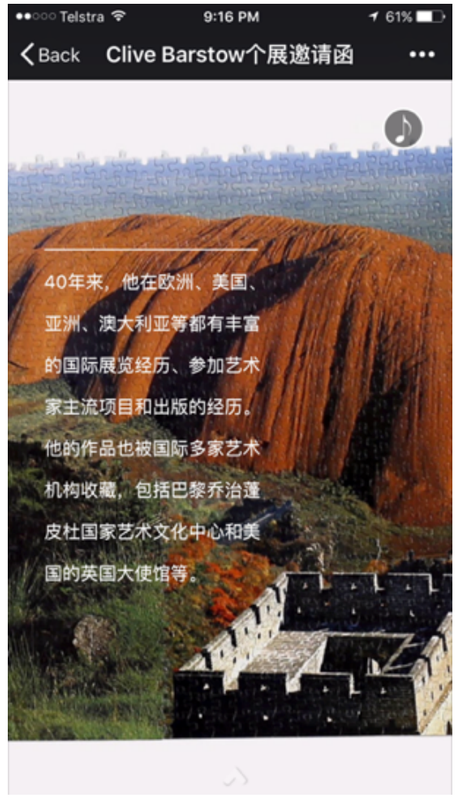
REVIEW: Third Space @ Spectrum Project Space

Posted on June 24, 2015
file:///Users/clive/Desktop/REVIEW_%20Third%20Space%20@%20Spectrum%20Project%20Space%20|%20Perth%20Press.html
Reviewed by: Natasha Bloomfield

Appendix 14 WeChat marketing and feedback for *Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow* 2015

















赠昨日以明天
“社会建构的新拼图”

中国上海沪江美术馆，
2015年10月28日 — 11月27日

本次展览的名字灵感来自建筑设计师Le Corbusier，他在1927年乐观地认为殖民主义有利于在快速发展的机器化时代中传播和扩散现代社会的审美价值。诚然，这个角度基于一种假设，即：欧洲中心的霸权主义——曾经占据主导地位的力量——带着它残存的幽灵，将继续参与我们未来的构建。我们新的殖民城市中建造的公园和花园就是极好的体现，作为怀旧象征，欧洲田园牧歌的价值被重新构建。当今瞬息万变的世界中，新的社区不断形成，交融的文化也不断产生，这种牧歌式的大自然剧场在当下多元文化社会中有着主导地位，并质问着我们的主流理念，同时也展现了一个混乱和冲突都可共处的新型民主化理想场景。

现代澳大利亚和那些与传统欧洲价值体系——建立在殖民主义政治理念基础上的体系——不兼容的文化有种相异相生的复杂关系。在这个方面，澳大利亚土著文化和中国文化都非常独特，他们有很多相似之处，都与大自然联系紧密。这与以模仿环境建造出的欧洲化的主题公园和花园形成强烈对比。也许这些仿造环境现在更准确地反映了一种精神的边缘地带，在这种激流动荡的边缘地带，整一性的主流文化的宏大叙事常常被重塑。

我当前的创作实践就是基于这个边缘性的空间，用拼图作为一种新的社会建构的隐喻，在这过程中每一步都不容易。在Homi Bhabha的“第三空间”理论中他认为冲突和碰撞都揭示着全球化和融合的现实，也同样质问着什么是真实，什么是想象。这是一个动态的空间，它在我们言说时不断发生着变化并扰乱我们对于过去的记忆和对未来的认知。

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致谢：

感谢各位对于本次展
特别是我在中国和澳

我近年与中国文化的密切接触将我置于当下这个暂存的中间空间，增加了对移民社群的情感。从文化角度来定义我是英国人，空间上来说我却是个澳大亚人，而我现在一部分的生活都在中国。中国文化一直是我最尊重和最亲近，而且中国让我可以从一个古老文明的角度出发，同时审阅我的过去和现在。

或许文化理论学家Nikos Papastergiadis关于个人身份认同的观点是对的，他出个人身份认同取决于我们在哪里而不是我们从何而来。对于全球化公民来，我们所在的位置并不固定。对于一些人来说，生活已然变成一种时间和空间流浪，这加剧了短暂身份认同概念的形成，反映着我们在去中心化的世界中对共享社区和可渗透边界的适应和重组能力。

道家思想或者恰如其分地解读了这种变化的状态：相对应地翻译为“道”“路”，道家学说指出变化的过程即现实本身，事物在变化发展的途中融合在起。我的经历正如这般：在一边搭建桥梁一边跨越它们的同时还诠释着我在旅过程中遇到的崭新世界。

在Le Corbusier晚年时期提出了更能反映殖民化空间的观点，他认为“只有想是可以传递的”。通过此次展览中的作品，我想向大家展示自己关于想象世的思考，而之前有幸经历的种种也为我的想象世界增色很多。

我非常荣幸能在这里工作和举办展览，也很高兴能与各位我尊敬的朋友们享我的想象世界和有关于“昔日的明天”。

克莱夫·巴斯托
2015年5月25日

览的大力帮助和支持，
大利亚的家人、朋友和同事们。

GIVING YESTERDAY A TOMORROW

New jigsaws of social construction

Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai China
28th October – 27thth November 2015.

The title of this exhibition derives from a quote by Le Corbusier in 1927 in which he speaks optimistically about the virtues of colonialism as a means of spreading and sharing the aesthetic values of modernist social spaces in a growing machine age. This position of course assumed a Eurocentric hegemony, a prevailing dominant power which carried with it remnants of the past as a formation of the future. This was no more graphically played out than in the construction of parks and gardens in our new colonial cities, in which European Arcadian values were reconstructed as nostalgic references to a time gone by. In a rapidly changing world where new communities are forming and hybrid cultures are emerging, this idyllic theatre of nature now plays host to a new multicultural society that questions our dominant beliefs, presenting a new democratised Arcadia in which chaos and conflict are exposed and shared.

Modern Australia has a dichotomous relationship with cultures that do not fit the classical European value system, a system that underpinned the political philosophy of colonisation. Aboriginal and Chinese culture are unique in this respect and have much in common with each other through their deeply embodied and synchronous connection to nature, in stark contrast to the implanted and simulated environments of our Europeanised theme parks and gardens. Perhaps these simulated spaces now more accurately reflect a spiritual borderland, a place in flux where the master narrative of a dominant monolithic culture is being reshaped.

It is within this liminal space that I base my current practice, using jigsaws as a metaphor for a new social construction in which the pieces of the puzzle do not easily fit. This is Homi Bhabha’s third space in which conflict and collision are exposed as a reality of globalisation and hybridisation, in turn questioning what is now real and what is being imagined. This is a dynamic space, changing as we speak and disrupting our memories of the past as well as our perceptions of the future.

My close involvement with Chinese culture in recent years has positioned me in this temporal in-between space, adding to the floating affect of diaspora. While I identify with my British heritage in a cultural sense, and the place I now live identifies me as Australian, my life is now also partly Chinese. China offers me a place in which I can view both my past and my present from the perspective of an ancient culture that I have the utmost respect for and for some reason, an affinity with.

Perhaps the cultural theorist Nikos Papastergiadis was right when he said that personal identity is based on where we are rather than where we are from. For true global citizens, where we are may no longer be fixed, as for some, life has become a nomadic existence of time and place contributing to the notion of a transient identity that reflects our ability to adapt and reform to a decentralising world of shared communities and permeable boundaries.

Daoism perhaps best explains this shifting state: translated as “The Way” or “The Road”, Daoist theory presents the process of change as a process of reality itself, the way things come together while still transforming. My journey has taken this path, building bridges while crossing them and translating the newly forming hybrid worlds that I have encountered along the way.

In his later life, Le Corbusier offered a more reflective view of the colonised space by stating “nothing is transferable but thought”: the works in this exhibition therefore offer my thoughts about my imagined worlds, transferring through this moment in time and coloured by the experiences that I have been privileged to encounter along the way.

It is a great honour for me to exhibit and work here, and to share my imaginary worlds and yesterday’s tomorrows with those who I respect so deeply.

Clive Barstow
25th May 2015.

Acknowledgements
This exhibition would not have been possible without the generous help,
support and contributions of my family friends and colleagues in China and Australia.

克莱夫・巴斯托
Clive Barstow

克莱夫・巴斯托是一位创作型艺术家和作者。克莱夫・巴斯托来自英国，在伦敦艺术大学切尔西艺术学院学习，并师从Eduardo Paolozzi 和Tim Mara等著名艺术家。在1992年移民澳大利亚以前，他一开始从事雕塑创作，后转向版画艺术。他近期的创作实践主要是研究关于生活在混合和多元文化的澳大利亚的政治和社会问题。这使他从不同的角度看待自己的过去，并以一个在迅速全球化的世界中寻找意义的移民澳大利亚艺术家身份来看待未来。

克莱夫•巴斯托的研究也将他带到中国，现在他视这里为“家”。对他而言，与土著艺术家和中国艺术家一起工作都是改变一生的经历，在这共享的经历中结下了深厚的友谊，一些朋友现在更像是他的“家人”。

40年来，他在欧洲、美国、亚洲、澳大利亚等都有丰富的国际展览经历、参加艺术家驻留项目和出版的经历。他的作品也被国际多家艺术机构收藏，包括巴黎乔治・蓬皮杜国家艺术文化中心和美国的英国大使馆等。

克莱夫是埃迪斯科文大学传媒与艺术学院的艺术教授和院长，上海理工大学荣誉教授，美国田纳西州菲尔莱狄更斯大学国际教职员工。他现担任澳大利亚版画协会、澳大利亚艺术与设计大学协会、澳大利亚艺术院长及主任协会的执行成员。同时他还是澳大利亚OPEN BITE版画研讨会董事，致力于推动版画在澳大利亚几个土著社区内的发展。

他近期的展览包括上海米奥画廊的“文化修剪”展览，出版物有英国牛津大学出版社的《遇见第三空间：在澳大利亚和中国的跨文化艺术实践中的身份与混合性研究》。2005年，克莱夫被澳大利亚大使馆授予艺术与设计学校杰出教育奖、澳大利亚杰出艺术教育和研究个人，这都是对他在澳大利亚艺术和设计教育方面贡献的肯定。

Clive Barstow is a practicing artist and writer. Clive originates from Britain where he studied at the University of the Arts London (Chelsea School of Art) under such eminent artists as Eduardo Paolozzi and Tim Mara. He trained originally as a sculptor and later as a printmaker before moving to Australia in 1992. His recent creative practice investigates the political and social issues concerned with living in a hybrid and multicultural Australia. This enables him to view his past from a different location, and his future from a position of a migrant artist who is searching to find meaning in a rapidly globalising world.

Part of this search has brought Clive to China, a place he now regards as a “home”. Working with Aboriginal and Chinese artists has been life changing for him, and one in which a sense of place has become a shared experience full of deep friendships for people he now considers as ‘family”.

His exhibition profile includes forty years of international exhibitions, artist residencies and publications in Europe, America, Asia and Australia. His work is held in a number of international collections, including the Musse National d'Art Modern Pompidou Centre Paris and the British Council USA.

Clive is Professor of Creative Arts and Head of School of Communications and Arts at Edith Cowan University, Honorary Professor of Art at the University of Shanghai Science & Technology China and global faculty member of Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey USA. He currently holds executive membership of the Printmakers Council of Australia, the Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools and the Australian Council of Deans & Directors of Creative Arts. Clive is also Director of the Open Bite Australia Print Workshop, which encourages the development of printmaking within a number of indigenous communities in Australia.

His recent exhibitions include “Cultural Pruning” at the Meou Art Gallery Shanghai China and recent publications include “Encountering the Third Space: a study of indentity and hybridity through trans cultural artistic practice in Australia and China” at the Oxford University UK. In 2005 Clive was awarded the distinguished teaching award by the Australian Council for University Art & Design Schools, Australia’s peak body for creative arts teaching and research for his contribution to art and design education in Australia.

道 可 道

在时间与空间的不断流变中，我与克莱夫·巴斯托教授已交往八年了。虽有不同的文化背景，从最初的一见如故到对彼此文化的尊重、了解、亲近和对艺术的共同热爱，使我们成为最好的朋友，并在工作中建立起两校的友谊。

克莱夫是英国人，移民到澳大利亚。由于对中国文化的热爱，他又经常生活在中国。正是这种空间位置的变动，使他产生了对个体身份的关注，由此也产生了我们“第三空间”合作项目等一系列艺术活动。

“第三空间”是一个观念的空间，亦是一个动态的空间。正是这种相异相生的复杂关系，产生了克莱夫的作品语言，并用拼图的艺术表现形式来隐喻新社会的构建，以此来让我们用新的视角重新审视过去、现在和未来。

“道之为物，惟恍惟惚”。中国哲学家们在解释“道”时，有说物质，有说精神，但共识则是“道”是不断运动变化着的。今天文明带给人类物质享受的同时，也破坏了人与自然的和谐关系。人们在质问全球化带来的同一性时也在重新思考着有和无的变动关系。这也是克莱夫在审视自身多元的文化身份的同时，尝试着从不同的文化视角去思考的问题。

感谢克莱夫·巴斯托教授给我们带来的社会建构新拼图的视觉盛宴。让我们一起分享他的“赠昨日以明天”吧。

姜君臣
2015年10月15日

THE DAO THAT CAN BE TOLD

Professor Clive Barstow and I have been developing a deep friendship for more than eight years as time flies and the spaces changes. Although we come from different cultural backgrounds we felt like old friends from the start, we became close and developed a good relationship of cooperation between the universities we are working for. We have much in common such as a deep respect for our cultures, and a curiosity and love for the arts.

Clive originates from Britain and emigrated to Australia but now he lives partly in China because of his love of Chinese Culture. This changing of places has focused his attention on our individual identity and has resulted in the coherent “Third Space” joint projects and other art activities between artists in Australia and China.

“The Third Space” is a dynamic space with conceptual connections to theory and practice. Due to this complex dichotomous relationship, Clive creates his own unique language of art. He utilizes jigsaws as his form of expression and as a metaphor for a new social construction, presenting us with a different perspective in order to reconsider our past, present and future.

“The Dao is elusive and intangible”. When Chinese philosophers explain the Daoism, some emphasise the material meanings while others stress the spiritual aspects, but they all share a consensus that Dao is changing all the time. Nowadays our civilisations provide us with a comfortable life with abundant materials, but in the process destroys the natural harmony between human beings and nature. Thus when we question our identity created by globalisation we also rethink the ever-changing relationship between “to have” and “ to have not”. This is also Clive’s concern, through which he attempts to view our world from different cultural perspectives while reflecting on the formation of his own multi-cultural identitiy.

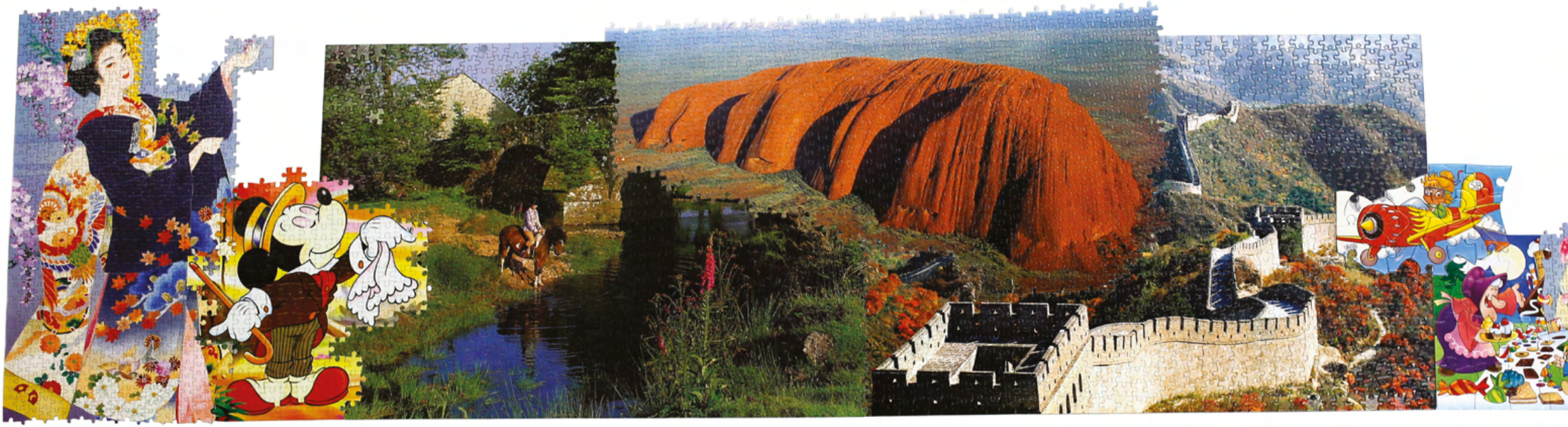
Thanks for the visual feast that Professor Clive Barstow brings to us with his new jigsaws of social construction. Let us share with him the joy we get from his fantastic solo exhibition “Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow”.

Jiang Junchen

15th October 2015



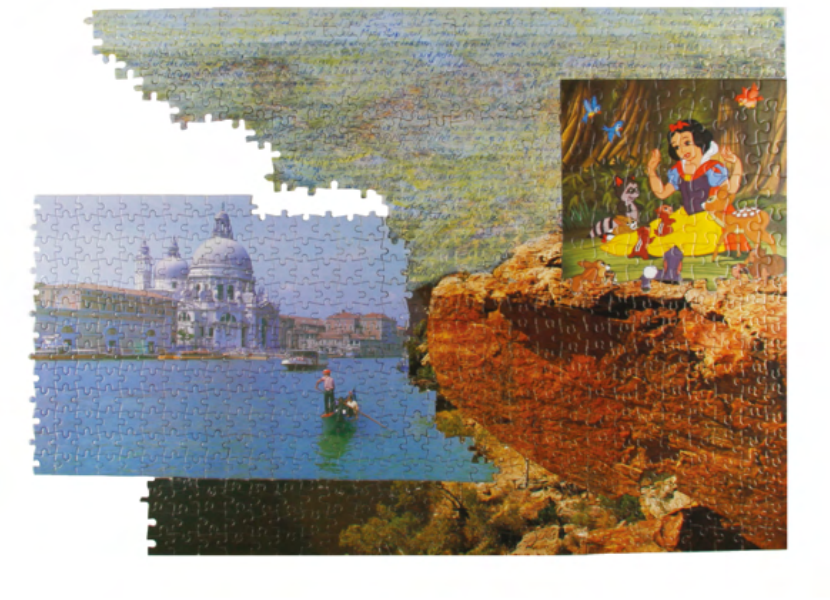
Title A Chinese Whisper (2004-2005)
Medium Animated Film



Title **Entering Anarcadia** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **230 x 50cm**

Title **Cabbage Crates Over The Briny** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62 x 57cm**



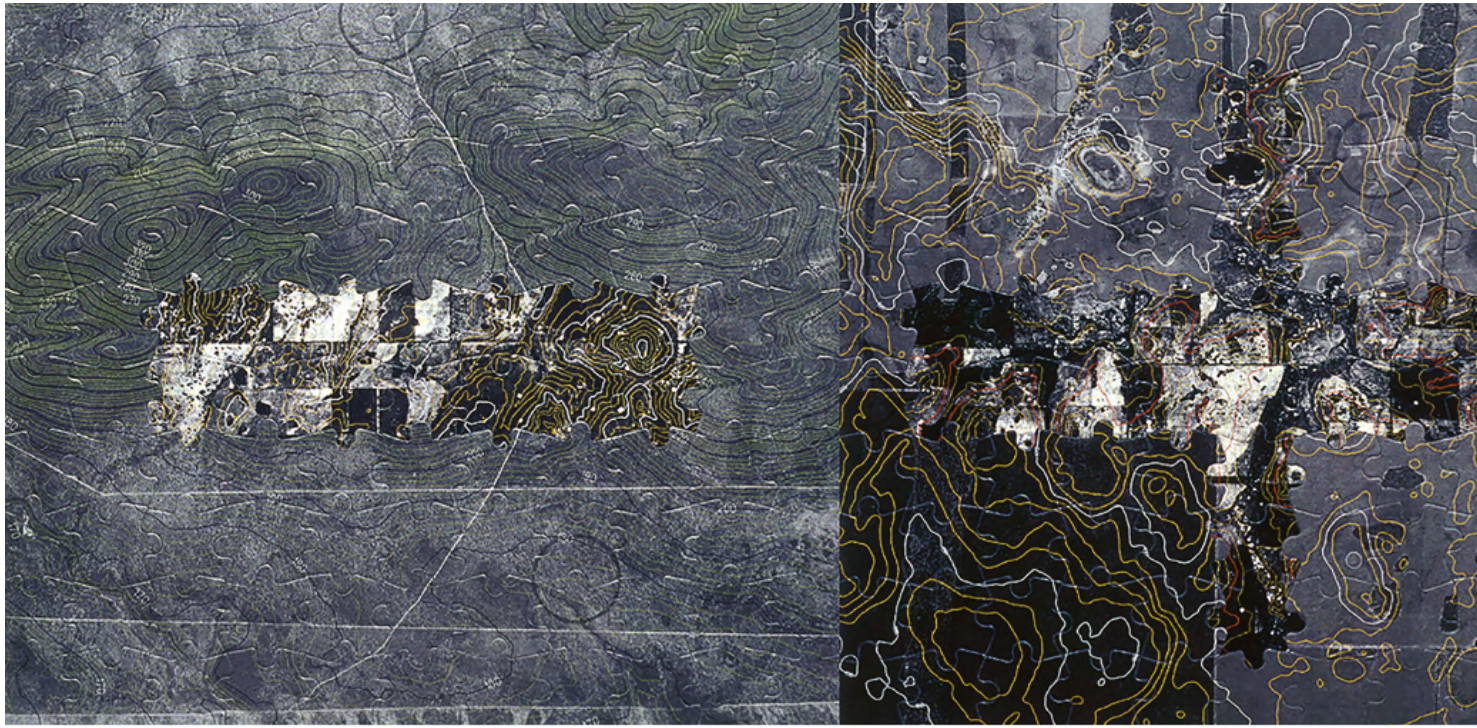


Title **Picnic at Hanging Rocks** (2004) (in collaboration with Craig Hudson)
Medium Jigsaws, acrylic paint, pen and ink.
Size 58 x 48cm



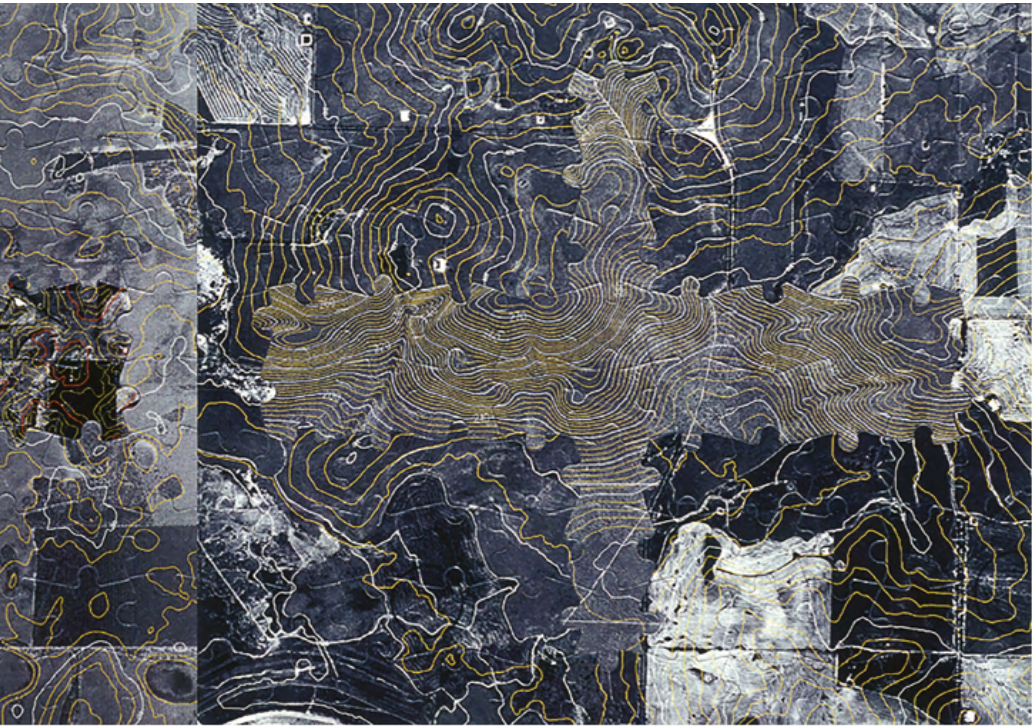
Title **Watching and Waiting** (2005)
Medium Jigsaws
Size 58 x 48cm





Title **Gods Country 1** (2000-2005)
Medium **Digital jigsaws**
Size **48 x 200cm**

Title **Every Road Has Two Paths** (2005) (in collaboration with Glen Philips)
Medium **Jigsaws, pen and ink**
Size **58 x 48cm**





道路都有两边边缘
道路都有两边 两个
边缘 两个侧边 就象每条
河都有两岸 面对面 并彼
此致谢 一并非感谢分
享同样的[illegible] 或是沿同
一个方向结伴前行 他
们彼此对立并因此而
向对方致敬 于是他们
象兄弟一样相遇在夕桌
象如战士佩带了铠甲 他
们相互对立又相互感谢
一条河缓缓流入港湾
象一条路走带了所有的负担
[illegible]屹立两侧 但互相对
立又互相致谢……——燕



Title Uncool Britannia (2005)
Medium Jigsaws, acrylic
Size 62x 54cm

策展人：**朱清华**
主办：**上海理工大学　埃迪斯科文大学**　　承办：**沪江美术馆**
媒体支持：**99艺术网　雅昌艺术网　崇真艺术网**

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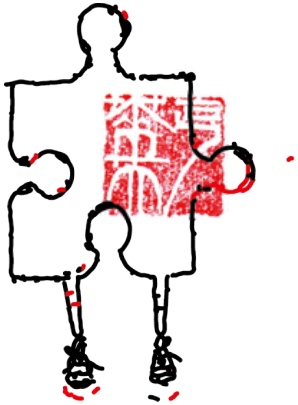


Catalogue Design **Jiang Junchen 姜君臣**
Photography **Paul Godfrey**
Translations **Zhu Qinghua 朱清华 Zhou Jie 周婕**
He Jie 何洁 Gong Fangyi 龚芳仪
Shelves **Wang Chengfeng 王成凤**
Gallery **Xue Xiaofen 薛小芬**
Collaborations **Craig Hudson, Glen Philips**
Original Jigsaws **Jo Barstow**

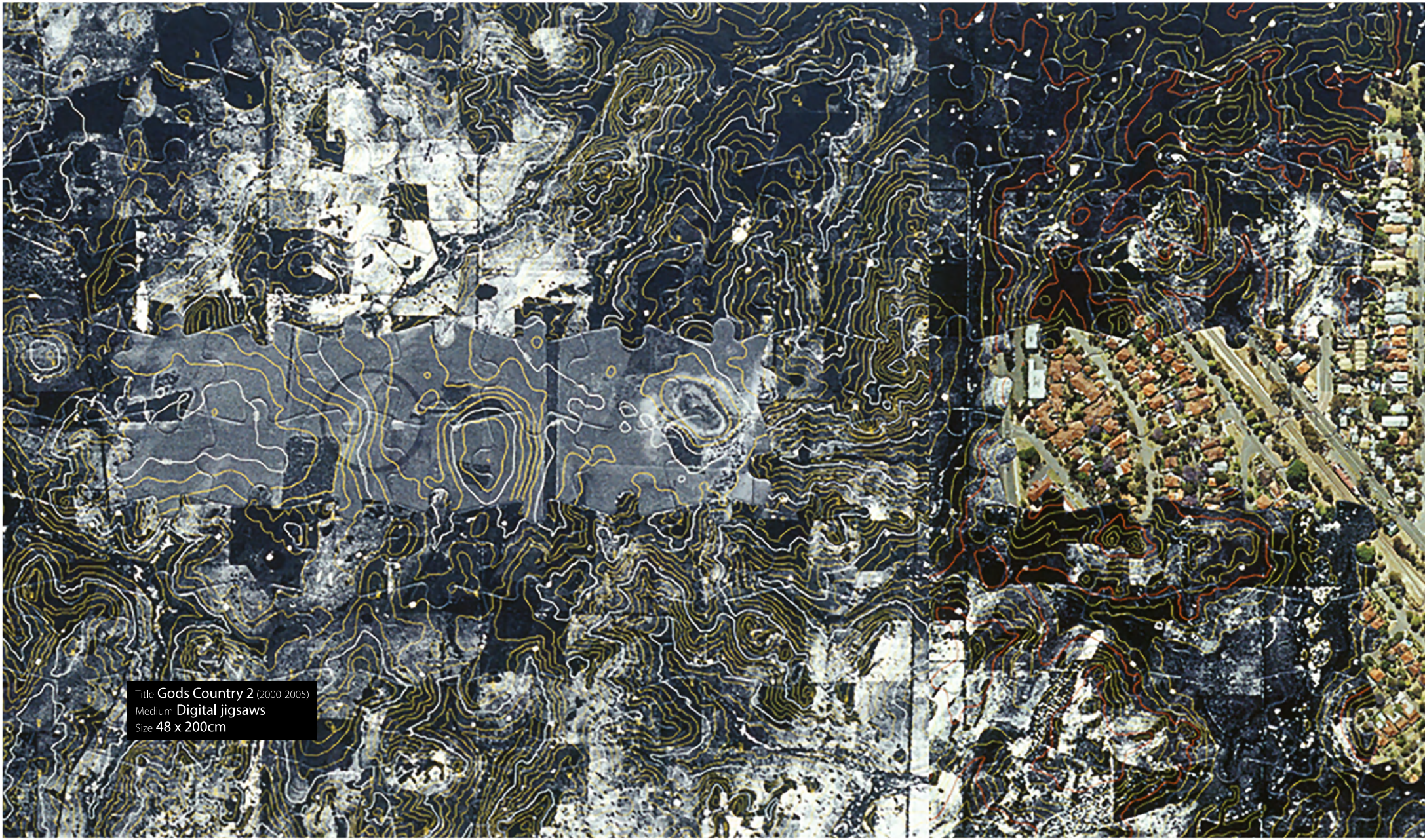


Title Flora, Fauna and the Ranger (2005)
Medium Jigsaws
Size 58 x 48cm

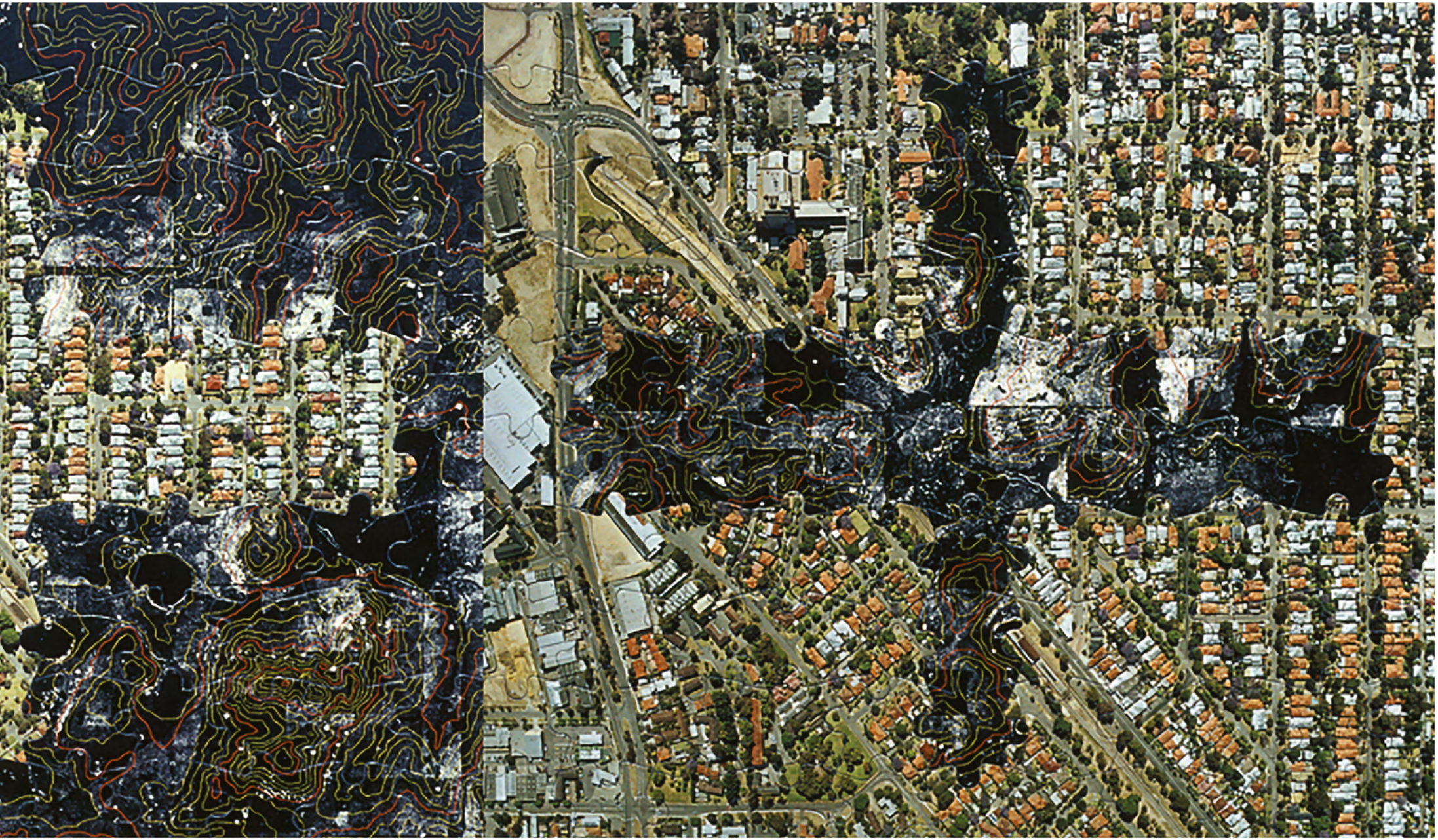




Title **Et In Anarcadia Ego** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws, acrylic paint, pen and ink**
Size **62 x 55cm**



Title Gods Country 2 (2000–2005)
Medium Digital jigsaws
Size 48 x 200cm





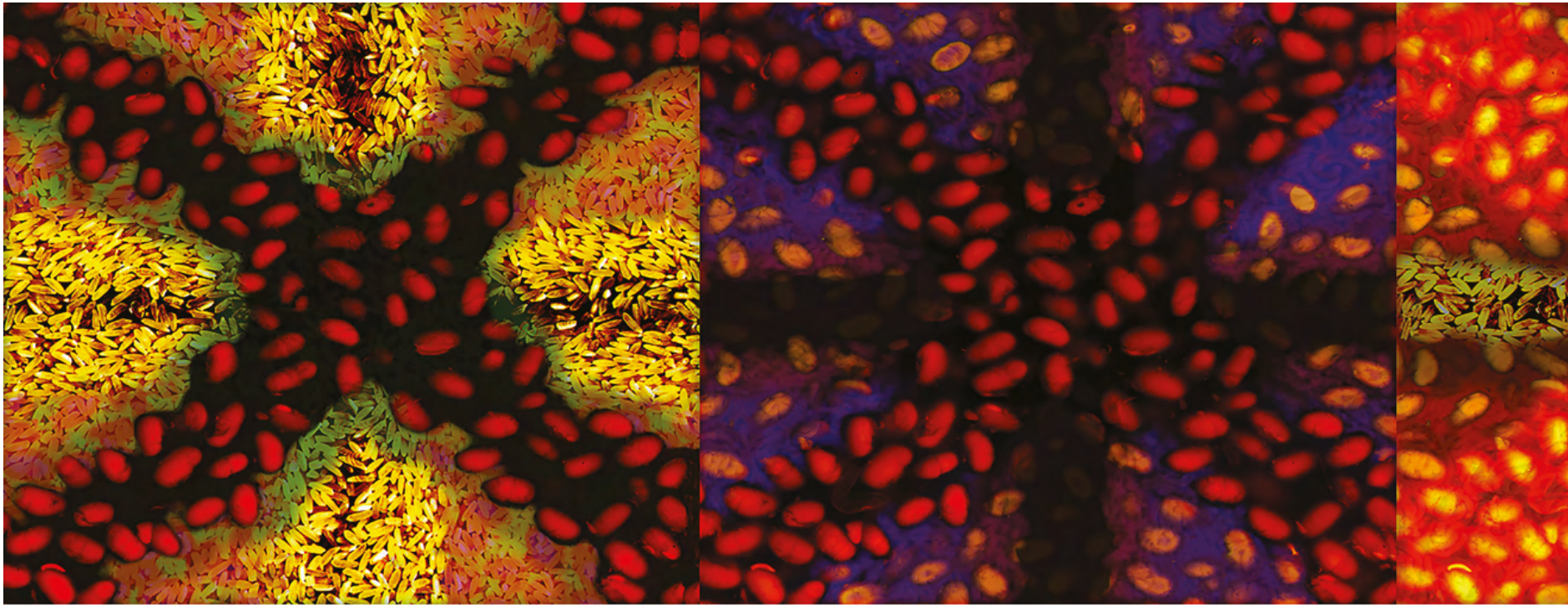
Title **Innocence Lost** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws, acrylic paint**
Size **62 x 54 cm**



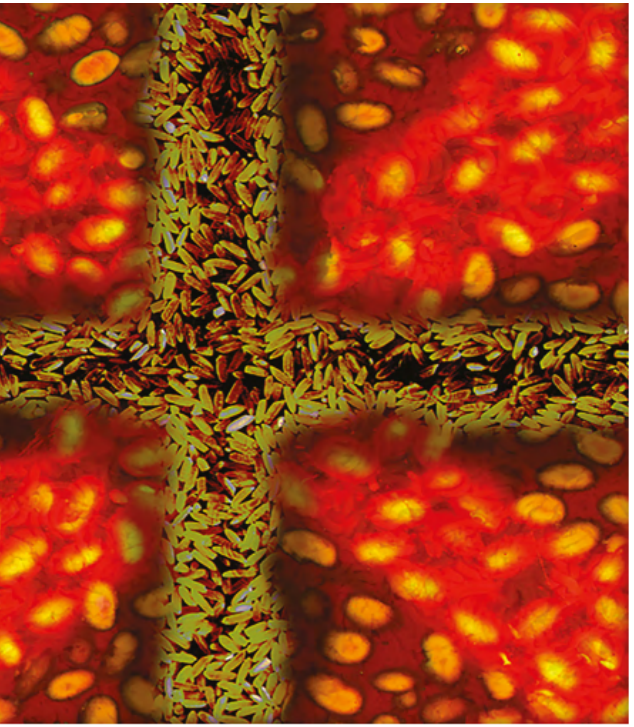
Title **A Happy Occident** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws, acrylic, pen and ink**
Size **58 x 47cm**



Title **War** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **58 x 48cm**



Title **Food Flags** (2000-2005)
Medium **Digital Jigsaws**
Size **48 x 200cm**

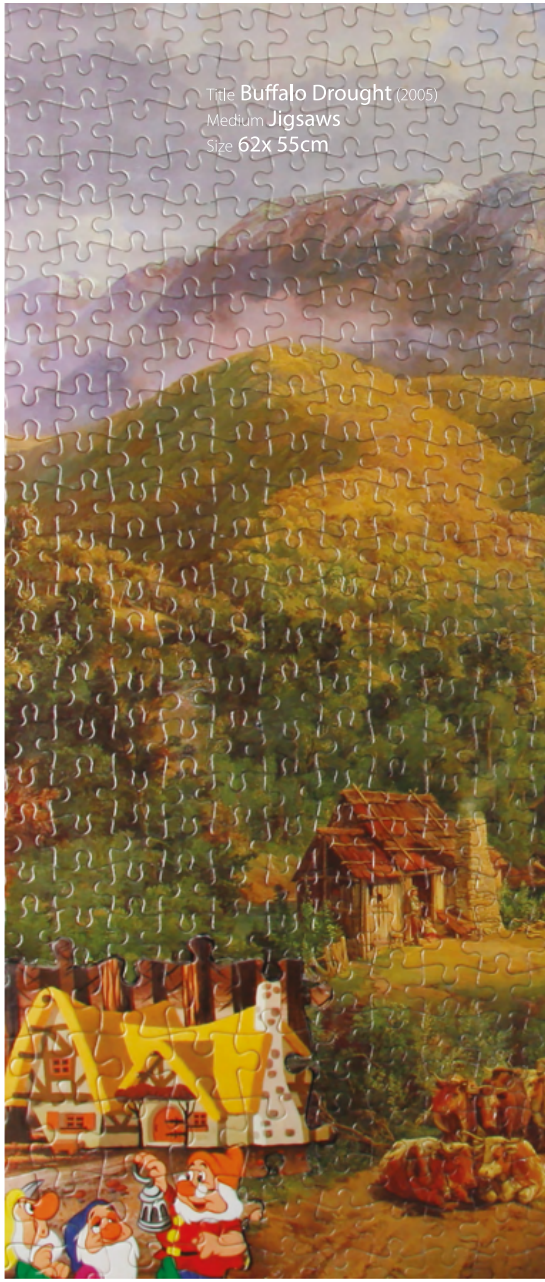




Title **Birdsong** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62 x 55cm**



Title **Ghosts** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws, acrylic paint**
Size **58 x 48cm**



Title **Buffalo Drought** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62x 55cm**





Title **Gone Fishin’** (2004)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62 x 54cm**



Title **Piece** (2005)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62x 54cm**



Title **Jellystone Picnic** (2004)
Medium **Jigsaws**
Size **62 x 54cm**

Giving Yesterday A Tomorrow

Clive Barstow

New jigsaws of social construction

赠昨日以明天

社会建构的新拼图

沪江美术馆，上海，中国 2015年10月27日–11月27日

Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai China 27th October – 27thth November 2015.



TOMORROW IS HISTORY

Turner Galleries, Perth, Australia
28 July - 26 August 2017.

The title of this exhibition "Tomorrow is History" is a play on the construct of time and place, a continuation of the central themes of cultural and historical representation following on from my exhibition entitled "Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow" at the Hu Jiang Gallery in Shanghai in late 2015.

I was born in 1956 in Britain, the year in which John Osbourne published "Look Back in Anger," which not only established the Kitchen Sink movement in Britain, but perhaps more importantly shifted our gaze away from the American family ideal toward the stark realities of social division in post war Britain. In the same year, Richard Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi marked the beginnings of the British pop art movement with their exhibition entitled "This is Tomorrow" at the Whitechapel Art Gallery London. A coincidence of titles and events that sixty years on takes on a new poignancy in the current context of social unrest, cultural division and mass migration as a result of the conflicts of a rapidly globalising world.

Looking back and looking forward as a way of positioning oneself in time assumes an established system of history telling that is firmly rooted in formative linguistics. This predominantly western chronological structure perhaps no longer represents the complexities of our shifting and dynamic hybrid communities. Zygmunt Bauman's (2000) thesis on liquid individuals describes how "reality should

be emancipated from the dead hand of its own history" suggesting that the need to re-examine our histories might demand a different language, a more liquid language of poetics and imagination, through which history, past present and future could be reframed. This exhibition proposes just such an Altermodernist position that suggests a dystopian future within a more metaphysical concept of time. Within this concept, history is re-invented as a way of positioning oneself within time and place, and ultimately as a more embodied thinking process.

The disruption of time and space make reference to what Frank White (1987) termed the overview effect, where astronauts experience a cognitive shift in their sense of space while viewing the earth from a distance. From this position in space, national boundaries disappear and the conflicts that divide people and nations become less significant. While we cannot all be astronauts, the exhibition shares a view of culture that is more grounded, and one that attempts to avoid the centrality of othering, in what might be more appropriately termed the otherview effect. To express this multi-dimensional position, the works in this exhibition offer a visualisation of what Henry Lefebvre terms cumulative trialectics, a plural and decentralised theoretical model of space in line with Bauman's ideas on liquid individuals. Trialectics establishes a range of three-dimensional relationships in order to extend beyond Homi Bhabha's (1994) third space of conflict in which the polarities of othering become predominant. Cumulative trialectics is interpretive and can include social, cultural, methodological and practical relationships that involve the embodied self as a legitimate and essential part of the triangle, in effect creating a new dialogic space that exposes "emotions and experiences that we all attempt to proscribe and are unwilling to acknowledge, but which nevertheless occur" (Vork, 2013).

Since the year 2000 I have worked closely with two distinct cultural groups, those of Aboriginal elders from the north western desert region of Australia and with artists from mainland China. Through various forms of collaboration with writers, interpreters and artists, my work has slowly formed a new British, Sino-Australian trialectic, an often-awkward alliance of disjuncture and misinterpretation where visual language through necessity has replaced spoken and written communication.

Within this working relationship, the spiritual aspects of both Aboriginal and Chinese cultures have emerged as a form of Daoism, a philosophy focused on man's harmonious connection to place, and one that is constantly changing and reforming to adapt to the situations in which it operates. In this respect the works in this exhibition prompt a "reawakening" (Debord, 1958) through an alignment with Chinese Shan-Shui-Hua brush painting where traditional Chinese landscapes are constituted from different perspectives and from different times, offering a more abstract concept of time and place in which the artist presents what they think rather than what they see. The works in this exhibition, like Shan-Shui-Hua painting, reflects not the artist's eye, but the mind.

The reconstructed jigsaws serve as a metaphor for the misfits of social construction where the intersections between cultural groups are awkward and ill-fitting, reflecting what Homi Bhabha terms "incommensurable states" (1994). In Georges Perec's postmodern novel Life a Users Manual (1978) the main character Bartlebooth spends his later life obsessively making jigsaws of images from his travels around the world. While

completing his 439th and final jigsaw, Bartlebooth dies holding the one remaining piece in his hand. Ironically, the last hole in the jigsaw is the letter X while the piece he is holding is the letter W. Irony, futility and humour continually surface throughout the artworks presented in this exhibition as a way of making new meaning from the poetics of language, Reading between the lines serves as a reminder that reality is a product of what we chose to believe and what we subconsciously choose to retain.

Thematically the exhibition is purposely eclectic, flitting between the social and the religious, from the historical to the political, from presence to absence and searching in all the dark corners in-between. Technically, the crossovers between pictorial narratives, wall sculptures and animation are also hybrid in-between forms that offer fragments of a whole as a way of in-completing the picture. Within this counterpoint of harmony and discord, I take the position of the Semionaut, as one who organises new meaning from the remixing of language, symbols and the disparate elements that once had meaning but are now perhaps meaning-less.

As a predominately studio based artist, making art is an isolated experience for me. The production of works in this exhibition however has relied heavily on the interaction and contribution of many people, all of whom have shared this creative journey with great passion and commitment. This is an exhibition of many voices, made up of often opposing ideas and philosophies but where a community of the otherview has emerged. To everyone who has contributed to this exhibition I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Clive Barstow
11th May 2017

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Chinese Takeaway (2017)
Jigsaws
22 x35 cm



Every Road Has Two Paths (2015) in collaboration with Glen Philips
Jigsaws, pen and ink
58 x 48cm



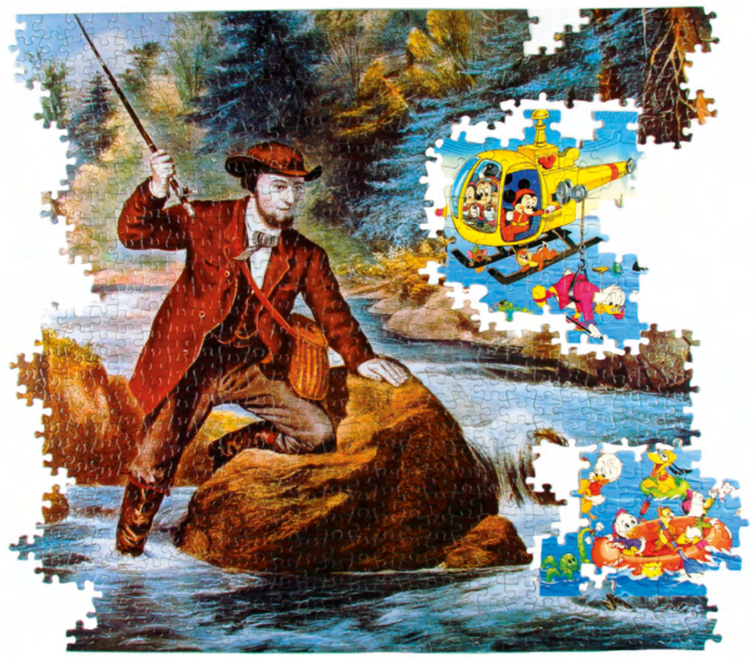
Buffalo Drought (2015)
Jigsaws
62x 55cm



Birdsong (2015)
Jigsaws
62 x 55cm



Innocence Lost (2015)
Jigsaws, acrylic paint
62x 54cm

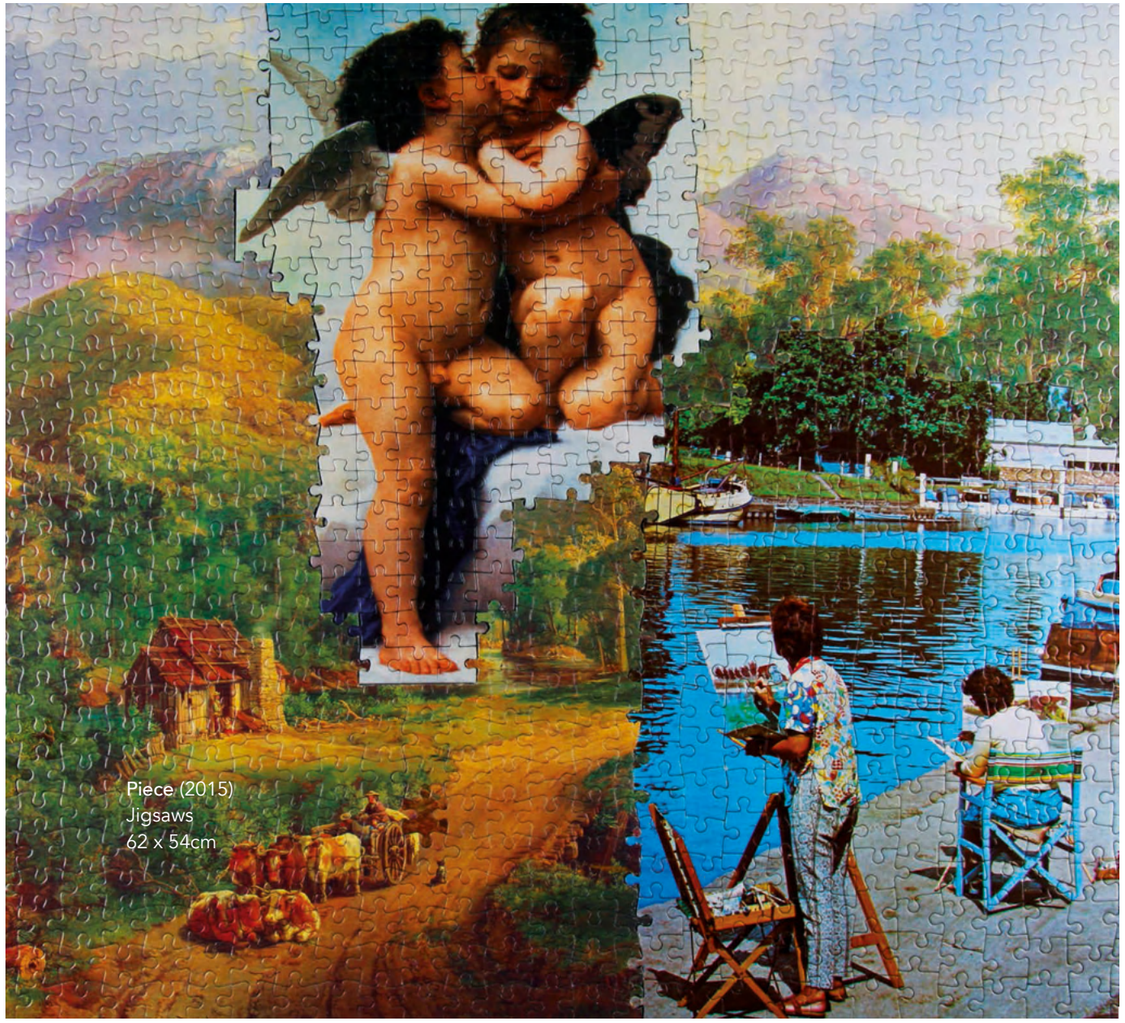


Gone Fishin' (2014)
Jigsaws
62 x 54cm



War (2015)
Jigsaws
58 x 48cm

16



Piece (2015)
Jigsaws
62 x 54cm



Otherview (2017)
Jigsaws
230 x 50cm

18



Entering Anarcadia (2015)
Jigsaws
230 x 50cm

19



Uncool Britannia (2015)
Jigsaws, acrylic
62 x 54cm





Collaborative Performance with Xu Shanxun
Hu Jiang Gallery Shanghai China October 2015



Bartlebooth's Double Cross (2017)
Wood, Plaster, Glass, Sand,
Resin, Flowers
233 x 144cm





Bartlebooth's Double Cross: Detail (2017)



We Will Decide: Detail (2017)

THIS IS AS IT SHOULD BE

Exhibitions plant seeds. Projects such as Tomorrow is History have an immediate effect and long-term effects. They sink in. They seep into our cultural awareness, muddying the neat categories and pigeonholes of a story we think we already know. How do we read this story? What are the seeds sown and how might they be taken up by another generation of artists (Obrist 2014)?

The dialogue/s set up by the stories told in this exhibition breach cultural boundaries, entering a space that is neither here nor there whilst bridging both. We read the exotic, the nostalgic, and the historic however unlike a jigsaw the pieces don't quite fit, instead they move us forward into a narrative that plays with culture/s, time and space.

Do we read this work maintaining significance of context over text, read through the conditions set up by the complex of the social, historic, climatic and physiological (Bakhtin 1981). What might unfold over time, given the notions visible throughout this exhibition: an array of semiotic activity pilfered across cultural boundaries, a history virtually impossible to restore, and therefore impossible to resolve? Meaning here is ruptured—at times I am uncomfortable, at other times amused, ironic doubling and an aesthetic importance of play are both found in this work. I see the cultural signifiers taken out of their context/s and reintroduced as playful tropes that tell a life story layered with political salience, playful irreverence, sharp intellect, biting sarcasm, a cross-cultural collaborative sensitivity, and generosity of spirit. The contradictions intrinsic to these works pitch us unnervingly close to the brink of meaning making and then we are distracted by another narrative equally as engaging, unset-

tling and humorous. Humour in this work "is both pleasure producing and rebellious" (Freud 1976, 168) inherently capable of the liberating capacity to attack the system from within (Bakhtin 1968).

The contexts of these works become a text that can be 'read' using a semiotic methodology that treats medium-bound terms such as spectatorship, storytelling, rhetoric, discursivity, and visuality as aspects rather than essences opening up larger questions of representation and interpretation that facilitate systematic interrogation of the ways arts emerge, circulate, and are intertwined within a culture (Bal 1991). Aspects versus essences suit the reading of this work given the cultural overlays apparent in the works and the irreverent tone of the overall exhibition.

I say irreverent however tradition is everywhere shot through in these artworks—Surrealism, Dada, William Burroughs' cutup texts that make reference to action painting, happenings, and aleatory music, paralleling avant-garde literary theory such as structuralism and deconstruction. All spliced together to tell a story of a life that thrives on the politics of difference, the richness of story telling—this exhibition is a cultural analysis of everyday life (Bal 2002/2012).

The sculptural installations bring us into a collusive relationship with the material utterances in this dialogue—repeated motifs linking across culturally specific icons irrespective of their original meaning. These however lack any cultural impropriety; instead a rollicking tale spins us around the exhibition chasing a specific story—one among many. Do we follow the birds this reading, trickster that steal jigsaw pieces while Disney characters ride a kangaroo.

The sculptural works link the jigsaw works—at once more raucous—almost as though elements of the jigsaws have been liberated from their two dimensionality— set free to find Barteltooth's last jigsaw pieces (Perec 1978). Amongst these works Crow-Ded perhaps most confronts our sense of the playful and critical simultaneously.

Probably…the larger part of the labour of an author in comprising his work is critical labour; the labour of shifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative. (T.S. Eliot as cited in Small 2013, 168).

Crow-Ded connects many of the images, objects and text located across the exhibition finding new meaning through juxtaposition of objects.

The artist is both the product and the instrument of change imbued with textuality and discourse (Alpers 1988) overlapping as these may be. These yield insight—the author of these texts take the stance as 'native informant' as problematic as that term is given today's global culture in that it is no longer possible to posit the idea of 'native'. Plurality, change, and displacement make any fixed position hard to sustain (Bal 2002/2012). The viewer however may not know whether to chuckle or become indignant. This is however serious work—raising questions about the way forward in a politically correct climate in order to find a more commensurate way of existing between cultures proactively while not repeating the mistakes of the past.

I have watched this artwork unfold over time, in exhibition, and in the studio. While Barstow's vision for tomorrow looks more inclusive…this work leaves me with more questions that answers—sowing seeds, questioning the cultural diversity that should be Australia. This is as it should be.

Dr. Lyndall Adams
14.3.2017

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Crow-Ded (2017)
Wood, Metal, Resin,
Glass, Plastic
247 x 169cm

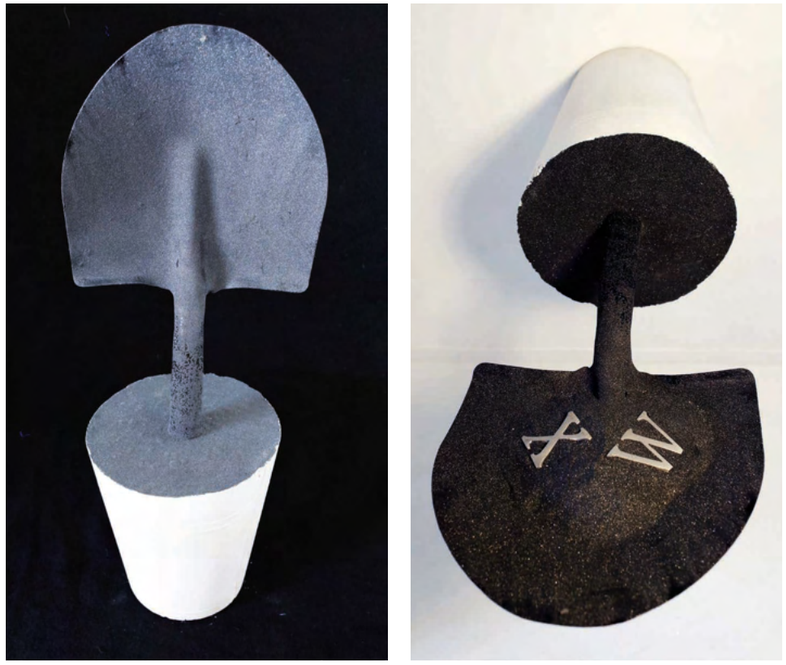


We Will Decide (2017)
Plaster, Resin, Polystyrene,
Plastic, Steel, Sand
287 x 267cm





We Will Decide: Detail (2017)



We Will Decide: Detail (2017)

THE TRIALECTICAL MODEL OF THE TRICKSTER

Question: What do "God Save The Queen", "Et in Anarcadia Ego", "Uncool Britannia" and "Cabbage Crates Over The Briny" have in common? Answer: They are all titles of works in Misfits: Beyond the Jigsaw by artist Clive Barstow, and lay bare the importance of intertextuality for his creative praxis. Referencing Vivienne Westwood, the matriarch of punk, and the Sex Pistols rebelling against British politics, to an ironic anarchistic play on the utopian notion of a romanticised, bucolic, classical arcadia, directly referencing Nicolas Poussin's painting from 1637-1638, "Et in Arcadia Ego", to referencing Monty Python – a British surreal comedy group. Barstow plays the role of the trickster, and invites us, his audience, into a complex world of play, metaphor, irony and interrogation.

Barstow investigates the subjectivity of the self as framed within one's lifeworld and the systems that invariably pervade it. As sociologist Raewyn Connell attests, "The making of subjectivities does not occur in a personal realm walled off from the social. Rather, creativity and the social are interwoven …" (Connell, p. 15). There are three central geographical spaces that map Barstow's lifeworld – Britain, Australia and China. He originates from Britain with its legacy of colonisation, empire and cultural transgression. Barstow's influences are many and cross these geographical spaces, it is however, the cultural, social and political specificity of each that he uses in the construction of his work. Some such examples from Britain are the early social realist, kitchen sink dramas of the late 1950s and 1960s, punk and its anarchistic tropes, and the

seemingly innocuous North American colonisation of British culture in the form of Disney.

Moving from Britain to cosmopolitan Australia at a time in which post-colonial attitudes were at the forefront of academic and cultural life, Barstow's work clearly deals with such issues of Aboriginal identity and the appalling legacy of terra nullius that still impact upon us today. It is however, the longevity of tradition of Aboriginal culture and of Chinese culture – the third geographical location that makes up Barstow's lifeworld – that influences him. Barstow's praxis agrees with sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman's assertion that, "A mixing of cultural inspirations is a source of enrichment and an engine of creativity" (2015, p. 31). These three diverse cultural contexts and their respective histories, ideologies and cultural tensions, are referenced in Barstow's work and seen most clearly in his reconstructed jigsaws and readymades, where Duchamp, Gilbert and George and Rodchenko come to mind. His work resonates on a number of complex levels revealed sometimes overtly, sometimes quietly and covertly.

The many diverse cultural tropes he references – pop, punk, the readymade – are thrown on their head and reconfigured, to communicate the complexity of living within social and cultural conditions which Bauman calls Liquid Modernity. In Barstow's work imagery relating to all three geographical spaces intersect in what seems humorous at first before becoming increasingly problematical.

The trickster is at play again in Barstow's film "A Chinese Whisper", where straight away we are asked to consider our colloquial use of this term, and its etymology. The film reveals Australian flora and fauna in the form of a jigsaw – familiar imagery for Barstow, kookaburras, kangaroos and kangaroo paws – represented with Chinese text, where systematically, piece-by-piece the picture is made known. This work, as is the case with all of Barstow's works, visually encapsulates cultural hybridity – and apprehends us, metaphorically stating, are we not all culturally hybrid? His film work is seductive, and sophisticatedly and deliberately develops an accumulative nature of experiences, building on what has gone previously, yet clearly and evocatively communicating the non-fixity of meaning and culture.

These ideas are further made manifest in the performative collaboration with Chinese artist Xu Shanxun, at Barstow's exhibition "Giving Yesterday a Tomorrow" in Shanghai. Xu Shanxun wrote symbolically onto Barstow's work "God's Country" his family's displacement through the Chinese Cultural Revolution – the physical act was direct and had a palpable agency. The trialectical model here is made explicit: "God's Country" features representations of colonised Aboriginal lands layered with personal displacement within China, although through a different set of governing and ideological principles, and the end result is both synchronous and poetic.

The different media Barstow employs is sophisticated and purposeful – both familiar and unfamiliar. He metaphorically asks the viewer to play – however it is play that is at once political and inscribed by histories that one may not wish to be reminded of. Children's play is encouraged through jigsaws, and the playfulness of the sculptural works. Yet we are challenged and made to think of the overt politicisation of children through Disney, and the systemic colonisation of the individual. The work is very seductive by the way it is exquisitely made and the use of familiar cultural references. Barstow makes obvious

how disproportionate aspects of culture can be, and visually renders a collision of different styles, genres, imagery, yet beautifully crafted to appear unified. The process for the viewer is uncomfortable at times when you are demanded to make sense of a narrative that reveals the underbelly of culture – the racist and the insidious.

The materiality of Barstow's works, reveal the physicality of the readymade – the readymade as reverential – and the everyday transformed into the world of the fantastical. He renders the whimsical and the macabre within a lens of intercultural discourse in all its complexity with the playfulness of the absurd. Barstow mixes the reverential, child's play and anarchistic beauty within a trialectical model framed by three diverse yet interconnected countries, seen most poetically and challengingly in "Entering Anarcadia". In this work he expertly visually challenges the notion of the binary, and reveals its limits, instead promoting a greater far-reaching and open trialectical model, where images of Uluru, The Great Wall of China, and Disney – to name only a few – are exquisitely crafted to provide a narrative that can be read as both vignettes and complete – both commensurate and incommensurate.

Barstow invites us, his audience, to immerse ourselves within his work, and to experientially posit our lifeworld – filled with our personal subjectivities, emotions and intimacies, within the socio-political landscape – into a jigsaw or a readymade. This agency ascribed to us may reveal missing, fragmented and incommensurable pieces – but overall make a whole picture of the individual within our liquid, physical and increasingly virtual lives.

Dr. Nicola Kaye
15.3.2017

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Black Sheep White Fella' (2017)
Plaster, Resin, Wood, Glass, Print
170 x 140cm



Black Sheep White Fella': Detail (2017)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exhibition would not have been possible without the generous help, support and contributions of my family, friends and colleagues in China and Australia. Thank you to Professor Ross Woodrow at Griffith University and Dr. Lyndall Adams and Dr. Nicola Kaye at Edith Cowan University for their enduring support. A special thank you to He Jie 何洁 for her help and devotion in all things Chinese, without whom these exhibitions would not have been possible.

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Collaborations: Craig Hudson, Glen Philips, Xu Shanxun
Original Jigsaws: Jo Barstow

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On 29/03/15 10:00 PM, "Christin Bolewski" <C.Bolewski@lboro.ac.uk> wrote:

dear clive,

please find attached a copy of the paper. it is related to my ow art practice - a digital video animation / a video painting which i did in 2009. this is the first paper which i published in relation to the art work and its mainly directed to the use of perspective in shanshuihua and compared with the Western use of perspective and specifically to 3D computer software….later i did some other papers which focus on other aspects of the work.

it would be nice if you could send me a copy of your paper when its ready…i am also still working on intercultural art work / translation and would be interested to read it.

i work at lboro since 2005…probably there is clive edwards or john atkin left from the time when you have been there.

all best, christin

Bolewski, C (2008) EVA: 'Shan-Shui-Hua' - traditional Chinese landscape painting reinterpreted as moving digital visualisation. In Dunn, S, Keene, S, Mallen, G, Bowen, J (ed) *EVA 2008: Electronic Visualisation and the Arts Conference*, Shan-Shui-Hua, The British Computer Society London, pp.27-34, ISBN: 978-1-906124-07-6.

From: JoanRoss <joan@joanross.com.au>
Date: Thursday, 30 April 2015 8:17 am
To: Clive BARSTOW <c.barstow@ecu.edu.au>
Subject: Fwd: For Helen Morgan

Hi Clive,
No probs with you using an image of the work, thanks for asking permission, and yes I'm interested in seeing it in context :)
cheers
Joan

Begin forwarded message:

From: Clive BARSTOW <c.barstow@ecu.edu.au>
Date: 27 April 2015 10:04:44 PM AWST
To: "info@turnergalleries.com.au" <info@turnergalleries.com.au>
Subject: For Helen Morgan

Hi Helen

I am in the process of writing up my PhD and would like to use an image from 'Colonial Grab' by Joan Ross. I am happy to use a version from your website but I would need permission from the artist.

Could you either ask Joan on my behalf or put me in touch with her. I am happy to give Joan more context to the section where I mention her work if she requires it.

As you know we have purchased this film for the ECU collection, and it is now on show in Spectrum, such a great work!

Thanks Helen, hope you are well