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PART ONE:
PERSPECTIVES ON ANIMALS AND
HUMANS

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Companion Animals: The Pet Phenomenon

Recent pet industry research indicates significant changes in pet ownership in that Americans now own more pets than ever with the highest level recorded of 62 per cent of all households owning a pet. In 2003, Americans kept 65 million dogs as pets (Dillon, 2005) and approximately 78 million cats with 34 per cent of households owning at least one cat (HSUS, 2005). In 2008, in the United Kingdom, 43 per cent of households owned a pet with 22 percent of these homes owning a dog, a total population of seven and a quarter million dogs. With cat ownership increasing in the United Kingdom, the total population of cats is over seven million with 18 per cent of households owning a cat (PFMA, 2008). Pet ownership is even higher in Australia; one of the highest in the world, 64 per cent of the seven and a half million households in Australia own pets (Petnet, 2003) with four million dogs and two and a half million cats (ABC, 2007). Of these, 91 per cent of pet owners reported feeling very close to their pet (Petnet, 2003). Households spend more on their pets than on child care. ABC (2007) notes that “... what we are witnessing is the rise of the ‘fur family’” (ABC, 2007).

In addition, a 1999 survey (*NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard*, 2003) found that 85 per cent of Australian pet owners said that their pet was part of the family; 57 per cent said that their pet was their best friend; 86 per cent believed that the main role of their pet was love and companionship, rather than as a guard dog or a mouse catcher; 69 per cent said that their pet's death would be as upsetting as the death of a family member; and 60 per cent said that they would put themselves in danger to save the lives of their pets. Franklin's (2006) survey (2000-2004) of Australian households indicates that, on average, 88 per cent of households ascribe family membership to their pets. These pets also have access to parts of the house that, in the 1950s and before, were out of bounds to them. Franklin (2006) found that over half of the respondents in his survey claimed they allowed

their pets into their bedroom and almost half were allowed on the furniture. Franklin (2006) noted that "... companion animals mostly have the run of the house" (Franklin, 2006: 210).

In the United States, 83 per cent of pet owners refer to themselves as their pet's Mum or Dad and over 63 per cent of dogs owners say *I love you* to their pet at least once a week (Dillon, 2005). People willingly spend large amounts of money on their pets in feeding, caring, grooming and nursing when ill. The marketing and consumer research carried out by Holbrook *et al* (2001) on the presence of animal companions in the mundane lives of ordinary consumers concluded that "... pets occupy hallowed ground" (Holbrook, 2001: 11) and that pets are a type of *sacred* animal beyond mundane consumer and consumption experience.

1.1.1 www.dogue.com.au: A New Perspective

Moreover, *haute couture* items for the *cool* fashion-conscious cat or dog are now available on increasing numbers of websites (e.g., www.dogue.com.au; www.fifiandromeo.com; www.lucytags.com; www.petcomfort.com; www.handsnpaws.com; www.alldogsgym.com; and www.animalfair.com). Australian-based sites such as the *Vogue* redolent www.dogue.com.au (Plate 1.1.1) aim to satisfy those dog owners desirous of pampering their pets with the latest *haute couture* and fashion clothing for all occasions, collars of every imaginable style and colour, beauty treatments, specialist foods, bedding, travel items and toys. Websites such www.meowhoo.com and www.missglamourpuss.com offer a range of items from clothing to jewellery especially for felines, while www.animalfair.com is a site associated with a magazine, also catering for the style-conscious pet, marketed as the *lifestyle magazine for animal lovers*. Among the offerings on this website for both the canine and canine companion are fashion, travel, beauty, design, wildlife and events.

www.dogster.com, the *Facebook* for canines, listing 363,998 four-legged members at the beginning of 2008, is yet another recent Internet development for

domesticated non-human animals. Felines, too, have www.catster.com with a total furry membership of 152,537, all of whom have their individual profile pages listing their personal statistics of age, gender and weight along with their horoscope, pet-peeves, skills, favourite nap spots, toys and foods as well as photographs of the family, human and non-human animals. To what extent do these connote a case for animals, trivialize them, or simply reflect an inchoate desire to bring the human and the non-human animal closer together?

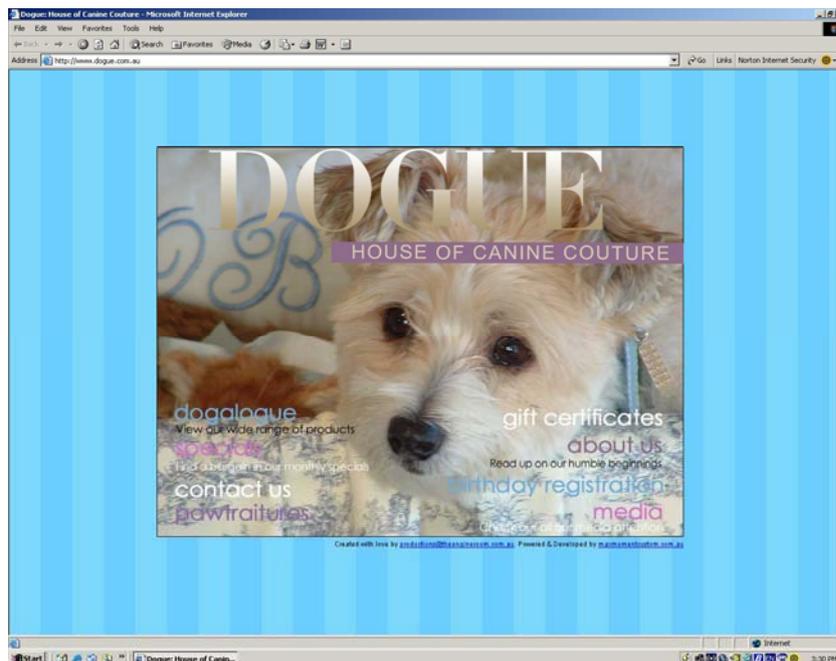


Plate 1.1.1 Home page, www.dogue.com.au
accessed 30 December 2007

In the United States, and throughout parts of the rest of the world, not only do people outfit their pets in designer-label fashions, they also feed them human food, give them human names, celebrate their birthdays, provide them with specialist medical and palliative care when they are ill and/or aged, mourn them when they die and bury them in pet cemeteries with many of the rituals associated with human burial (Serpell, 2002). Currently, pet funeral services range from pet hearses to individual cremations and burials to which, according to one pet crematorium, over forty people attended one burial (ABC, 2007). The report also predicts that, in the future, there might even be cemeteries where humans and

their companion animals can be buried together (ABC, 2007). Australia's first known bereavement support group for people mourning their animal friends was initiated in Melbourne (aap, 2006). Anecdotal evidence abounds on the devastation felt by pet owners when their beloved companion dies (Appendix A provides one such example). Science, too, is giving comfort to grieving pet owners. In early 2004, a California firm launched the world's first cat cloning service with the announcement of its first sale to a Texas woman for \$50,000: a cloned, male kitten named Little Nicky. The cloned kitten is a genetic twin of Nicky, a seventeen-year-old Maine Coone pet cat kept by the woman until he died in September (Reuters, 2004).

1.1.2 Pets *qua* Animals

Franklin (2006) argues that pets are being increasingly brought closer to humans in emotional and social terms, which suggests not only

... the surrogacy of animals for significant human relationships but also a breakdown in the perceived difference between humans and non-humans (Franklin, 2006: 207).

Franklin (2006) also argues that the specific bonds between human and animals are unique to them, citing as an example the vocal expressions between humans and their companion cats. Whereas cats are largely mute in their dealings with other cats, according to Franklin (2006), they seem to have learned of the significance of vocalisation between humans and the fact that humans vocalise to *them*.

In his analysis of the origin and evolutionary implications of anthropomorphic thinking and behaviour in the context of our relationship with pets, Serpell (2002) claims that

The anthropomorphic tendency to attribute human feelings and motivations to nonhuman animals has given rise to a unique set of

interspecies relationships that have no precedent elsewhere in the animal kingdom (Serpell, 2002: 8).

Berger (1980) recognises the practice of keeping pet animals on a social scale as a unique and "... modern innovation" (Berger, 1980: 14), one which prompts Fudge (2002) to pose the question: "Is a pet an animal?" (Fudge, 2002: 27). Certainly, humans have deeply intimate relationships with their companion animals. Pets are welcomed, loved and treated as a member of the family. Pets are loved as individual creatures and "A pet is a pet first, an animal second" (Fudge, 2002: 32) suggesting there is a particularity about our relationship with pets. Fudge (2002) elaborates by noting that while pets are, for many people, the closest and most intimate contact with non-humans, "...this does not mean that we can see pets as a simple representation of all animals" (Fudge, 2002: 32). Yet, paradoxically, loving your pet does not necessarily transfer to a more general and universal love of all other animals (Fudge, 2002). There are also the statistics of animal shelters, which evidence our ability to neglect our responsibility towards our companion cats and dogs. The Animal Welfare League (AWL) of Queensland, for example, offers a conservative estimate of 200,000 animals who are euthanised each year in that state's animal pounds and shelters (Basile, 2006).

1.1.3 Animals as Enigma

Each of us has a level of familiarity with animals. We co-exist with them; we share the same planet and resources. We observe them and live with them yet they may also seem unknowable. Animals are *alive* like us, yet different, familiar to us yet strange, akin to us yet alien. We are compelled to seek understanding of them as well as answers to some basic and fundamental questions such as: What is an animal? (Ingold, 1994); What is it that we see when we look at an animal? (Rothfels, 2002). Artist, Franz Marc (1880-1916) pondered in 1914: "How does a horse see the world, how does an eagle, a doe, or a dog?" (Chipp, 1968: 178), possibly pre-empting philosopher Nagel's (1974) more specific query of What is it like for a *bat* to be a bat? (Nagel, 1974); and later, Cheney and Seyfarth's

(1990) What is it like to be a monkey? and Bekoff's (2004) "What is it *like* to be a dog or a cat or a mouse or an ant? and What does it *feel like* to be a dog or a cat or a mouse or an ant?" (Bekoff, 2004: xv) or, indeed, any other animal for that matter. Furthermore, as Rothfels (2002) observes there is currently "... an accelerating scholarly interest in animals and their place both within and outside of human cultures" (Rothfels, 2002: xi).

Despite these efforts, however, animals remain enigmatic no matter how much we try to understand them or share their world. It soon becomes apparent that our relationship with animals is essentially paradoxical. This is borne out when we look at our starkly differing attitudes towards, for instance, a pig and a dog, four-legged creatures of equal intelligence (Singer, 1990; PETA, 2005). The dog has largely benefited from its welcome inclusion into a relationship with humans, while the pig has not (Dover, 2004). (In some Asian countries both the pig and dog are treated in the same way – as food). The anthropomorphism and individualisation of a particular group or species of animal – pets – are, in the long history of the human-animal relationship, relatively recent phenomena that heighten and accentuate the equivocal nature of our relationship with animals (Serpell, 2002).

1.1.4 Emotional Paradigm Shifts: Humans and Animals

A closer look at our relationship with pets reveals the complex, if not illogical and specious, boundaries and taboos we have established and, interestingly, those we are questioning and disassembling between humans and animals as well as between different species of animals. According to Franklin (1999), a new kind of relationship with our pets has occurred leading to the hypothesis that

... our new behaviour to pets relates to new tensions in relationships between humans ... we are in fact, substituting pets for a range of close human ties (Franklin, 1999: 5).

On the other hand, the change in our relationship with pets has also occurred, to a greater or lesser extent, in our attitude towards some other animals. One animal, familiar to Australians, which has consistently been demonised and feared, is the shark. The 1975 film, *Jaws*, confirmed and heightened human fears about this animal. Now, the author of the novel *Jaws*, Benchley, has completely changed his ideas about sharks and has become an enthusiast about and protector of sharks. He now works for National Geographic Magazine campaigning for these misunderstood animals, asking people to put aside their prejudices, stereotypes and fears. Benchley even tours Asia to advocate for sharks and against shark-fin soup (Handwerk, 2002). Rothfels (2002) observes nevertheless that, while the media are putting forth Benchley's new image of great white sharks, every opportunity is taken to promote an older and more fearful image of these animals.

The positioning and persuasive powers of the media in our changing views of animals were also evident in the BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) epidemic in the United Kingdom and other countries of Europe in 2001. Amid the grim images of burning pyres of millions of cattle, pigs and sheep that were seen on television and in the print media, a photograph of a thirteen-day-old white calf, named Phoenix, appeared on the front pages of British newspapers. Phoenix was found in a pile of cattle that had been killed as a preventive measure on a farm next to another on which foot-and-mouth disease had been found. She had apparently been sedated prior to the planned slaughter but had somehow missed the bullet and had spent five days under a pile of fifteen healthy but slaughtered cattle. The owner appealed for her to be spared when the government veterinarians arrived to finish the job, and seemingly the press photographer heard about her. The newspapers received numerous letters from readers about the plight of Phoenix asking for her to be saved.

Tony Blair, the British prime minister at the time, on becoming aware of the situation, might have seen a political opportunity, but he personally intervened to give reprieve to Phoenix. Fudge (2002) observes that "... this thirteen-day-old calf came to symbolize the unrest at the mass slaughter that was taking place" (Fudge,

2002: 41). Moreover, Fudge (2002) states that “The anonymity of the slaughter of cattle was disrupted by a calf with a name” (Fudge 2002: 41). Phoenix was now her owner’s pet and had turned into an individual animal rather than an anonymous product on the strength of the popular media. Rothfels (2002) maintains that, indeed, “... debates about the significance and representation of animals have become an almost constant presence in our culture” (Rothfels, 2002: xi). He cites the media coverage of Kabul’s one-eyed lion and other animal victims of the Afghanistan war and “... the perennial stories of whales, elephants, pandas and other charismatic species” (Rothfels, 2002: xi).

1.2 Consistencies and Inconsistencies

When we examine our relationship with our pets or companion animals¹ compared with that to other animals, paradox and ambivalence become apparent. This is particularly evident in the area of food and edibility. It is highly improbable that we (in Western societies) would eat a cat but we more than happily dine on a cow. Given the above, eating an animal who also is a pet might seem like eating one of the family. The paradox of our relationship with animals, then, is illuminated when the inconsistencies of our relations with animals are brought to the fore. Juxtapose those animals we use for food, for instance, with the anthropomorphic representations of animals in children’s books or consider our fascination for animals in the wild with the less interested way we think about those animals used for research and experimentation in laboratories (Dover, 2004). Arluke and Sanders (1996) suggest that when we look at our attitudes towards animals “... one of the most glaring consistencies is inconsistency...” (Arluke and Sanders, 1996: 4).

For the past thirty years, many of the philosophical, ethical and moral questions about animals have, in the main, probed what it means to be human. At the same

¹ This is the more widely acceptable term used currently; however, Dunayer (2001) argues that that *non-human companion* and *non-human friend* is preferable non-speciesist language.

time, however, the animal rights movement and animal behavioural research have developed to the point where the animal rather than the human is located at the centre of the debate. The expanding field of animal studies (Rothfels, 2002; Wolfe, 2003, 2003a; Fudge, 2002) brings the wide variety of disciplines and the disparate range of issues and topics together in order not only to examine, talk and write about animals but also to represent them visually. The examination of the relationship and connections between humans and animals and our interpretations of these connections are in a seminal phase and, indeed, a formative period in the long history of human-animal interactions. Nevertheless, it might appear that western culture, individuals or groups are still reluctant to consider the inherent contradictions in our relationship with animals seriously and truthfully. As Fudge (2002) observes, a failure to think beyond ourselves and include ...“within the orbit of our imagination as well as our material existences, those of other species ...” (Fudge, 2002: 22) would reveal a limitation to our capacities, as well as a perpetuation of many cruel and paradoxical practices.

The complex nature of the issues surrounding the human and animal relationship is often highlighted both internationally and in Australia when some crisis or controversy arises. Even though, for nearly three decades, philosophers, ethologists, animal behaviourists and others (Dover, 2004) have been publicising the blurred boundaries between human and animals and pointing to the dichotomies of human and animal relationship, it might appear that society only becomes responsive or pays close attention to this research when people's health and well being are more directly affected by the relationship. An example of this significant interest in the human and animal relationship and boundaries was a major exhibition held in Dresden, Germany (from November 2002 to August 2003) at the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum. This long-running exhibition, which was funded by the German Health Department, was titled *Human and Animal: A Paradoxical Relationship (Mensch und Tier: Eine Paradoxe Beziehung)*. The organisers argue that, now, the relationship between humans and animals is not so much a partnership as a precarious frontier, a concept which was the *leitmotiv* of the Dresden exhibition.

Yet another example of a new boundary between animals and humans being forged is with the great apes – orang-utans, chimpanzees and gorillas. The Great Ape Project, which was initiated by Cavalieri and Singer (1993), brought together a group of scholars and scientists including Jane Goodall, Richard Dawkins, Jared Diamond, Douglas Adams and Marc Bekoff to argue for the inclusion of all the great apes in the basic ideal of equality. The contributors to the project offer varying perspectives on the status of the great apes from a variety of disciplines including anthropology, philosophy, zoology, psychology, ethology, education, ethics and the law. The radical thread integrating the different viewpoints is “... a reassessment of the moral status of chimpanzees, gorillas and orang-utans and the acceptance of some nonhuman animals as persons” (Cavalieri and Singer, 1993: 2).

The titles of a number of the essays in the book, *The Great Ape Project* (1993) indicate the strength of support for the concept of status of persons for apes: *They Are Us*, Teleki; *Chimpanzees – Bridging the Gap*, Goodall; *The Case for the Personhood of Gorillas*, Patterson and Gordon; *Gaps in the Mind*, Dawkins; *The Third Chimpanzee*, Diamond; *A Basis for (Interspecies) Equality*, Persson. The editors argue that humans are also great apes and the Great Ape Project seeks

... an extension of equality that will embrace not only our own species, but also the species that are our closest living relatives and that most resemble us in their capacities and their ways of living (Cavalieri and Singer, 1993: 1).

DNA studies, for example, show that a chimpanzee's closest relative is not the gorilla, but humans who share 98.4 per cent of their DNA with two living species of chimpanzees. Additionally, research by a number of ethologists such as Goodall (1990) and Fossey (1983) has shown that the great apes have lifelong ties with family members as well as emotional and social lives similar to humans. Apes not only have the ability to relate to others but also demonstrate consciousness. Thus, the project argues, apes should no longer be considered

objects, things or chattels, that is, the category of property, but be considered for inclusion within the category of persons.

Furthermore, the questions raised by the issue of extending the status of the great apes to the category of persons are complex and involve issues of law and the legal system. Interestingly, Rutgers University School of Law in the United States, one of the first universities to teach an Animal Rights Law course, presents legal and moral materials involving the human and animal relationship well beyond the great apes to all species of animals. At Rutgers, animal rights law is studied in relation to "... the use of animals for food, hunting, vivisection, and entertainment, and working in a variety of legal and administrative contexts" (Rutgers: 2005).

1.3 The Animal as Societal Issue

Within both the disciplines of the sciences and humanities, the animal has become an *issue* (Rothfels, 2002; Wolfe, 2003a) and is often referred to as *the question of the animal* (Wolfe, 2003a). Not surprisingly, the subject of animals in the twenty-first century is a vast one, crossing as well as connecting diverse disciplines and often divergent discourse, reflecting the many and complex intersections of the parallel lives of humans and animals. In order to map the complexity of this area Figure 1.3.1 illustrates the extent to which human lives are interconnected with and interdependent on animals. Figure 1.3.1 references our categorisation of animals and how we think about, live with and look at animals across the disciplines. It also indicates the diversity and scope of animal issues which intersect the sciences and humanities as well as the industries of food and merchandise production and entertainment.

While the intersection with art is encompassed in Figure 1.3.1, it lacks the complex interweaving that characterises the humanities, for example. Yet it is also important to consider what emerges when visual art addresses *the question of the animal-human relationship*. To what extent indeed might the visual arts offer

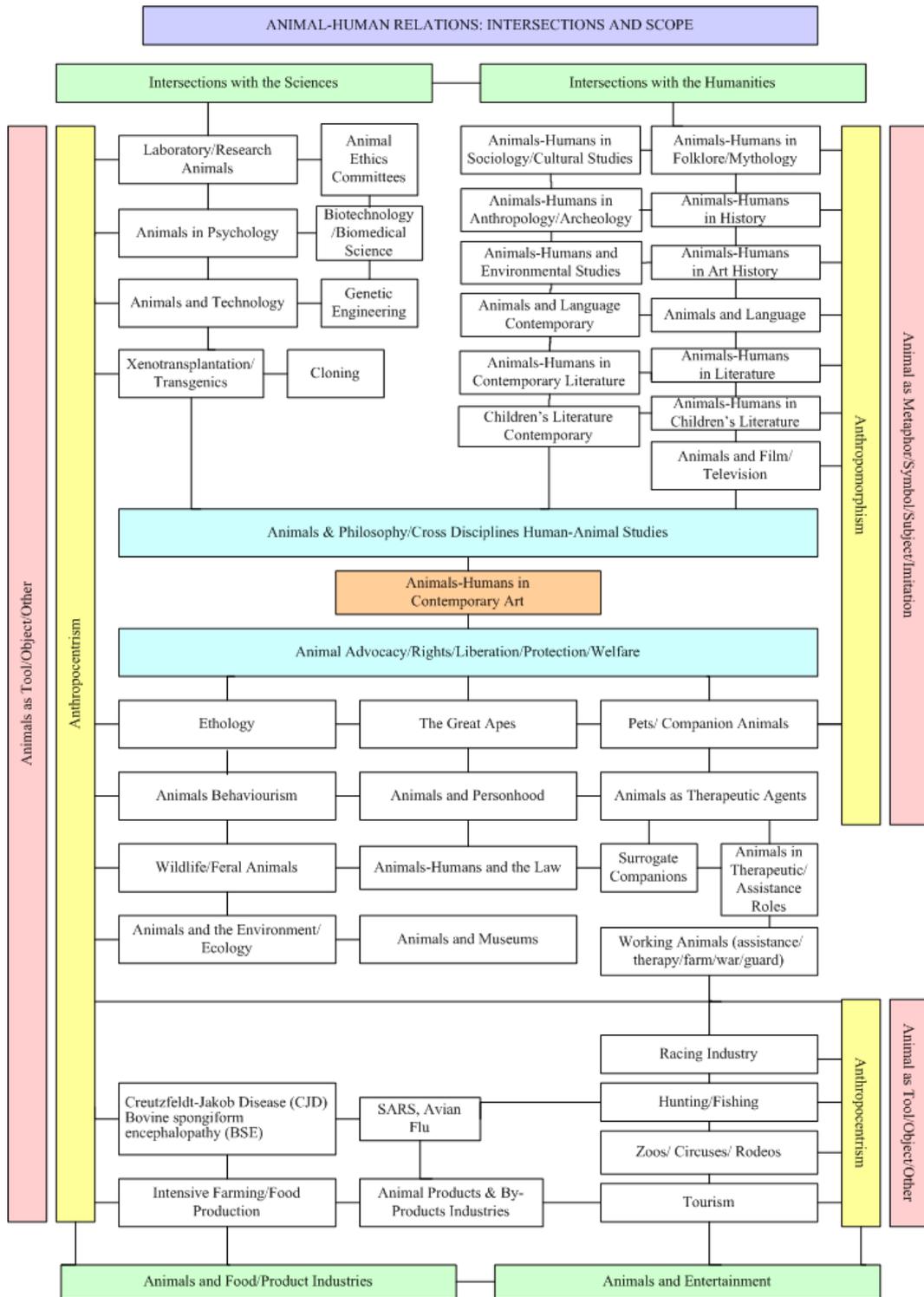


Figure 1.3.1 Mapping Animal-Human Interactions

alternative ways of thinking about and observing animals? Why and in what ways has the animal become such a potent subject in contemporary art? Given Ingold's (1994) premise that "... humans and nonhuman animals share the *same* existential

status, as living beings or persons ...” and his understanding of the use of metaphor “... as a way of drawing attention to real relational unities rather than of figuratively papering over dualities” (Ingold, 1994: xxiv), might the animal in some ways have become the new metaphor for contemporary life and issues?

1.4 Animals and Humans: The Gaze and the Mutual Gaze

Our encounters with animals, especially our pets, to a large extent, are mediated through the visual realm. That is, just as *looking* at other humans and being looked at by other humans, according to psychologists Argyle and Cook (1976), are fundamental in human social behaviour, looking and direct eye contact play an important role in animal-human interaction. Indeed, the importance of the eyes to both human and non-human animals in a number of their behavioural and social contexts such as courtship, displaying aggression, warding off threats and establishing social order and hierarchies is well-researched by animal behaviourists and psychologists (Argyle and Cook, 1976). The eyes played a significant role as a social signal very early in the evolutionary scale, so much so that some insects and fish evolved eye-spots and similar displays that mimic the eyes of their predators. Later, it has been demonstrated that the surrounding decoration of the eyes, termed eye-rings, (Argyle and Cook, 1976) of reptiles, birds and mammals are used as social signals to members of the same species. Moreover, Argyle and Cook (1976) maintain that “Whenever organisms use vision, the eyes become signals as well as channels; the most important place to look is another’s eyes” (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 1).

The *gaze* and the *mutual gaze*, in Argyle and Cook’s (1976) words, are indeed arousing and are often used between the same or different species of animals as a signal of threat or withdrawal. Hence, gaze is potent in meaning as a social signal and is therefore interpreted in social interactions. Mutual gaze, according to Argyle and Cook (1976), has the special meaning that two individuals are attending to each other, which is usually necessary for the beginning and/or sustaining of social interaction. Furthermore, the mutual gaze is sometimes

experienced as “... a special kind of intimacy, mutual access, and meeting of minds” (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 170).

Well-known primate researcher and advocate, Goodall (1990), who has spent over forty years working with chimpanzees, is highly cognisant of the importance of visual interchange and eye contact. She observes that

For a long time I never liked to look a chimpanzee straight in the eye – I assumed that, as in the case of most primates, this would be interpreted as a threat or at least as a breach of good manners. Not so. As long as one looks with gentleness, without arrogance, a chimpanzee will understand, and may even return the look. And then ... it is as though the eyes are the windows into the mind (Goodall, 1990: 10).

Sometimes looking into the eyes of these animals has been a painful experience for Goodall. For instance, when she visited an adult male chimpanzee, named JoJo, in a scientific research facility, Goodall observed: “In his eyes, I read gratitude because I had stopped to talk” (Montgomery, 1991: 205). Goodall, distressed by the sight of this gentle, intelligent animal’s confinement in a stark metal cage, wept and “... JoJo stared at her intently. He reached a black hand through the bars. He touched the wetness on her cheek, sniffed its scent, and then licked her tears from his finger” (Montgomery, 1991: 205).

The *loss* of looking at or eye contact with animals is considered by Berger (1980) in his essay, *Why Look at Animals?*, Berger (1980) suggests that

The eyes of an animal when they consider a man are attentive and wary. He does not reserve a special look for man. But by no other species except man will the animal’s look be recognised as familiar. Other animals are held by the look. Man becomes aware of himself returning the look (Berger, 1980: 5).

According to Baker (2001a), the animal-human relationship is characterised by Berger (1980) as one of an absence of contact “...which is epitomized by the pathos of an unrecognized looking, an imperfectly-met gaze” (Baker, 2001a: 11).

Berger (1980) discusses the *kind* of look that occurs between the animal and human. Berger (1980) argues that by no other species except humans will an animal's look be recognised as familiar. While other animals might be *held* by the look of another animal, humans have an awareness of themselves *returning* the look. According to Berger (1980), the animal scrutinises the human "... across a narrow abyss of non-comprehension" (Berger, 1980: 5).

The human, too, is looking across a similar, but not identical, *narrow abyss of non-comprehension*. Berger (1980) suggests that the human is always looking across at animals with ignorance and fear. This contrasts with relations between two humans who might bridge the abyss with language or the *existence* of language if the two speak different languages. Berger (1980) argues that "Language allows men to reckon with each other as themselves" (Berger, 1980: 5); however, Berger (1980) adds, in the confirmation made possible by language, human ignorance and fear may also be confirmed. Mitchell (1994), on the other hand, observes that "Animals can see what we see; they can look at us in the eye across a gulf unbridged by language" (Mitchell, 1994: 334).

Gaze and mutual gaze, then, are important in the interaction of and communication between both humans with other humans and humans with animals. Argyle and Cook (1976) argue both that "... gaze plays a central part, indeed several central parts, in human social behaviour" and, what is more, that

Any theory or account of social behaviour that fails to mention gaze is therefore completely inadequate. It is unfortunate that accounts of human behaviour *do* fail to mention it (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 167).

The animal-human literature reflects a similar dearth of reflection and discourse on the gaze and mutual gaze between animals and humans. The discipline of psychology evidences the highest number of studies of the gaze in animals, particularly primates (e.g., Emery, 2000; Karin-D'Arcy & Povinelli, 2002; Call, Braüer, Kaminski, Tomasello, 2003; and Kaminski, Riedel, Call, Tomasello, 2005). Best (2000), in a review of a number of books on animals, pays tribute to

Griffin (1992) who is considered to be the father of cognitive ethology, and his work which is documented in the books *Animal Thinking* (1984) and *Animal Minds* (1992). Best (2000) argues that Griffin (1992) took seriously the notion that animals can think and advanced compelling arguments to that effect. Best (2000) also notes that much research in the area of cognitive ethology evidences animal behaviour, communication and intelligence

... in a spate of recent books and the new discipline of 'cognitive ethology' that studies animal intelligence, science finally is beginning to fathom the depth of animal complexity. ... New studies suggest that rats dream when they sleep and that the great apes have 'self-awareness neurons' responsible for self-consciousness (Best, 2000:1).

Best (2000) refers to the human gaze *towards* animals, arguing that "The paradigm shift from seeing animals as subjects of a life instead of objects of a gaze has important implications" (Best, 2000, 1). To what extent, then, does this gaze travel in one direction, from human towards animal or animal to human? What type of gaze is the animal-human gaze?

According to Olin (2003), "*Gaze* is a rather literary term for what could be called 'looking' or 'watching'" (Olin, 2003: 319). In her discussion of the term gaze and its use in visual art, Olin (2003) suggests that gaze can be considered a subheading of a larger category usually called *spectatorship*, which covers a complex of terms with interchangeable meanings but different connotations. Olin (2003) claims that

'Beholding', for example, has religious connotations, while 'scrutinizing' suggests the involvement of intellect. In theoretical discussions hardly anyone just looks at a work of art, and glimpsing and peeking, watching, glaring, or seeing have far remained beneath the notice of most art theorists. Words for the agent of gazing are 'beholder', 'viewer', or occasionally 'spectator' or 'audience', especially if the work in question is a film. Related terms in the complex can characterize an attitude towards viewing. 'Visual pleasure' is a straightforward characterization, for example, when compared to terms with a more academic ring, such as 'ocularcentrism' or the Freudian 'scophilism' (Olin, 2003: 319).

Moreover, while the word gaze implies a steady intensity and intention in looking, there are also implications of both pleasure and power that are taken in the viewing and looking. Olin (2003) argues that

While most discourse about the gaze [in visual art] concerns pleasure and knowledge, however, it generally places both of these in the service of issues of power, manipulation, and desire. There is usually something negative about the gaze as used in art theory. It is rather like the word 'stare' in everyday usage (Olin, 2003: 319).

The term *gaze* in the visual arts has thus, since the mid-twentieth century, acquired a number of connotations, which might be both related to and different from psychological and other studies of this phenomenon.

Ways of Seeing, Berger's (1972) influential book based on a BBC television series, discusses works of art in relation to ideology, gender and social class and suggests that these are important factors in the understanding of the gaze. "Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak", observes Berger (1972: 7). He also suggests that our knowledge of our surroundings and our place in the world is also largely established by seeing. Moreover, the relationship between what we see and what we know is never conclusive because "... we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves" (Berger, 1972: 9). Thus seeing and looking are affected by our beliefs, experience and knowledge.

This is evidenced in the predominant subject of the female nude in European painting. Of this traditional art theme, Berger (1972) argues that

... men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at ... The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object – and most particularly an object of vision: a sight (Berger, 1972: 47).

Berger (1972) claims that, in European art from the Renaissance onwards, women were depicted as being "... aware of being seen by a [male] spectator" (Berger,

1972: 49). Thus, for Berger (1972), the gaze is essentially a white, male empowered gaze, a *spectatorial gaze*. In concurrence with Berger's (1972) desiring, subjugating and voyeuristic view of the gaze, Callen (1995) further notes that

In most images of the female nude in Western art, the woman is 'aware' of being looked at. Even where no eye-contact is represented, the figure's self-awareness is inscribed in poses which display the body and invite the gaze of the privileged spectator (Callen, 1995: 84).

Olin (2003) suggests that "There must be someone to gaze and there may be someone to gaze back" (Olin, 2003: 319). According to Olin (2003), the mutual gaze proposes that "... if you can look back, you cannot be possessed by the gaze of another" (Olin, 2003: 327). Additionally and significantly, this returned gaze also suggests an engagement with the other person (or animal), which might give rise to the idea of engagement with responsibility. That is, arising from the mutual gaze might also be some level of accountability and liability for the other person (or animal) involved in this exchange. The *un-possessing gaze* might connect the two participants so that empathetic consideration of the other is consequential.

Furthermore, Olin, (2003) claims, the word *gaze* is a useful word for "... uniting formal and social theory because unlike 'opticality', it is a double-sided term" (Olin, 2003: 319). Interestingly, however, Olin (2003) suggests that the choice of terms such as *gaze* indicates an attempt to address ethical issues that can be read through visual analysis of a work of art, and argues that

The use of the term 'gaze' is therefore emblematic of the recent attempt to wrest formal discussions of art from the grasp of linguistic theory, to focus on what is visual about a work of art and yet address the wider issue of social communication to which linguistic theory, applied to art, opened the discourse (Olin, 2003: 319).

While, importantly, Olin (2003) reminds us that a work of art is to look at and "Theories of the gaze attempt to address the consequences of the looking" (Olin, 2003: 329), the shared, returned or mutual gaze between persons within the work of art is also a significant aspect of an art work to investigate: gazes can be

exchanged between the subjects *within* the work. Just as it might be important to see ourselves how others see us, in Olin's (2003) words, it might also be important to understand and see ourselves looking at another being – an animal.

It is clear that the spectatorial and proprietorial gaze, identified by Berger (1980), Olin (2003) and others, is no longer appropriate or relevant to contemporary artwork depicting the interaction of animals and humans. What is needed is a concept of *participatory gaze* which is not transmissive (i.e., from the dominant to the subjugated) but mutually interactive. The acknowledgement of this level and type of visual, non-verbal communication in contemporary artwork is important. This would, indeed, recognise that the dialectic, both internal and external to the artwork, has shifted somewhat. Rather than being the passive focus of the spectatorial or subjugated gaze, the subjects (animal and human) of the artwork enact a *mutual gaze*, a form of gaze which plays an important role in the growth of social bonds between two individuals (Argyle and Cook, 1976). Given that the subjects' gazes *turn to each other* rather than the viewer/s, these *reciprocal gazes* are participatory and differ in essence from the mutuality discussed by Olin (2003) in which she argues that "...theorists espouse some form of dialogism, in which a totalistic, hegemonic gaze is replaced by the mutual gaze of equality" (Olin, 2003: 327). While mutual and equal, such gazes nevertheless exist as non-verbal communication between the *viewer* and the *viewed* and between the *human* and *another human or animal*.

Obviously the *reciprocal gaze* between animal and human *within* the artwork takes the discourse on the gaze in a different direction. The inquiry about the gaze, relating to the viewer and the viewed (both internal and external to the work), moves thus from one of *spectatorship*, of being scrutinised, viewed, observed and objectified in a context of pleasure and/or power to one of *reciprocity* between animal and human. The essence of such mutuality, sharing, participation and connection creates a context of reciprocal care and/or responsibility, a context appropriate to visual exploration of the animal-human relationship.

1.5 Rationale for and Aims of the Research

This issue of reciprocity of gaze in visual art depicting animal-human interactions has not yet been documented. Hence the overarching research purpose here is to probe the parameters of the animal-human interface through consideration of the following questions:

- To what extent might the visual interchange and interface of *reciprocal gaze* be critical to animal-human relationships?
- What role, indeed, might non-verbal communication play in the shaping of animal-human interactions, particularly in relation to domestic pets?
- To what extent might there be continuity in this exchange, as Noske (2004) argues or, alternatively, discontinuity?
- What, if any, is the evidence of the engagement of visual artists with the sensitivities and aesthetics of such issues?

Specifically, the research aims to

1. explore *reciprocity of gaze* between the animal and human in visual art as evidence of the animal-human relationship;
2. investigate the ethics and aesthetics implicit in such visual reflections of animal-human relations; and
3. utilise the data derived from 1. and 2. above to re-focus animal-human interactive looking and *mutual gaze* through the development of visual artwork.

1.6 The Organisation of the Thesis

1.6.1 Part One: Perspectives on Animals and Humans – Introduction and Establishment of the Parameters of the Research

Part One comprises an introduction to the research and establishes both the background and parameters of the project. Having acknowledged in the introduction that the fields of animal-human relations and animals in visual art are wide and complex, Chapters Two, Three and Four review the literature pertaining to the research. Chapter Two provides an overview as well as an analysis and perspective on the more specific foci of contemporary animal art which depicts both animals and humans while Chapter Three surveys and analyses the animal art in which animals and human engage in mutual gaze. The latter analysis is presented in a tabular format in order to facilitate the interconnected nature and evolution of art involving animals and humans through the art periods but also to grasp the comprehensiveness of the field of animals in art. Chapter Four examines the scope of the term gaze and particularly from the perspective of the visual arts while Chapter Five identifies the interconnected nature of animals in art with the areas of aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy and presents the working and key principles for the research. Chapter Six presents the methodology for the research, including the conceptual framework and key principles, the direction for which is derived from the literature.

1.6.2 Part Two: The Animal-Human Gaze Made Visible – Documenting Creative Processes

Chapter Seven documents, presents the interviews with the seven artists and synthesises these interviews as well as establishes commonalities and divergences between the artists. Chapter Eight delineates the group exhibition process.

Chapter Nine documents the process of creating the artworks for exhibition from prototype to final works while Chapter Ten analyses the planning, preparation for and the installation of two of the three exhibitions as well as the exhibitions themselves. This comprises the choices of venues, proposals to the venue, creating the invitations, catalogues as well as the installations of the works and the exhibition openings.

1.6.3 Part Three: A Renewed Focus on Animal-Human Gaze: Review, Appraisal and Directions

Chapter Eleven provides a retrospective analysis of the research processes, together with critiques of the exhibitions and a consequent consideration of the future implications of the research for the pedagogy of animals and art and for further art practice and research.

CHAPTER TWO – PERSPECTIVES ON ANIMAL AND HUMAN INTERACTIONS: LIFE AND ART

2.1 New Perspectives on Animal-Human Relationships

In the past three decades, ever-increasing interest in the subject of animal-human relations has generated a substantial volume of literature from a range of disciplines including philosophy, ethics, psychology, anthropology, ecology and sociology and, more currently, cultural and literary theory. Baker (2001b) identifies the humanities disciplines of history, art history, literary criticism, socio-cultural anthropology and philosophy as well as the natural sciences as areas demonstrating a significant growth of interest in the field of animal-human relations. Indeed the field of human-animal studies is burgeoning in a variety of scholarly disciplines interested in the human relationship to animals. In the United States, for example, in 2002, Anderson (2005) notes that the American Sociological Association recognised the newly developed Human-Animal Studies section (www.asanet.org/sectionanimals/) and, moreover, members of the American Psychological Association are petitioning for a similar division. Furthermore,

The 10th anniversary issues of *Society & Animals*, published in 2002, include contributions from anthropology, the (representational) arts, consumer sociology, criminology, economics, feminist studies, geography, history, political science, postcolonial studies, psychology, religion, and sociology (Anderson, 2005: 1).

In Australia, the inaugural conference of *The Animals and Society (Australia) Study Group* held in Perth, July 2004, was initiated in order to bring together Australian-based scholars working in a variety of disciplines “... to better understand the roles and meanings attributed to non-human animals in human societies” (UWA, 2005). The establishment of this Australian group, together with other similar academic discussions on animals both in Australia and internationally, reflects the enormous interest and activity in animal-human

relations. The cross-discipline studies represent the diversity of perspectives on our experiences of non-human animals within both the social sciences (psychology, sociology, anthropology and political science) and the humanities (history, philosophy, literary criticism, cultural studies and visual arts).

Following the success of *The Animals and Society (Australia) Study Group* conference, other Australian academic institutions have taken the initiative to launch animal-human relation study groups. The University of Tasmania hosted the second *Animals and Society (Australia) Study Group* conference, *Animals and Society II: Considering Animals* in July 2006. This Hobart conference attracted a greater number of participants than the first and with an expanded range of disciplines including, particularly, an increased number of visual art representatives (including the researcher [Appendix B]) comprising 12 per cent of the presenters. With the experience of the previous conference and the development of animal studies groups and centres in a number of universities, it is becoming evident that this group is beginning to work within an interdisciplinary framework, that is, the sciences and humanities are starting to engage within understandings of the other's terms and approaches.

The momentum begun by the animals and society study group continues with the third *Animals and Society (Australia) Study Group* conference scheduled to be hosted by the University of Newcastle in 2009, the *International Academic and Community Conference on Animals and Society: Minding Animals*. The organisers state that this conference "... will examine the interrelationships between human and nonhuman animals from cultural, historical, geographical, environmental, moral, legal and political perspectives" (Minding Animals, 2008). What is more, this conference makes the claim of bringing together "... an unheralded number of leading scientists, philosophers and social theorists, academics and community leaders, all committed to animal protection and welfare, but never having all met at the one event" (Minding Animals, 2008), including Nobel Laureate Professor JM Coetzee, Distinguished Professor Bernard Rollin, Professors Emeritus Marc Bekoff, Tom Regan and Michael Soulé, and Professors Carol Adams, J Baird

Callicott, Dale Jamieson, James Serpell, Peter Singer, Paul Waldau and Jennifer Wolch.

As indicated by the breadth of this list of distinguished scholars, such conferences are forums where animal-human interactions in their multifarious settings are likely to be addressed; these include animal cruelty, farm animals and the therapeutic uses of animals; the applied uses of animals such as research, education, medicine and agriculture; the use of animals as entertainment and sport such as dog-fighting, circuses and zoos. The synthesis of animal-human relations within diverse disciplines also tackles issues and attitudes toward animals as affected by different agencies such as the history of the domestication of animals, the politics of animal welfare, animals as war machines, the animal rights movement, the representations of animals in literature and, importantly, the representation of animals in visual art.

At the beginning of 2008, listed on the online animal studies forum, H-Animal, under the rubric of H-Net (www.h-net.org/), were twenty forthcoming conferences and meetings reflecting the increasing worldwide engagement in the serious exploration and study of animal-human relations. H-Animal also has been invested with the responsibility for updating bibliographies, post conference papers, exchange teaching and research questions and also links to animal studies teaching syllabi and other resources. The site purports that its aim is to "... serve as an on-line home for the growing number of scholars across disciplines who are engaged on the study of animals in human culture" (H-Animal, 2008). As well as being a forum for discussion and exchange for scholars across the disciplines who study animals, its book and journal reviews "... help keep scholars abreast of new writing about animals" (H-Animal, 2008).

A great deal of this was, and still is, a result of Singer's 1975 (1990) seminal writings on animal liberation, which continue to promote considerable discussion and debate leading to significant numbers of publications. For example, Manzo's (1994) bibliography includes over 1,300 sources on the animal rights movement

from 1975-1990. Alongside this and other animal rights bibliographies (Kistler, 2000; Magel, 1989), a number of bibliographies reference such aspects of the animal-human interaction as the human-animal bond (Allen, 1985); animal experimentation and animal rights (Christensen, 1991; Friedman, 1987); and reviews of 1,412 articles and books on vegetarianism (Dyer, 1982). A bibliography developed in the mid-1980s (Kellert and Berry, 1985) lists some 3,860 publications, while another bibliography utilises internet technology for an ongoing animal bibliographic project developed by the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University: the *Animal Studies Bibliography*, (2008) appears on a website which, the authors maintain, is constantly updated. In 2005 it offered some 1,360 publications on the theme of animal-human relations. More recently, in furthering animal advocacy discussion, an online academic journal and centre for the discussion of animal liberation/rights philosophy and policy was founded

... to advance the study, research, and dialogue of the principles and practices of animal rights and animal liberation ...[and] engage[s] in critical examinations and philosophical dialogue through an online journal, research databases, a speaker's bureau, and conferences on animal liberation issues (CALA, 2005).

The proliferation of conferences, meetings and publications might well go some way in addressing the comprehensive list of investigable questions on animal issues presented by Cunningham (1995) more than ten years ago, which he identified under such headings *Animals as a variable in human socialisation*; *Animals in culture*; *Animals in sport, recreation and leisure*; *Animals as food, product and artefact*; and *Animals as a variable in social stratification*. Sociologist Franklin (1999) also recognises some areas in need of further examination and argues for the wider scope of a sociology of animal-human relations established by "... the increasingly contentious and conflictual nature of human-animal relations across a number of sites in the twentieth century ..." (Franklin, 1999: 2). These include, claims Franklin (1999), animal husbandry, the food industry, pet keeping, animals and tourism, animals and sport as well as changes in taste for animals and fish as foods. More recently, Kew (2003) asserts that the area of media and animal liberation is an under-researched area in the

United Kingdom. The emergence of *animal studies* which is, according to Baker (2001b), a substantive subfield within the social sciences and is "... an academic 'parallel' to the animal rights movement ..." (Baker, 2001b: 1) thus addresses animal-human relations questions of importance in the twenty-first century.

Franklin (1999) views the field of animal-human relations from a different perspective to that of Baker (2001b). According to Franklin (1999), the two paradigm states of animal-human relations in the twentieth century correspond to the social conditions of modernity and postmodernity. In regard to postmodern relations with animals, the "... decentred sensibilities of postmodernity were caught up in the acts of reflexive remodelling..." (Franklin, 1999: 189), which broke down the certainty of anthropocentrism in relation to animals, and importantly, "... new explorations into the possibilities and potencies of human-animal relationships were made ..." (Franklin, 1999: 189).

Interestingly, the uneasiness that arises between modern and postmodern viewpoints is also detected in contemporary art. According to Smith (2001), the modernists' suspicion of postmodernism is also aggravated by the practices of some postmodern artists such as taxidermy, and indicated by the tension between modernist and postmodernist advocate-scholars at a 2000 animal studies conference at the University of Sheffield. Such lively debates and discourse on questions of the parameters and positions of animal studies continue within the forum of H-Animal. Issues relating to animal studies entering the mainstream disciplines are a hot topic giving rise to questions, for instance, on animal studies and animal advocacy and the ethics of using animals in art. Sorenson's (2008) view of animal studies and animal advocacy is one example of the intensity of discussion:

In response to Anita Guerrini's questions ('Is there room in Animal Studies for people who, say, think eating meat is not wrong? Or that experimentation on animals in some circumstances is somehow justified?'), how would one respond to someone posting similar questions on a Black Studies network (Can I still keep slaves?) or a Women's Studies network (Can I still beat my wife?), etc.? If Animal Studies doesn't

develop a strong commitment to advocacy, what's the point? (Sorenson 2007).

According to Baker (2001b), it is easy to see how schisms might develop within animal studies. He argues that it might be perceived thus: on one side, animal advocates, activists and academics concerned with the actual mistreatment of live animals; and on the other side, a group of scholars who seem more concerned with exploring theories of animal representation, for example, than with addressing the actual plight of the represented animals.

However, Baker (2001b) also maintains that there are scholars who indicate approaches to the representation of animal-human relations that are ethically informed and purposeful, addressing the literary and the political representation of animals (Fudge, 2000, Simons, 2002). Simons (2002), for example, looks at the question of animal rights in the context of literary criticism and, importantly, from a declared personal commitment to the rights of animals. McKay (2002) claims that

Simons looks for a delicate balance between polemic (for animals' rights and for an academia that engages with society at large) and more conventional criticism that reads literature closely and as if animals mattered (McKay, 2002).

Ingold (2001) might have forecast the views of Simons (2002) in his critique of the doctrine of *social constructionism* (a doctrine which states that relations with animals and the meanings that humans claim to find in them are symbolic projections onto animal others whose source lies in the domain of human relations). He goes as far as to suggest that

A future sociology will have to recognize (as social anthropology has already begun to do) that social relations are not, exclusively, human relations (Ingold, 2001).

Ingold (2001) might indeed welcome Franklin's (1999) sociological framework of the transition from modernity to postmodernity for understanding changes in animal-human relations. Franklin (1999) argues that there is

... a connection between some general conditions of postmodern sensibility and the general direction of change in human-animal relations since the early 1970s (Franklin, 1999: 60).

These broad social forces of change, Franklin (1999) claims, have brought about a wide range of industrial, ethical, conceptual and emotional changes in our dealings with animals. The ground for these changes in animal-human relations in the period since the 1970s was set, Franklin (1999) asserts, firstly, by an extraordinary growth in the range of activities associated with animals, which has continued to escalate; secondly, by the politicisation of animal-human relations; and thirdly, by the decline of meat eating in Western societies. Indeed, according to Franklin (1999),

- an increasing range of animals has been drawn into closer, emotional association with modern cultures;
- the categorical boundary between humans and animals, so fiercely defended as a tenet of modernity, has been seriously challenged, if not dismantled in places;
- the social cause of these changes can be located in at least three processes that frame the postmodern condition: misanthropy, risk and ontological insecurity (Franklin, 1999: 3).

Franklin (1999) contends that ontological insecurity is produced by a postmodern social identity, which is characterised by a lack of continuity and order along with social fragmentation. While the unsettling nature of postmodernity, with its lack of direction and planning and its general aversion for government and bureaucracy creates, on the one hand, a certain freedom and a perpetual state of change and, on the other, a sense of confusion, loss, unpredictability and anxiety arises is also a consequence.

In relation particularly to the changes in pet-keeping and practices in the last twenty years or so, for example, Franklin (1999) argues that ontological insecurity provides a useful way of investigating the patterns and directions of change. The idea that pets may be kept as companions in lieu of a diversity of human relations takes us only so far in explaining recent changes in the ways pets are kept. Indeed, Franklin (1999) contends that it is not at all apparent that the extension of greater humanity and care towards pets is simply because they are fulfilling surrogate human roles. Also, at the same time, new attitudes to animals are evident and operational in other areas of animal-human interaction, such as animals in zoos and in the wild. Furthermore, the argument that pets are "... simply becoming ever more anthropomorphised may be exactly wrong" (Franklin, 1999: 86). Instead, in considering their pets as animals with particular characteristics and needs, pet keepers (in Franklin's (1999) terms) are attempting to understand the needs of others and, in realising that the needs of humans and animals are not mutually exclusive, are exploring the possibilities of mutuality. According to Franklin (1999) then,

... the human-animal relation is not one characterized simply by strong sentiments, but also [is] unconsciously challenging and dissolving the human-animal boundary itself (Franklin, 1999: 86).

Fudge *et al* (1999) discuss these tissue-thin and porous boundaries between the individual human and the animal in early modern thought and philosophy indicating that reflections on the question of defining the boundary between animal and human might have long been a preoccupation of humans, if only to answer the question of what it means to be human. Noske (2004) suggests that animal-human relations are beyond boundaries, arguing that there is a natural continuity between animals and humans; an animal-human continuity. Both animals and humans exist in nature and also in society. According to Noske (2004),

Each and everyone of us is a sentient individual, a species member as well as a 'place' in the world. In this world nature and society intersect. It is all there is, nobody and nothing exists outside either (Noske, 2004: 9).

The idea of animal-human continuity is, Noske (2004) maintains, "... not just about the 'humanlike-ness' of animals but also about the 'animallike-ness' of humans" (Noske, 2004: 7). There is, according to Noske (2004) an existential and crucial connectedness between the two.

Contributing to the dialogue about animal-human relations and the breaking down of boundaries between the two is the recent publication by Haraway (2008), When Species Meet. While obviously this publication is too recent to have had any impact on the current research, it is important to include as she examines the intersections between human and non-human animals and the idea of *companion species* while especially celebrating her own encounters and relationships with her canine companions. In essence, Haraway's (2008) argument may be regarded as adding to the prevailing discourse rather than breaking through to new territory in this area. She does, however, take Derrida to task about his incurious approach to his companion cat who looked back at him, and about whom he wrote extensively but, however, not about what "... the cat might actually be doing, feeling, thinking, or perhaps making available to him in looking back at him that morning" (Haraway, 2008: 20). Haraway, like Franklin (1999), Noske (2004) and others, argues against human exceptionalism and for the idea that human and nonhuman animals as *companion species*, in Haraway's (2008) words. She claims that "... we are in a knot of species coshaping one another in layers of reciprocating complexity ..." (Haraway, 2008: 42). Importantly, Haraway (2008) urges us "... to think harder about encounter value ..." between the species (Haraway, 2008: 62).

The *encounter value* to which Haraway (2008) refers is that between, in her terms, ordinary beings, species of all kinds including human beings, meeting or encountering in places such as the house, laboratory, zoo, park, field, office, prison, ocean, barn or factory. According to Haraway (2008), trans-species encounter value is about

... relationships among a motley array of living beings, in which commerce and consciousness, evolution and bioengineering, and ethics and utilities are all in play (Haraway, 2008: 46).

She especially focuses on those encounters that involve different biological species such as dogs and humans.

In his deliberation on the paradox of animal-human encounters, Cox (2005) observes that, over the past one hundred and fifty years, "... the human/animal divide has been steadily crumbling" (Cox, 2005: 18) and, moreover,

... from Kafka's *Metamorphosis* to *Spiderman 2*, the cultural imagination of modernity has been filled with becoming-animals of all sorts: vampires, werewolves, human flies, elephant men, dog-faced boys, Playboy bunnies, plushies and more ... we need to rethink our traditional relationships – biological, ethical, political, aesthetic, affective – to animals, hence, to reconsider who and what we are (Cox, 2005: 18).

It is noteworthy in the discussion on animal-human relations that the growing number of humanities and social sciences scholars who have continued to explore animal-human questions or the *human-animal binary* (Lundblad, 2004) includes, as Wolfe (2003a) points out, theorists who are not otherwise known for their interest in animals such as, among others,

Julia Kristeva in *Powers of Horror* and *Strangers to Ourselves* (the abject, ethnicity); Jacques Derrida in a host of texts from *Of Spirit to Glass*, *The Post Card*, and essays such as 'Eating Well' and 'Force of Law' ... Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, *Kafka: A Question of a Minor Literature*, and elsewhere (becoming-animal, the critique of Freud and of psychoanalysis); ... Donna Haraway in works ranging from *Primate Visions* through *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* to the recent *ModestWitness@SecondMillenniumFemaleManMeetsOncomouse...* (Wolfe, 2003a: ix).

Furthermore, since Berger (1980) in his influential essay *Why Look at Animals?*, explored the ways in which we view animals, scholarly interest in the representation of animal-human relations (Ham and Senior, 1997; Mitman, 1999;

Lippit, 2000; Fudge, 2002; Baker, 2000, 2001b, 2003; McHugh, 2001; Rothfels, 2002; Cox & Ward, 2003) is also accelerating. Baker (2001b) questions why it is that

... representation has become such an inescapable and compelling topic in these disciplines [social and natural sciences], and what exactly is its significance in relation to the human experience of other animals? (Baker, 2001b: 1).

Baker (2001b) maintains that much current writing acknowledges the extent to which human understanding of animals is shaped by *representations* in such domains as scientific studies, museums, zoo displays as well as in film, art, literature and the mass media rather than by *direct* experience of them. Moreover, art and literature employ the particular characteristics of their medium to address perceptions of the animal. The complexity of the debate on representing animals, Baker (2001b) argues, begins when it becomes clear that the representation of the animal does not and cannot simply represent the *real* animal. Moreover, Rothfels, (2002) argues that

... the way we talk or write about animals, photograph animals, think about animals, imagine animals – represent animals – is in some way deeply connected to our cultural environment, and that this cultural environment is rooted in a history ... (Rothfels, 2002: xi).

In witnessing the proliferation of the growth of interest in animals, Prod'Hom and Moulinier (2006) observe that the attention paid to animals, particularly domestic animals, has reached extraordinary dimensions in the past few years and that there is

... not a newspaper, magazine, television programme, radio broadcast or other type of discourse that does not place the animal at the centre of current events ... From social phenomenon to artistic production, we are forced to realise that a transformation is taking place today and that human beings are weaving new links in their relationship vis-à-vis animals and their world, a kingdom about which we know so little but nevertheless live alongside as familiar (Prod'Hom and Moulinier, 2006: 7).

What, then, are the implications for the visual representation of animal-human relations that might be drawn from these diverse theoretical standpoints? It might be suggested that the complexity of animal-human relations in the twenty-first century is as much reflected in the theoretical debates as it is in contemporary animal imagery. Indeed, it might be implied that contemporary discussion on animal-human relations and contemporary art on animal-human relations are inextricably linked. To what extent is contemporary art addressing postmodern anxiety about animal-human interactions? In contemporary art that addresses animal-human relations, there are references to and intimations of the changes in animal-human relations, which indeed challenge the animal-human borderlines and where animals are seen as they are, beyond their object status.

It might also be suggested that animal-human relations, animal advocacy and contemporary art, but particularly the animal-human gaze and mutual gaze in contemporary art, also remains under-investigated in the Australian context. Several recent essays (Williams, 2004; Vasiliou, 2004) in catalogues accompanying Australian exhibitions indicate interest in the area of the animal in art. However, apart from Baker's (2000) explorations of British and some American contemporary animal imagery in relation to postmodern philosophy and literature, there is little writing which offers a serious and sound framework in which to consider the animal-human relationship in art.

While theories regarding the terms gaze, glance, look, the eye, scopic, vision and visuality are incorporated within visual arts' discourse (Berger, 1972, 1980; Bryson, 1985; Foster, 1988; Callen, 1995; Olin, 2003) and most endeavour to address the perception and importance of seeing and vision, little attention is paid to the particular gaze between animals and humans as evidence of their relationship.

2.2 The Gaze as Evidence of Animal-Human Relationships

Franklin (1999) argues that, in most Western societies, looking at animals is considered desirable and pleasurable and that the demand to see and gaze at animals has grown significantly over the past two hundred years with a dramatic growth over recent years. Franklin (1999) claims that the zoo is an *animal-human site* where the gaze is the principal if not the only objective and, thus, applies the term *zoological gaze* to this looking (Franklin, 1999: 62). For the looking at animals *in the wild*, that is, in less contrived or managed settings such as national parks or similar locations, Franklin (1999) uses the term *natural zoological gaze* to indicate the different context for gazing at animals in the wild (Franklin, 1999: 81). According to Franklin (1999), while the nature of the way humans gaze at animals has been organised socially over time, gazing at animals has been a

...significant entertainment in modernity, although it has changed in form from the early travelling collections of colonial exotica to whale watching off the California coast (Franklin, 1999: 7).

Since the 1970s onwards, the zoological gaze has been refocused and re-examined. The presentation of zoos changed from their main purpose to provide fun and amusement for humans – from an anthropocentric gaze, in Franklin’s (1999) words, which focused on the maximisation of human pleasure, to places which increasingly considered the interests of the animals of prime importance. The zoological gaze was rescripted, according to Franklin (1999), adjusting to two major types of innovations in zoos – the endangered animal zoos or modern ark and the *theme-zoo*, which is a simulation of complete ecosystems from whence the animals came.

In those zoos breeding endangered animals, human visitors are aware that they were being *allowed* in to see a special operation that exists only for the animals. While in theme-zoos, Franklin (1999) argues, the zoological gaze is no longer humans looking in at the animals: “Here the public join the animals in their world and experience that world” (Franklin, 1999: 77). Since the early 1970s, Franklin

(1999) contends, "... it is possible to see a more decentred, empathetic, ecologicistic zoological gaze which reflects postmodern sensibilities" (Franklin, 1999: 83); and he identifies the almost universal interest of people in gazing at animals. But the gaze, as a number of other researchers (Argyle and Cook, 1976; Serpell, 1986; Emery, 2000; Sanders, 2003) argue, is not only in a single direction.

Given that vision, for both humans and animals, is a primary means of communication, the gaze between animals and humans plays a part in their relations with one another. In Sanders's (2003) words, "gaze and mutual direction of attention [are] central elements of the inter-subjectivity that supports interspecies friendship" (Sanders, 2003: 407). Indeed, according to Sanders (2003), "... the research on people's interactions with their companion animals (e.g., Cain 1985; Sanders 1999:143) shows that mutual 'face gazing' is an extremely common form of nonverbal interaction" (Sanders, 2003: 416).

Reference was made in Chapter One to the Argyle and Cook (1976) suggestion that both people and animals look at others with whom they are immediately concerned, whether or not they like them: they look regardless because they need to know about the other's intentions, "... which can be perceived from his facial expression, and the movement of his eyes" (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 170). So important are the gaze and mutual gaze that, in field studies of primates, for example,

... some of the conditions under which the animal stared at will ... [lead to withdrawal] rather than attack. A confident monkey that is likely to win a threat contest, stares with a frown ... (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 2).

Other studies (Itakura, 2004, Emery, 2000) suggest that many animals such as the great apes, primates, birds, dogs and horses engage in complex forms of social cognition such as visual-perspective taking (the ability to empathise or identify with the experience of another person), deception, empathy and theory of mind (the ability to understand that others have beliefs, desires and intentions that are

different from one's own) and have the ability to follow the gaze of another and employ shared or *joint visual attention*. With orang-utans, for instance, eye gazing, according to Bekoff (2004), is an important form of communication. “Juveniles may beg for food from their mother by shifting their gaze back and forth between the mother’s eyes and the food item” (Bekoff, 2004: 461). However, the meanings of mutual gaze differ between species of animals as well as between animals and humans and range from threat to affiliation depending on the situation, the relationship and the accompanying facial and bodily expressions.

From the literature, it is evident that gaze plays a significant part in reciprocity of audible, verbal communication or speech between people, thus making eye contact central to all forms of face to face interaction. The importance of the shared and reciprocal gaze between humans and its integration with verbal communication has been examined in psychological research. Recent studies on the mutual gaze between people as *speakers* and *listeners* in conversation (Bavelas, Coates, Johnson, 2002, Bavelas & Chovil, 2000) indicate the importance of *visible acts* in *face to face dialogue* in creating a high degree of reciprocity in the exchange. Indeed, “Speaker gaze seemed to have the strongest and most consistent relationship to a listener response” (Bavelas, Coates, Johnson, 2002: 569), which becomes a *gaze window* (in the authors’ terms) in the conversation. The significance of reciprocity of gaze is also evidenced in studies of human and non-human animal interaction.

Sanders (2003), for example, cites research and uses his own observations while interacting with his companion dogs to suggest that, together with play and speaking for animals, mutual gaze is a key element of friendly animal-human relations and is a “... process by which caretakers come to define the unique identities of their animals ...” (Sanders, 2003: 405). Sanders (2003) observes that

When [the dogs] look at me they usually pay attention to my eyes. I have noticed on walks how important looking is to them. A common way that one will communicate to the other that she wants to play is by staring. During the play they have a variety of ways of signalling ‘time out.’ In addition to stopping and avidly sniffing some place, a player can

effectively suspend the game by staring fixedly off into the middle distance. The other dog typically responds to this move by looking to see if there is actually anything important to look at. They do the same with me, and gaze off in the direction I am looking. This seems a fairly clear indication of their elemental ability to put themselves into my perspective. In a literal sense they attempt to assume my 'point of view.' If I look at something they conclude that it is probably something important. (Sanders, 2003: 425).

Sustained eye contact indicates the close nature of the animal-human relationship and the importance of eye contact and face to face interaction between animals and humans, especially animals and their companion humans. Moreover,

... people's interactions with their companion animals (e.g., Cain 1985: Sanders 1999: 143) shows that mutual 'face gazing' is an extremely common form of nonverbal interaction. As in close human relationships, sustained eye contact is an element of intimacy that symbolizes and reinforces the human-animal connection, and attention to facial expression provides interactants – both human and animal – with information about the subjective experience of the other (Sanders, 2003: 416).

Furthermore, Sanders (2003) cites research which relates to a veterinary surgery context between veterinary clients and their animals in a waiting room, which notes that a person would frequently hold the animal's head and stare into his or her eyes to give reassurance in much the same way parents make eye contact with their children.

In testing of dogs' recognition of human attention in two situations: (a) facing versus not facing the dog and (b) visible versus non-visible eyes, Gasci *et al* (2004) conclude that dogs rely on the same set of human facial cues for detection of attention, which form the behavioural basis of understanding attention in humans. Gasci *et al* (2004) ask about dogs: Are readers of our face readers of our mind? Their research indicates the affirmative evidencing that dogs are very efficient in discriminating between attentive and inattentive humans and rely on the orientation of the body, the orientation of the head and, importantly, the visibility of the eyes. Gasci *et al* (2004) note, particularly, that dogs are sensitive to the visibility of the eyes because they showed tentative behaviour when

approaching a blind-folded owner and they also preferred to beg from persons with visible eyes.

While physical movements and actions of both animals and humans convey information such as intention, emotion and direction to the other, it is the eyes that are the significant means of communication for both. Eye to eye contact behaviours in animals and humans evidence some similarity. For instance, Serpell (1986) notes that monkeys use eye to eye contact in expressing dominance or aggression with a simple look or an exaggerated scowl being enough to establish their dominant position and claims that such “Comparable patterns of gaze and gaze avoidance are found in humans” (Serpell, 1986: 109). For humans, the stare is generally disconcerting because of its intensity and duration, which Serpell (1986) observes, often denotes hostility. However, also in humans, prolonged looking might be a signal of attraction, admiration and affection, between couples or mothers and their children. Serpell (1986) claims that studies indicate that people look more at those they like and, in the appropriate circumstances, being looked at is perceived as a positive signal of interest and attraction. Thus Serpell (1986) argues that

The frequency and patterning of gaze and mutual gaze also play a crucial role on relationships between people and their pets. Although they do it to different degrees and in different ways, both dogs and cats regularly engage in mutual eye-contact with their owners, and spend considerable amounts of time observing their activities (Serpell, 1986: 110).

Humans also deliberately seek eye to eye contact with their pets by attracting their gaze by, for example, calling their name and then talking to them.

Serpell (1986) remarks on the difference between the gaze of dogs and cats with their owners, claiming that dogs in general look at their owner much more than cats do, and in a different manner. Cats, according to Serpell (1986), sometimes exhibit a particularly frank and detached sort of stare but when a cat is stared at directly, at close range, he or she will generally close or half-close his or her eyes a few times before slowly looking away. This may have a physiological basis

because the cat's eyeball is incapable of the degree of up-and-down movement found in dog or human eyes. Dogs who are stared at directly by their owners will, at frequent intervals, slightly avert his or her gaze, as if close quarters mutual gaze is unnerving. Additionally, the facial musculature of dogs is akin to the way humans use this set of muscles and is interpreted with the gaze as expressions of happiness, sadness, boredom, embarrassment and so on.

Interestingly, even the angle of the eye-contact between pets and owner communicates meaning for both animal and human. The size relationship between humans and most pet dogs and cats, for example, means that animals generally look up to humans. Serpell (1986) suggests that this gives a necessarily subordinate and submissive status to the pet relative to the owner. The level or angle of human and animal gaze and its implications are little examined in the literature but it might seem that the animal-human mutual gaze itself suggests eye to eye contact with one party drawing closer to other – up or down – to look intently into the other's eyes. Emery (2000) also raises the idea of the social gaze in human and non-human primates being more than just the eyes and argues, in relation to primates particularly, that "... the whole head, in particular the orientation in which it is directed (using the nose, for example) is a sufficient indicator of attention direction (and therefore interest)" (Emery, 2000: 582).

Furthermore, Emery (2000) suggests that, in some instances, the eyes are not visible and the only cue available for identifying information about the behaviour is the head direction. Emery's (2000) research identifies the use of eye contact or *eye gaze*, in Emery's words, as a social signal by human and non-human primates, which "... may have become necessary due to morphological, environmental and habitat changes throughout primate evolution" (Emery, 2000: 599) and the shift to visual processing for animals,

... and the gaze especially, as an important means for signalling, may be related to the development of mental attribution (theory of mind) in humans (and possibly the great apes) (Emery, 2000: 599).

According to Smythe (1975), in the majority of animals other than primates and humans, eye movements are secondary to head movements. Smythe (1975) suggests that, for animals with necks of reasonable length, the head can be swung into the required position almost instantaneously. However, animals tend to carry their eyes in the horizontal position whatever the position of the head. Smythe (1975) claims that dogs seldom lift their eyes even when their head is held firmly and, as in mammals with some eye movement, the two eyes work in conjunction. Stereoscopic vision relates to the ability to visualise an object as solid. In bats, rats, mice and rabbits, and in some insectivorous animals, the two eyes are often capable of working singly. Binocular vision, with convergence and accommodation (the power of focusing) is present in primates including humans.

However, Sanders (2003) observes the ability of his pet dogs to follow the direction of the gaze of both himself and his other companion dogs. According to Kaminski, Riedel, Call & Tomasello (2005), perhaps the most basic skill of social cognition is gaze following and “Gaze following is a ... skill with many potential benefits for animals that live in social groups” (Kaminski *et al*, 2005: 11). While at least five primate species, Kaminski *et al* (2005) claim, are known to follow the gaze of others belonging to their own species, few studies on gaze following in other mammals have been undertaken. The studies of Kaminski *et al* (2005) on domestic goats found that these animals used gaze following to find food at a level comparable to that of primates. Kaminski *et al* (2005) hypothesise that, from an evolutionary point of view, animals’ gaze following serves a range of functions, thus

... food-caching birds and other animals must be able to detect eyes directed at them at certain points in the caching process if they are to forage and cache effectively (Emery & Clayton, 2001), and knowing when predators are watching is important for survival (Kaminski *et al*, 2005: 17).

In concurrence with Sanders’s (2003) observations, Kaminski *et al* (2005) note that the experts at gaze following and other human communicative cues are domestic dogs. Kaminski *et al*, (2005) conclude that reacting to human cues might

be an effect of domestication for both goats and dogs and, indeed, other animals such as horses and that "... domestication by humans in some way contributes to animals' ability to read human communicative cues" (Kaminski *et al*, 2005: 17).

It is not surprising, then, that the literature evidences the sensitivity of animals to the gaze of humans. For example, studies on the dog by Call, Bräuer, Kaminski & Tomasello (2003) contribute to

... a growing body of research that a variety of animal species beyond nonhuman primates possess flexible social-cognitive skills, perhaps especially those concerning the understanding of the visual behaviour of others. Recent studies have found that several different bird species are sensitive to the visual orientation of conspecifics (Heinrich & Pepper, 1998) (Call *et al*, 2003: 263).

Emery (2000) and many other researchers (e.g., Rosenthal & Ryan, 2000; Agnetta, Hare & Tomasello, 2000; Hare, Call, Agnetta & Tomasello, 2000; Karin-D'Arcy & Povinelli, 2002; Sanders, 2003; Call, Bräuer; and Kaminski, Riedel, Call & Tomasello, 2004) suggest that gaze is a fundamental component of social interaction in animals. This research builds upon the early studies of Argyle and Cook (1976), which recognised the central role played by the gaze and mutual gaze in social behaviour as social signals, and contends that any theory or account of social behaviour that neglects to mention gaze is completely inadequate.

2.3 Issues of Anthropomorphism and Anthropocentrism

There is considerable unease, even contentiousness, in the discussions about anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism within the scientific, philosophical, anthropological, ethologist and animal behaviourist disciplines, (Midgely, 1983; Serpell, 1986; Griffin, 1992; Ingold, 1994; Serpell, 2002; Tyler, 2003). Tyler (2003) observes that, across the spectrum of viewpoints on anthropomorphism, are "... those who believe it to be unscientific and demeaning, and those who believe it to be an inevitable and useful pragmatic strategy" (Tyler, 2003: 1).

Arluke and Sanders (1996), in their effort to summarise the polarised positions on the deliberations about anthropomorphising animals, claim that

Behaviourists and many ethologists roundly condemn anthropomorphic descriptions while everyday pet owners and most members of the animal rights community routinely make use of anthropomorphism as a dominant vehicle for making sense of animal behaviour (Arluke and Sanders, 1996: 80).

Furthermore, Arluke and Sanders (1996) suggest that the behaviourist perspective allows humans the psychological distance necessary to exploit animals untroubled by guilt. Arluke and Sanders (1996) argue that there is a middle ground claimed by the ethologist Griffin (1992), Serpell (1986) and others, which emphasises the evolutionary roots of anthropomorphism. Human exchanges with animals, Arluke and Sanders (1996) propose, "... involve knowing, relating to, shaping interactions with, and responding to the interactional moves of the animal–other" (Arluke and Sanders, 1996: 81).

Midgely (1983) opposes the view that anthropomorphising is a fallacious and misleading way of reasoning, which projects and applies human experience to animals. Midgely (1983) maintains that "... all our reasoning extrapolates from limited experience" (Midgely, 1983: 142). Furthermore, Midgely (1983) suggests that

The degree of mutual understanding which we have, both with our own species and with others, is only made possible by attributing moods, motives and so forth to them on the rough model of our own, and constantly correctly the resulting misunderstandings (Midgely, 1983: 142).

In his consideration of the most appropriate strategies for the animal rights movement to represent animals visually in advocating their cause, Baker (2001a) might well support Midgely's (1983) premise. He stresses that he favours "... the provisional appropriation of cute anthropomorphic imagery in an attempt to destabilize its traditional meaning" (Baker, 2001a: 232). Baker (2001a) claims that this avoids objectifying the animal and centring the human. He goes even

further, favouring the adoption of therianthropic – partly animal, partly human – attributes in the representational strategies “... in order to exploit their troubling connotations” (Baker, 2001a: 232). However, Baker (2001a) also admits that “Anthropomorphism is always an uncertain undertaking” (Baker, 2001a: 230). In reference particularly to Walt Disney’s earlier patronising anthropomorphism of wild animals on film through editing, musical effects and commentary, Baker (2001a) notes that, “Much of the difficulty lies with assigning any clear status to what it is that is being seen anthropomorphically (Baker, 2001a: 230).

The uncertain undertaking of anthropomorphism to which Baker (2002) alerts us is reflected in Fudge’s (2002) analysis of the photograph of Ham, the four-year-old male chimpanzee who was sent into space by NASA and returned in January 1961. Fudge (2002) questions and rejects the general anthropomorphic interpretation of Ham’s smiling face as one of happiness (in receiving his reward of an apple) and suggests that “... the bravery of the chimpanzee is translated into something that reflects, perhaps, the terror he felt ...” (Fudge, 2002: 27) during the periods of weightlessness, long periods of waiting as well as of lack of oxygen and the landing into the ocean and the one hundred minutes confined in the capsule before he was finally rescued. Ham’s poignant photograph and story exemplifies Fudge’s (2002) belief that there are some problems with the way we interpret animals in three main areas of our lives – our pets, our food and our clothing. Fudge (2002) also notes that anthropomorphism, notably in children’s literature, might actually serve an ethical and positive function because “...without anthropomorphism we are unable to comprehend and represent the presence of an animal...” (Fudge, 2002: 76).

Interestingly, Wilson (1984) offers a much broader perspective on our relations with other species, indeed the whole environment, coining the term *biophilia*, which he defines as “... the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes” (Wilson, 1984:1). Wilson (1984) argues that humans are biological species finding meaning in other life forms, noting that, “We are literally kin to other organisms” (Wilson, 1984: 130) as well as being “...human in good part

because of the particular way we affiliate with other organisms” (Wilson, 1984: 139).

In relation to pets specifically, Serpell (2002) maintains that anthropomorphism, defined as

... the ‘attribution of human mental states (thoughts, feelings, motivations and beliefs) to nonhuman animals’, is an almost universal trait among companion animal caretakers ... (Serpell, 2002: 1).

However, Serpell (2002) argues that there is a cost that animals, especially pets, incur in the human-animal relationship. Anthropomorphic selection, Serpell (2002) contends, “... probably is responsible for some of the more severe welfare problems currently found in companion animals” (Serpell, 2002: 1), which sees animals selected and moulded in appearance, anatomy and behaviour to adapt them to “... their unusual ecological niche as social support providers” (Serpell, 2002: 1). There are ethical limits beyond which we should not go. These limits, Serpell (2002) suggests, should disallow the deliberate breeding of companion animals

... who suffer from painful, distressing, or disabling physical or emotional handicaps or from surgically mutilating them in the interest of fashion or convenience (Serpell, 2002: 7).

Questioning the very meaning of anthropomorphism itself, Tyler (2003) proposes “Anthropomorphism as a notion [which] is anthropocentric in a very particular sense” (Tyler, 2003: 5) because anthropomorphism, both as a term and concept, starts with the human. Moreover, Tyler (2003) argues for suspending assumptions, created by anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism, that restrict “... what we can think both about the human being and the being of other animals” (Tyler, 2003: 6).

An animal that is typically anthropomorphised in children’s literature is the rabbit and, thus, when it finds itself not only in the laboratory but in our homes as a pet

or as food, dilemmas might come to the fore. People's anthropomorphic tendencies towards the rabbit were the target of a website scam in 2005 and, indeed, as Frith (2005) observed, exposed social hypocrisy. Through an office email chain, a website detailed a horrible fate for a bunny called Toby unless a total of \$US50, 000 (A\$64,150) was sent to his anonymous owners who were holding him to ransom. Toby's picture on the website showed us, the viewers, his appealing innocence and heart-melting cuteness. The website even had recipes for Toby after he had been killed and cut up into bite-size pieces. The website received protests and hate-mail but, interestingly, also the surprising sum of \$US28, 000 before the police were called in to investigate. Frith (2005) observed that

What the misguided emotion around it all shows is how hypocritical we are about our modern food chain. The hysteria about this one kilogram of personalised adorability is out of whack with accepted reality. We are apparently happy to eat animals, subjecting them to some pretty heinous practices on the way, but please, not sweet names or faces (Frith, 2005).

The website hoax also revealed the extent to which we anthropomorphise animals and are thus moved enough to care about them. Moreover, it reveals our double standards, inconsistencies and confused relations when it comes to animals.

Ingold (1994) reminds us that if we accept that animals may be "... conscious, intentional agents ..." (Ingold, 1994: 9), then we might have also to ascribe to them personal and natural powers. That is, "... we are forced to recognize that they embody attributes of personhood which in the West are popularly identified with the condition of 'humanity'" (Ingold, 1994: 9). However, Ingold (1994) also suggests that anthropomorphism need not be an inevitable consequence of treating animals as persons: "To understand elephants (say), we do not have to pretend that they are 'just like humans'" (Ingold, 1994: 10). But, Ingold (1994) argues, we may have to apply some interpretive methods, which are common to the humanities. In addition, Ingold (1994) points out that, in order to overcome anthropocentrism, "... animals should not be regarded as failed – or at best partially successful – attempts at humanity" (Ingold, 1994: 10), and our respect

for other animals ought not to be conditional upon their ability to perform human tasks such as reading and writing. While the human species is unique, uniqueness is a feature common to all species. Ingold (1994) observes that "... it is arguably far more anthropocentric to base estimations of other species on the measure to which they can perform as we do" (Ingold, 1994: 10).

Fudge (2002) discusses anthropomorphism in relation to children's literature, films and science, and the influence of Christian, Baconian and Cartesian ideas in which animals are with us on earth for the advancement of human knowledge and human lives. However, in relation particularly to animal experimentation, she asks

What might it mean that we know that animals experience the world in ways that are not unlike ours and yet continue to experiment upon them? What does that tell us about ourselves? Animal experimentation seems to provoke this question, but refuses to answer it. It is as if a form of anthropomorphism not unlike that found in children's books, finds its way into the laboratory (Fudge, 2002: 104).

Indeed she concludes that "Animals are used because they are like us, but this is a fact that can be read against itself" (Fudge, 2002: 105).

2.4 Contemporary Animal Issues and Art Practice

In this context, it is noteworthy that, in the second half of 2004, several contemporary art exhibitions were presented that centred explicitly on the animal. Curators of the exhibition, *Bêtes de Style/ Animals with Style*, in Lausanne October 2006 to February 2007, observe that, over the last few years "... the attention paid to animals, particularly domestic animals, in western culture has reached extraordinary dimensions" (Prod'Hom & Moulinier, 2006: 7). Moreover, they argue that the animal is presented in

... so many artistic idioms, so many signals informing us about the preoccupations shared by creators and artists in questioning the human/animal relationship (Prod'Hom & Moulinier, 2006: 7).

In the United Kingdom, the exhibition titled, somewhat directly, *Animals*, presented a group of works that question the common ways we understand animals and also "...question human and animal identities ..." and "... do not anthropomorphise, trivialise or reify animals" (Schneider, 2004: 5). Specifically, these works were anti-anthropocentric and re-evaluated non-human modes of perception. In the United States, in 2004, the exhibition, *Animals & Us: The Animal in Contemporary Art*, showcased the work of such well-known artists as Beuys, Dion, Coe and Wegman among others around the theme of animals. The accompanying text notes that

Artists are also increasingly calling into question the brutal aggressiveness with which scientists and other humans treat animals, as well as the notion that people are inherently separate from and superior to other species (Art in Context, 2005: 1).

Also argued is that, while the work in this exhibition is varied in its approach, it challenges hierarchies that have dominated our relationship to animals for millennia and raises issues that are important to both the art community and the broader society. Wegman's photographs of his pet dogs, for example, reflect "...the collaborative symbiosis that is the hallmark of the 'new pet': the animal as equal participant in a cooperative dynamic" (Art in Context, 2005: 1).

During October 2004, at about the same time as the overseas exhibitions, two Australian exhibitions focused on animals, one titled *Pelt* and the other *Instinct*. *Pelt* prompted one reviewer to comment that

... there has been a recent shift in emphasis towards a reassessment of the links between the human body and those of animals who are our closest physical and cultural point of connection with the nonhuman world (Williams, 2005: 56).

Williams (2005) also observed that, internationally, there has been "... a renewal of interest in how the idea of the animal in art can be reconfigured" (Williams, 2005: 30). More recently, in 2006, another exhibition, *The Idea of the Animal*,

presented as a major component of the Melbourne International Arts Festival and featured twenty-nine artists. According to the director of RMIT Gallery in which the exhibition was held, it was at that time arguably

... the first major exhibition of its kind in Australia that specifically explores the complexities of human-animal relations in the light of issues raised in the fields of anthropology, social history, urban geography, history and philosophy of science, social theory and cultural theory (Davies, 2006: 3).

Further afield, in the United States, in May 2005 to February 2006, an exhibition, titled *Becoming Animal*, at Mass MoCA explores "... the closing gap between human and animal existence..." (Mass MoCA, 2005: 1). It was pointed out that the twelve artists (including Australian Piccinini) exhibiting in *Becoming Animal* are

... fascinated by this thin membrane separating human and animal life, by the character of animals, by our love for animals, but also by the human capacity to treat animals with disdain and wilful negligence (Mass MoCA, 2005: 1).

One of the artists, Nicholas Lampert, for example, began his Machine Animal collages in 1995 "... as a reaction to the onslaught of the human/machine world onto nature" (Mass MoCA, 2005: 2), while another artist, Sam Easterson, attaches micro video cameras to the top of various animals' heads to present a journey from the vantage point of that animal whether it be chicken, wolf or aardvark. These exhibitions indicate the increasing and shifting interests, recognition and questions about our relationship with and attitude towards animals in what Wolfe (2003a) identifies as "... what is perhaps the central problematic for contemporary culture and theory ... the question of the animal" (Wolfe, 2003a: ix).

Contemporary artists, both internationally and in Australia, have created and are creating innovative, and sometimes unsettling, visual language giving form to our perplexing relations with animals within the context of the current social, philosophical, scientific and theoretical writing and research about animals. The

ideas of Fudge (2002) and other theoreticians such as Lyotard (1984), Deleuze and Guattari (1988), Haraway (1991; 2008) and Derrida (1999), for example, have been drawn upon and shaped by the art theoretical writings of the British art historian and cultural theorist, Baker (2000; 2001a; 2001b; 2003; 2004) in his analysis of contemporary animal art. Such explorations have not only produced a critical and significant basis from which to consider contemporary animal art but have also created a theoretical framework for further deliberation and questions about animals in art.

Williams (2005) identified some of these questions such as those relating to Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) concept of *becoming-animal*, argued by Baker (2000) for its relevance to contemporary animal art: Williams (2005) asks, "Does the artist try to 'become' animal in order to embrace its difference" (Williams, 2005: 31)? However, more recently, Baker (2003) suggests that contemporary art's exploration of the animal is more appropriately described as *imitation* given that most contemporary art appears to find knowledge of what an animal *is* less interesting. Indeed, Baker (2003) argues that much contemporary animal art makes no claims "... to the 'nature' of the imitated animal" (Baker, 2003: 158). Furthermore, these works suggest

... playful exchanges between the human and animal, or between one animal and another, which may allude to borders or distinctions but which are not impeded by them (Baker, 2003: 158).

Baker (2003) cites a number of artists who *imitate* animals in their works such as William Wegman (1943-) who takes photographs of his pet dog, Man Ray, dressed up or imitating various other kinds of animals such as an elephant, zebra, bat and dinosaur; Edwina Ashton's (1971-) videoed animal performance, *Sheep* (1997); and Paula Rego's (1935-) *Dog Woman* pastel drawing series of 1994 showing the artist herself squatting and snarling like a dog.

If Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) concept of *becoming-animal* is not thus fully embraced, Williams (2005) raises the question as to whether the artist should "...

take a more reflective approach by calling on the substantial weight of the cultural traditions that have accrued to the social construction of animals” (Williams, 2005: 31). Inquiry relating to contemporary art and animals, indeed, might embrace Williams’s (2005) important questions but other relevant and critical questions might also be posed such as: To what extent has contemporary art reflected upon the increasingly complex animal/human interface? Why is the animal such a potent subject in art? In what ways does contemporary art address issues about social and individual ethics, responsibility and relations with animals? Is the human/animal relationship boundary always a static one?

In the light of Ingold’s (1994) ideas about the “... transformations in the relations between humans and animals ...” (Ingold, 1994: xxii) and his premise that “No *absolute* boundary ... separates the domain of human involvement with nonhuman animals from the domain of their involvement with one another” (Ingold, 1994: xxii), it is reasonable to ask the question: In what ways does contemporary art respond to or challenge the culturally constructed boundaries between human and animals? To what extent does contemporary art probe the cultural conditions and constructions of animals? To what extent is it possible for contemporary animal art to arrive at a balance between ethics and the aesthetics? What ethical and moral considerations influence the use of live or dead animals in art? Is it possible to proselytise for animals in an aesthetic and meaningful way? To what extent does/ought style transcend context and vice versa? Is style or beauty or aesthetics more important than the underlying concept for the animal artwork? Some contemporary animal art such as the work of Marco Evaristi (1963-) urges us, pressingly, to consider these questions.

2.5 Animals and Advocacy: Ethics and Aesthetics

At times contemporary art practice focusing on animal issues might appear as contentious as the area of animal advocacy itself. A number of artists are now using the actual animal – both alive and dead – in their work in changed and controversial ways. The artistic merit of an artwork might be subsumed under

other more divisive and contentious issues. One recent example of this controversy is the widely publicised art work by the Chilean born, Denmark-based artist Evaristti who featured, in an exhibition at the Trapholt Art Museum in Kolding Denmark, ten kitchen blenders filled with water in each of which was placed a single live goldfish. Visitors to his exhibition were invited to switch on the blender and liquefy the fish, which at least one visitor did, thus killing the fish. The artist's stated intention was that he wanted to force people to do battle with their conscience. The museum director was prosecuted for cruelty to animals but was later acquitted. He told the court that artistic freedom was at stake and that it is "... a question of principle. An artist has the right to create works which defy our concept of what is right and what is wrong" (BBC: 2003). While the museum director defended his case on the basis of artistic freedom, the success of his case did not rest on artistic freedom but on the basis that, since the fish were killed instantly, killing them in a blender was not deemed to be cruelty.

It is worth noting that had the case been heard in Australia, the outcome might have been different. An Arts Law legal officer, Etherington (2003), examined how the artist and the work would fare under Australian law as it relates to cruelty to animals. He noted that legislation around Australia prohibits cruelty to animals and, while the legislation varies in each state, a typical definition of an act of cruelty is to ill-treat or unreasonably, unnecessarily or unjustifiably beat, kick, wound, mutilate, abuse, torture or terrify an animal. However, Etherington (2003) believed that, finally, it would come down to what the judge on the day considers unreasonable or unjustifiable and also that

... if an artist cannot show that they have a sound explanation for why they are killing or harming an animal – and this would have to include them showing why alternative means were not viable – they are exposing themselves to criminal conviction (Etherington, 2003: 7).

The use of live animals in art also raises issues of cruelty and coercion: the animals are clearly not in a gallery space or artwork for their benefit, well-being or of their choice. However, several artists use live animals in their work. A

notable example is Jannis Kounellis (1936-) who exhibited *Untitled (12 horses)*, which featured twelve horses tethered to the walls of the Galleria L'Attico, Rome in 1969, for several days. He chose live horses for their symbology and historical links to mythic, heroic paintings and equestrian statues. Other prominent artworks using live animals include Joseph Beuys (1921– 1986) live coyote in *Coyote: I like America, and America likes me*, 1974, Mark Dion's (1961-) more recent use of eighteen live African finches in *Library for the birds of Antwerp*, 1993 and the many wild animal and art interactions of Olly (1971-) and Suzi (1970-).

In contrast to the use of the animal in the work of Kounellis, live animal use in the artwork of Beuys, Dion and Olly and Suzi takes the side of the animal with a more environmental or nature-centred focus, which considers the relationship of animals and humans in the contemporary world. These artists share the common ground of *truth* and *authorship* as Baker (2000: 12) describes it. Dion and Olly and Suzi have expressed their desire to communicate *truth* in their work. Additionally, Dion, Beuys and Olly and Suzi step out of the art studio into the wider world environment and interact with nature and people who are not necessarily involved in art. British artists, Olly and Suzi, for instance, who join together as one artist in a hand-over-hand collaborative art-making process, respond directly to animals in their wild and natural state and in their own habitats such as deserts, jungles and ocean wildernesses.

While the use of live animals by Beuys, Dion and Olly and Suzi brings into focus the so-called *real* nature of animals rather than an anthropocentric view of animals, the issue of animal cruelty and coercion nevertheless remains. The question of the ethics or moral status of the artwork involving both live and dead animals is raised as a major and critical issue in contemporary animal art by Baker (2004) who admits that

... it is hard to disentangle ethical and aesthetic questions in these circumstances: the desire of some artists to address a subject such as the killing of animals may well be driven by ethical concerns, but the manner in which they try to do so will almost inevitably bring aesthetic considerations into play (Baker: 2004).

The debate about morality and ethics within the aesthetic realm appears to sit more comfortably within philosophy than in art theory. Thus, when the question of ethics aligns with aesthetic considerations in contemporary animal art, it represents an alliance that shifts the discourse into discussions about artistic value, taste, qualities of cohesiveness and attractiveness or general principles of beauty, and their position in contemporary art generally and animal art specifically.

In his book, *The Postmodern Animal*, Baker (2000) makes a "... cautious exploration of the aesthetics of the postmodern animal, and of its effect on the human" (Baker, 2000: 76). He uses, as the basis for his explorations, the philosophical ideas of French poststructuralist theorists such as Lyotard (1984) and Derrida (1999). Baker (2000) claims that, while the postmodern animal is made and encountered in many forms and may or may not incorporate live animals

... in considering the animal's relation to creativity, and thus (however warily) moving towards the questions of a postmodern animal 'aesthetic', the nature of the human's encounter with the animal is a matter of some importance (Baker, 2000: 50).

Baker (2000) views this encounter as a kind of confrontation, particularly when the animal and human share the same space, that is, when the animal artwork is a three-dimensional work as sculpture, installation or performance. Baker (2000) does qualify this resolute statement, however, by noting that "Taken too literally, it is of course a preposterous proposal" (Baker, 2000: 51).

The appearance or the *look* of the contemporary animal art or "... the possibility of an *aesthetic* appropriate to the postmodern animal ..." (Baker, 2000: 54) is also considered by Baker (2000). The postmodern animal seems "... more likely to be that of a fractured, awkward 'wrong' or wronged thing, which is hard not to read as a means of addressing what it is to be human now" (Baker, 2000: 54). The term *botched taxidermy* is used by Baker (2000) to suggest recent animal art practices "... where things again appear to have *gone wrong* with the animal, as it were, but

where it still *holds together*” (Baker, 2000: 56). *Mixed materials, hybrid forms, messy confrontations, taxidermic form reworked* and *tattiness* are Baker’s (2000) broad categories or themes of animal artworks. In all of these, Baker (2000) contends, materials are most important because “... they render the animal *abrasively visible*, and they do so regardless of how the artist thinks about animals” (Baker, 2000: 62). Moreover, Baker (2000) suggests, these so-called *botched* animals also represent improvised or *inexpert* knowledge of the animal, alongside the many competing disciplines of expert knowledge (of the animal and of writing) such as zoological, anthropological, historical and taxidermic among others.

Baker’s (2000) views of contemporary animal art and the questions of aesthetics, particularly, might be viewed in the wider deliberation and debate of contemporary art and philosophy by a number of art writers. Art theorists (Weintraub *et al*, 1996) have argued that the last thirty years or so have been possibly “... the most abnormal, surprising, chaotic, and troubling era in the entire history of art” (Weintraub *et al*, 1996: 254). *Pluralism* is a term applied to the variety of approaches and styles in contemporary art in order to give the sense of coherence to the “... loss of the illusion of historical linearity to a vague combination of cyclicity and chaos” (Weintraub *et al*, 1996: 256). Yet among the major changes in the postmodern period of art is the idea of beauty and aesthetics as unchanging and central to art. Indeed, “The artist came to be the destroyer of the idea of beauty” (Weintraub *et al*, 1996: 257).

More recently, prominent art theorists, Kuspit (2004) and Danto (2003), have revisited the rejection of beauty and aesthetics in contemporary art to argue for its relevance to art and, indeed, to human life. Kuspit (2004) traces the demise of aesthetic experience in art to Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) and Barnett Newman (1905-1970). Kuspit (2004) argues that Duchamp and Newman maligned the aesthetic by separating it from the work of art and the art making process and for them, (Kuspit, 2004) claims, the work of art becomes anti-aesthetic or “... post-aesthetic, that is, altogether stripped and emptied of aesthetic value” (Kuspit,

2004: 28). In his publication, *The Abuse of Beauty: Aesthetics and the Concept of Art*, Danto (2003) maintains that beauty is one of a range of aesthetic qualities but is the only one that is also a value, like truth and goodness, which is not only among the values we live by but "... one of the values that defines what a fully human life means" (Danto, 2003: 15). However, Danto (2003), less emphatic about the demise of beauty than Kuspit (2004), maintains that *avant-garde* artists such as Duchamp have taken "... an immense philosophical step forward" (Danto, 2003: xv). Indeed, the *Intractable Avant-garde* (of which Duchamp was one), as he terms it,

... helped show that beauty was no part of the concept of art, that beauty could be present or not, and something still be art. The concept of art may require the presence of one or another from a range of features, which includes beauty, but includes a great many others as well, such as sublimity ... (Danto, 2003: xv).

Danto (2003) suggests, then, that *avant-garde* art of the 1960s, which turned away from aesthetics, helped separate aesthetics from the philosophy of art which, he claims, "... has always been such a muddle" (Danto, 2003: xix).

In contemporary animal art, Baker (2000) acknowledges, the question of beauty is genuinely difficult. For a number of artists, Baker (2002) notes, "... their perception of animals as beautiful is central to their aesthetic concerns" (Baker, 2002: 93). Baker (2002) observes, however, that these artists qualify their ideas of beauty. The artist, Frank Noelker (1958-), for example, aims for the strongest combination of beauty and sadness he can achieve. Regarding his photographs of animals in zoos and captivity, Noelker states that he tries

... to photograph the animals with great dignity and respect, but there's also a kind of loneliness and isolation that I feel when I see the animals in captivity and I want that to come across. I try to use beauty and all of my training as an artist to get into people's hearts and minds (Satya, 2004:1).

Thus, the work of Noelker and other contemporary animal artists such as Sue Coe (1951-), Olly and Suzi, Dion, Britta Jaschinski (1965-) and New Zealand artist,

Angela Singer (1966-) is driven by their concern for the conservation of animals or addresses animal mistreatment or confinement while the work of others such as Jeff Koons (1955-) and Damien Hirst (1965-) make "... frequent use of animal imagery, or of animals themselves, without necessarily having anything particular to say about them" (Baker, 2001a: xxvii). Baker (2001a) refers particularly to two artworks in Hirst's show in Gagosian Gallery, New York, at the end of 2000, which featured fish tanks in which live freshwater fish swam around furniture from a gynaecologist's office. Baker (2001a) observed that the artist claimed that he really did not quite know what these works were about!

There is some indication that there is an increasing number of exhibitions of animal art, which take the side of the animals or even have an animal rights focus. In 2003 in New Zealand, for example, *Animality* brought together a group of international artists who have created works that

... radicalise the use of animals and animal imagery to address a range of questions about morality, responsibility and our relationship with the natural world (artscalendar, 2003: 1).

Animality included such artists as Singer and Daniel Unverricht (1965-) from New Zealand, Baseman and David Wilkinson (1956-) from the United Kingdom, Kate Rohde (1971-) from Australia, Kathryn Spence (1963-) and Catherine Chalmers (1957-) from the United States, and Karl Grimes (1955-) from Ireland.

These and other animal-centred exhibitions such as those referred to in 2.4, reflect the developments of the 1990s when artists began to take the theme of animals more seriously and, as Baker (2001a) notes, "... in doing so found ways of avoiding the familiar accusations of sentimentality" (Baker 2001a: xxvi). Baker (2001a) argues that "The sheer amount of contemporary art featuring animals in the 1990s certainly was a new phenomenon" (Baker, 2001a: xxvii). This growth in the 1990s coincided with the growth of animal liberation and animal rights or, as it is frequently termed, animal advocacy. Reflecting on this growth, Baker (2001a) offers some representational strategies or strategies of image-making in

his book, *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, which “... might have a chance to modify human perceptions of the nonhuman animal and to increase awareness of living animals’ circumstances” (Baker, 2001a: xvii).

Baker (2001a) argues that times have become more complex as non-human animals are seen to be more deserving of imaginative human thought but, in response to this, one group’s resolve to act upon some ethical boundaries or principles might be seen just as understandable as another group’s “... conviction that to adopt a fixed position is to obstruct imaginative thought” (Baker, 2001a: xxxii). Baker (2001a) considers apt the opinion that calls for a healthy airing of “... the uneasiness with which modernist and postmodernist advocate-scholars view the theoretical directions of each other” (Baker, 2001a: xxxii). However, significantly applicable to contemporary art is his belief that

... uneasiness seems both productive and creative, evincing an entirely proper engagement with the difficult task of continuing to reflect on animals and figuring out how best to represent them (Baker, 2001a: xxxiii).

In the history of art animals are portrayed in their multifarious roles and interchanges with humans and, as might be expected, visual manifestations and, indeed, evidence of animal-human social interactions, including the gaze and mutual gaze are found.

CHAPTER THREE – THE VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF ANIMAL-HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

3.1 Perspectives on the Animal in Visual Art

The lives of animals and humans are woven together in the images and artefacts from the earliest representations in Egyptian times to current postmodern and contemporary art period. Human attitudes and beliefs over time are evident in these works. Indeed Schneider (2004) observes that animals have always served humans as a vehicle or forum for questions about themselves in the world and thus have always had a place in art largely because

... there is a deep-rooted correspondence between the way we think about animals and how we have thought about ourselves and our culture in different eras and parts of the world (Schneider, 2004: 3).

Schneider's (2004) comments echo the ideas of the anthropologist Lévi-Strauss (1963) whose concept of totemism considered the relations between animals and people and the use of animals as metaphors for human society: "The animal world ... suggest[s] a mode of thought" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963: 13). Tapper (1994) contends that Lévi-Strauss's (1963) fundamental argument is that "... animals figure so commonly in totemic discourse, not ... because they are good to eat, but because they are good to think with (Tapper, 1994: 50).

Tapper (1994) extends Lévi-Strauss's (1963) argument by suggesting that "Animals are good to teach and learn with, particularly in those central areas of life clouded by taboos and inhibitions" (Tapper, 1994: 51). Franklin (1999) acknowledges that most sociologists and historians of animal-human relationships have been influenced by earlier anthropologists' work, which "... found that human conceptualization, classification and theorization of animals signify or

encode social thought” (Franklin, 1999: 9). According to Franklin (1999), the animal world provides a parallel metaphorical society in which human social structures and morality is extended. Furthermore, “... the socially constituted animal world is then used to think through or resolve social tensions, conflicts and contradictions” (Franklin, 1999: 9). Indeed, Franklin (1999) argues, “Animals are therefore good to think about what it is to be properly human” (Franklin, 1999: 9).

The animal or non-human metaphor, Tapper (1994) argues, allows the teacher and learner to avoid articulating the embarrassing or difficult truths about humans such as procreation, birth, death and the like. In the not so distant past, for example, English children were introduced to the realities of sex through stories of birds, bees, storks and so on. These animals were used to convey human values, morality and rules. Furthermore, Tapper (1994) suggests that animals are used as metaphors for moralising and socialising purposes in two contrasting ways, as models of order and morality and as “... the Other, the Beast, the Brute, the model of disorder or the way things should not be done” (Tapper, 1994: 51). Hence the animal-human relationship is bound up with metaphoric and symbolic meanings created by humans to reflect the human condition in all its contradictory and complex manifestations.

The Christian art that dominated the centuries from around the early Christian period of the fourth century to the Renaissance of the 1600s, for example, is particularly potent in terms of animal symbology and metaphoric reference. Speake (1994), in fact, argues that this created the basis for a common language. Among the numerous animals prominent as symbols in Christian art is the rat which, as Speake (1994) notes, is a general symbol of evil and destruction. She notes also the deer which, when drinking at a stream, fountain or spring, represents the soul’s intense thirst for the life-giving waters of the Christian faith; and the dove, which generally represents the Holy Spirit. Other Christian animal symbols include the eagle, with its wings outstretched with a snake in its talons as a symbol of good over evil; goats as symbols of souls of the wicked contrasting with sheep which are very frequent symbols of followers of Christ; and goldfinch,

which were associated with the Virgin and Child (the bird's diet of thistles and other spiny weeds was associated with the crown of thorns).

Often animals were symbolic of particular saints or holy people. The mouse, for example, was the emblem of St Gertrude and the ox, which was the traditional symbol of St Luke and was also associated with St Thomas Aquinas. Christian symbols in various forms also are found in art of later periods in secular or non-religious paintings. An example is William Hogarth's (1697-1764) painting of *The Graham Children* (1742) (Plate 3.1.1) which, on first viewing, appears to be a group portrait of young children with their pets and toys.



Plate 3.1.1 William Hogarth, *The Graham Children*, 1742, oil on canvas
160.5 x 181 cm
Presented by Lord Duveen through the National Art Collections Fund, 1934
© The National Gallery, London

In fact, however, the animals in the painting, the cat and bird, are symbolic representations that were favoured in seventeenth and eighteenth century painting. According to Francocci (1997) these symbols reflect childhood as a phase of life to be protected from the harsh outside world. In the top right-hand corner of the

painting, a cat stalks a goldfinch in a suspended gilded cage. The bird itself is a symbol dating back to pre-Christian times where the soul of a man flew away when he died. This myth continued into Christianity and was most often depicted as a goldfinch, a favourite pet with children. In reference to the cat in the top right-hand corner of *The Graham Children*, Francocci (1997) notes that

On closer examination of this area the cat's claws can be seen as out and gripping the furniture. His eyes are focused solely on the fluttering goldfinch. The gilded cage could be seen as the rich protector of the innocent, then released into a dangerous world, an allegory of the child becoming an adult and having to deal with an altogether more dangerous reality. The cord that cuts the corner of the painting and so obviously supporting the suspended cage could be symbolic of the fragility of life and especially of child mortality (Francocci, 1997: 1).

The Hogarth painting exemplifies the extent to which animals were utilised as symbols of the prevailing societal, cultural and religious beliefs and values in artworks not only of this period but also prior and subsequent periods. Vasiliou (2004) comments that

Throughout art history, animals have been used to symbolically represent human character traits, vices and virtues: as well as figuring in fantasy, myth and the supernatural, where animals act as mediators or harbingers of the future or the unseen (Vasiliou, 2004: 1).

The extent to which humans have depicted animals, since humans first represented the animal, in visible and visual form, as symbols and metaphors for human life is explored by Clark (1977). His investigation of the ways in which humans have represented animals also evidences both the vastness of the subject as well as the incongruity and dichotomies inherent in animal-human relations. He termed this a *dual relationship* and his analysis of artworks, spanning early Egyptian art to the early 1970s, also demonstrates that perceptions of human-animal interactions are always from the vantage point of humans within a particular historical, political, social and cultural context. The perspective of the animal can only ever be speculative on the part of humans. Accordingly, Clark (1977) categorised artworks portraying animals as humans perceived them, in

their imaginations, to be scared, symbolic, admired and destroyed by humans. Schneider (2004) also recognised this human viewpoint in her discussion of contemporary artworks in an exhibition titled, *Animals* (2004), observing that

... our relationship with the nonhuman world is mediated by history and that for us the animal, as a theme, has become a cultural construct ... artists represented here are only too aware that the animal itself can never be portrayed, only our notion of what it is (Schneider, 2004: 4).

Fudge's (2004) view is that this is hardly surprising given that

... orthodox evaluations of humans and animals always assert the superiority of the human – it is, after all, always humans who are performing the evaluation” (Fudge, 2004: 21).

Baker (2000) acknowledges the difficulties of assigning meaning, interpretation and signification in those artworks that probe the animal and the complexities of human-animal interactions in the contemporary world. Specifically in relation to taxidermic animal artworks, and perhaps drawn directly from Lévi-Strauss (1963), Baker (2000) suggests that “They are perhaps things with which to think, rather than themselves being things to be thought about” (Baker, 2000: 75). Moreover, Baker (2000) contends that

Neither species, nor genus, nor individual, each one is open both to endless interpretation and, more compellingly still, to the refusal of interpretation (Baker, 2000: 75).

The complexities of the animal-human relationship itself might well be matched by difficulties in understanding contemporary animal artworks. Baker (2000) argues that

... if little has been written about some of the most extraordinary and compelling postmodern animal imagery ... it is perhaps because it is by no means clear what can usefully be said about these baffling subjects (Baker, 2000: 80).

Baker (2000) even goes so far as to suggest that “The problem is that, if anything, [that] they *signify too much*” (Baker, 2000: 80). Citing the installations *Spider*, (1997) by Louise Bourgeois (1911-) and *Monogram*, (1955-9) by Robert Rauschenberg (1925-) where the critics’ interpretation overrode the artists’ view of the work, Baker (2000) contends that “Openness of meaning creates its own difficulties, as in cases where critical interpretations conflict with the artist’s intentions” (Baker, 2000: 80).

3.2 Analysis of Selected Works across History

Mindful of the probability for the vast range or continuum of meaning, interpretation and, indeed, misinterpretation of animal artwork in both the contemporary period and the prior periods, careful examination of selected works which engage with the animal-human relationship and which span from early Egyptian art to present day contemporary art has the potential, nonetheless, to offer a different perspective.

Table 3.2.1 thus presents a chronological overview of artworks that illustrate the different ways in which animals are perceived and the various kinds of humans and animals interactions across art history. The criteria for selecting artworks to be included are accessibility, widely publication, commonly reproduced and/or representative of the particular art period. Hence Table 3.2.1 comprises six columns as follows:

- (a) **Column one** – the *name* of the artist or art period.
- (b) **Column two** – the *dates* and *medium* of the artwork.
- (c) **Column** – the *title* of the artwork.
- (d) **Column four** presents a reproduced *image* of the artwork.

The reproduced image illustrates the work and indicates more clearly such elements as size relationships of animal to human, configuration of animal and human within the format of the work as well as the style, technique

and formal elements such as colour, composition, form and spatial relationships.

(e) **Columns five and six** present an analysis of the work relevant to this research. Column five indicates the *Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship*. To present the major features investigated in the artwork column five is sub-divided into three columns titled *Nature of Interaction*, *Dominance* and *Human Gender*. These three columns are explicated as follows:

(i) The column titled *Nature of Interaction* is sub-divided into two columns, one titled with a *plus sign* and the other a *minus sign*. The plus symbol (+) indicates that the animal-human interface and coexistence is benevolent, compassionate, friendly, benign, non-invasive, non-intrusive, non-objectified and/or non-exploitative. The minus symbol (-) indicates the opposite of the plus symbol, that is, that the interface is exploitative, abusive, dominating, insidious, unkind, unfeeling and/or malevolent.

(ii) The column designated *Dominance* is sub-divided into two columns titled **A** (Animal) and **H** (Human). The degree of dominance is indicated by the number of asterisks. The purpose of the asterisk system is to provide objective and non-interpretative indicators, which specify the evident or apparent action between the animal and human and is a descriptor of what is actually happening in the human and animal action – a literal action.

- A *high degree of dominance*, indicated by three asterisks (***), indicates an excessive level of stress or harm involved in the action and might be demonstrated in, for example, the animal/s being hunted, maimed or killed. This evident act of killing or hunting is clearly depicted in the work rather than being an interpretation of the event.

- A *medium degree of dominance*, indicated by two asterisks (**), indicates a less severe and invasive action upon the animal but involves some degree of restriction placed on the animal, which might be evidenced by the confinement or incarceration such as the animal/s in a zoo or cage.

- A *low level of dominance*, indicated by one asterisk (*), indicates little or

no level of stress or harm inherent in the activity. The animal, in this instance, might be performing an action without harsh coercion or force such as leading or riding a horse.

- Where the interface between the animal and human is characterised by *equality* or, at least, the lack of dominance on the part of the human, or indeed, the animal, an equal symbol (=) is indicated in *both columns*.

(iii) The third sub-column, *Human Gender*, assigns a column for females (F) and a column for males (M) to indicate which gender is interacting with the animal/s in the artwork.

(f) **Column six**, designated *Signification/Visual Implication*, specifies the overall visual message, purpose, intent or meaning of the human and animal interaction, which might be, for example, symbolic or metaphoric.

This interpretation of signification and visual implication is sourced, where possible, from art history references and, where little or no reference is offered, from personal research.

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Early Christian										
Unknown Egyptian	6 th Dynasty 2350-2190 BC Relief with painting	<i>Hippopotamus Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animal as sport/entertainment
Unknown Egyptian	19 th Dynasty 1292-1182 BC Relief	<i>King Seti I and his son, later Ramesses II capturing a bull.</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority
Unknown Egyptian	20 th Dynasty 1190-1077 BC Relief	<i>Ramesses III hunting wild bulls</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Unknown Egyptian	26 th Dynasty 672-525 BC Dark grey greywacke	<i>The goddess Hathor and the Pharaoh Psammetichus I</i>		✓		*			✓	• Animals as <i>sacred</i>
Unknown Assyrian	7 th Century BC Relief	<i>Horsemen: Detail from the great lion hunt</i>		✓		*		✓		• Human superiority • Animals as war machines
Unknown Assyrian	7 th Century BC Relief	<i>Ashurbanipal leading horse: detail from the Great Lion Hunt</i>			✓		*		✓	• Human superiority • Animals as war machines

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Unknown Greek	c. 570 BC Marble	<i>Calf Bearer (dedicated to goddess Athena)</i>		✓		**		✓		• Animal as sacrificial object
Unknown Greek	c.490 BC Red-figure bell krater	<i>Europa and the Bull</i>			✓	=	=	✓		• Animal as symbol in narratives of legends/mythology
Unknown Greek	438-432 BC Parthenon	<i>Young cow and herdsmen from the south frieze of the Parthenon</i>			✓		**		✓	• Human superiority

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Unknown Greek	438-32 BC	<i>Horsemen from the west frieze of the Parthenon</i>			✓		*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Human strength and athleticism
Unknown Roman	c.140 AD Bronze	<i>The Jockey of Artemision</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as sport/entertainment
Unknown Roman	250AD Marble	<i>Sarcophagus of the Lion Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Unknown Roman	4 th Century Mosaic	<i>Three stags driven into a net: detail from the 'Great Hunt' mosaic</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment
Byzantine	c. 532-48 Vault mosaic	<i>Mosaic of the lamb triumphant</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Unknown Early Christian	5 th Century Mosaic	<i>Good Shepherd</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Early Medieval	9 th Century stone	<i>In the lions' den</i>			✓		*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Late Gothic and Early Renaissance										
Limbourg Brothers	1413-16 Vellum	<i>'December' from Très Riches Heures of the Duke of Berry</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment
Limbourg Brothers	1413-16 Vellum	<i>'January' from Très Riches Heures of the Duke of Berry</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of fidelity/guardianship

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Jan van Eyck	1434 Oil on panel	<i>The Marriage of Arnolfini</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of <i>fidelity</i>
Antonio Pisanello	c.1440 Tempera on panel	<i>St Eustace</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Paolo Uccello	c. 1450s Oil on wood	<i>Rout of San Romano</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as war machines
Paolo Uccello	c.1460-70 Oil on panel	<i>Hunt in the Forest</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Leonardo da Vinci	c. 1490 Oil on wood	<i>Lady with an Ermine</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of sinister and darker forces
Lucas Cranach the Elder	1529 Oil on wood	<i>Staghunt of Frederick the Wise of Saxony</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment
Andrea Mantegna	1471-74	<i>Court of Mantua Presco</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of fidelity/guardianship

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Andrea Mantegna	c.1474 Fresco	<i>Suite of Cardinal Francesco (detail)</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal as symbol of status/strength/courage
High Renaissance										
Piero di Cosimo	c.1500 Oil on panel	<i>Death of Procris</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal as symbol of fidelity/guardianship
Lucas Cranach the Elder	1526 Oil on panel	<i>A Faun and his Family with Slain Lion</i>			✓		***	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human superiority Animal as symbol of virility

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Jacopo Tintoretto	1550 Oil on canvas	<i>Creation of Animals</i>		✓			*		✓	• Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Titian	c.1553-54 Oil on canvas	<i>Venus and Adonis</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	• Animal as symbol of <i>virility</i>
Francesco da Ponte called Bassano	1574 Oil on canvas	<i>Noah's Sacrifice</i>		✓			*		✓	• Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Francesco da Ponte called Bassano	1576 Oil on canvas	<i>Garden of Eden</i>		✓			*		✓	• Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Domenichino after cartoon by Annibale Carracci	1602	<i>The Maiden and the Unicorn</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal (mythic) as symbol of <i>virginity and chasteness</i>
Jan Brueghel the Elder	1613 Oil on canvas	<i>Animals Entering the Ark</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>religious</i> symbol
Peter Paul Rubens	1615-16 Oil on canvas	<i>Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animal as symbol of <i>strength/power</i> • Animals as sport/entertainment
Peter Paul Rubens	1616 Oil on canvas	<i>Lion Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animal as symbol of <i>strength/power</i> • Animals as sport/entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Baroque – France, Spain and England										
Diego Velázquez	1632-37 Oil on canvas	<i>La Tela Relá (Philip IV Hunting Wild Boar)</i>			✓		***	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as sport/entertainment • Human superiority
Rembrandt van Rijn	c.1637 Black Chalk	<i>Elephant</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as <i>exotic</i> object
Diego Velázquez	1640-45 Oil on canvas	<i>Count Dwarf Don Antonio el Inglés</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of <i>virility</i>

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Paulus Potter	1646 Oil on canvas	<i>Peasant Family with Animals</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals (particularly cows) as symbol of fertility, wealth and the earth and love of rural life
Paulus Potter	1647 Oil on canvas	<i>Young Bull</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals (particularly cows) as symbol of fertility, wealth and the earth Cow as symbol of nationalistic culture and politics
Paulus Potter	1647 Oil on canvas	<i>Punishment of a Hunter</i>			✓	**			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal advocacy Role reversal – animal pursuing human

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Diego Velázquez	c.1656 Oil on canvas	<i>Las Meninas</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal (three dogs) as symbol of <i>boredom (with royalty)</i> • Animal (one dog with child) as symbol of <i>innocence/curiosity</i>
Neoclassicism and Romanticism										
Francis Barlow	1665 Engraving	<i>Aesop's Fables</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as metaphor of human condition/follies
Alexandre- François Desportes	c.1699 Oil on canvas	<i>Self-portrait as a Huntsman</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of <i>power/prestige</i> • Human superiority • Animals as sport/entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
William Hogarth	1742 Oil on canvas	<i>The Graham Children</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol (bird in cage) of fragility of life and childhood mortality and (predatory cat) of harsh outside world
William Hogarth	1745 Oil on canvas	<i>The Painter and his Pug</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of compassion/humanity / English virtues
George Stubbs	1769 Oil on canvas	<i>The Milbanke and Melbourne Families</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals as symbols of prestige, wealth and leisure

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

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Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Joshua Reynolds	1775 Oil on canvas	<i>Miss Jane Bowles</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as vehicle/ symbol of expression of human feeling, emotion and informality
Thomas Gainsborough	1781-82 Oil on canvas	<i>Mrs 'Perdita' Robinson</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as vehicle/ symbol of expression of human feeling, emotion and informality
Joshua Reynolds	1787 Oil on canvas	<i>Miss Anna Ward and her Dog</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as vehicle/ symbol of expression of human feeling, emotion and informality

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
George Stubbs	c.1793 Oil on canvas	<i>William Anderson with Two Saddle Horses</i>		✓			*		✓	• Animal as symbol/object of <i>status, wealth and prestige</i>
George Stubbs	c. 1800 Oil on canvas	<i>Hambetonian, Rubbing Down</i>		✓			*		✓	• Animal as symbol/object of <i>status, wealth and prestige</i>
Théodore Géricault	1817 Oil sketch	<i>Race of the Riderless Horses</i>			✓		*		✓	• Animals as sport, entertainment and spectacle
Théodore Géricault	1822-23 Oil sketch	<i>A Charge of Cuirassiers</i>			✓		**		✓	• Animals as <i>war machine</i>

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Francisco Goya	1790 Oil on canvas	<i>Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zúñiga</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals (birds) as symbol of <i>childhood innocence</i> • Animal (predatory cat) as symbol of <i>harsh outside world</i>
Francisco Goya	1824 Oil on canvas	<i>Bullfight, Suerte de Varas</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals as <i>sport/entertainment</i>
Francisco Goya	1746-1828 Etching and Aquatint	<i>Disparate Puntual: from the series “Los Proverbios”</i>			✓		*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of human frailties and folly

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cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Rosa Bonheur	1853-55 Oil on canvas	<i>Horse Fair</i>			✓	*			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal advocacy • Animal dominance/ strength
Gustave Courbet	c. 1859 Oil on canvas	<i>After the Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals as sport/ entertainment • Human superiority • Animal antagonism
Eugène Delacroix	1861 Oil on canvas	<i>Lion Hunt</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority over animals • Animals as sport/ entertainment

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Modernism										
Jean-François Millet	1862-63 Charcoal and pastel	<i>The Shepherdess and her Flock</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal and human symbiosis • Veneration for rural life
Jean-François Millet	c.1864 Charcoal on paper	<i>Bringing Home the Newborn Calf</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal and human symbiosis • Veneration for rural life
Edgar Degas	c.1870 Oil on canvas	<i>Before the Start</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as sport/entertainment
Pierre-Auguste Renoir	c.1875 Oil on canvas	<i>Woman with a Cat</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of femininity

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				Nature of Interaction		Dominance		Human Gender		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Georges Seurat	1884-86 Oil on canvas	<i>A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals (dog and monkey) as symbols of <i>human characteristics</i>
Paul Gauguin	1897 Oil on canvas	<i>Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?</i>		✓			*	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals as symbols of human characteristics and stories
Henri Rousseau	1897 Oil on canvas	<i>The Sleeping Gypsy</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal as symbol of <i>untamed/wild nature</i>
Henri Rousseau	1910 Oil on canvas	<i>The Dream</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal as symbol of <i>untamed/wild nature</i>

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

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Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				Nature of Interaction		Dominance		Human Gender		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Marc Chagall	1911 Oil on canvas	<i>Rain</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals as symbol of human spiritual/cultural beliefs
Pierre Bonnard	1915 Oil on canvas	<i>Coffee Le Café</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human consideration for animals
Pablo Picasso	1933 Etching	<i>(Minotaur Defeated) from Suite Vollard</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human superiority Animal as sport/spectacle Animal as symbol of virility
Pablo Picasso	1937 Oil on canvas	<i>Guernica</i>			✓		***	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal as symbol for Spanish Republic (horse) and General Franco (cow)

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

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Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Balthus (Baltusz Kossowski de Rola)	1949 Oil on canvas	<i>Nude with Cat</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol for <i>innocence</i>
Postmodernism and Contemporary										
Joseph Beuys	1965 Perfor- mance	<i>Explaining Pictures to a Dead Hare</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human communication with animal
Francis Bacon	1969 Oil on canvas	<i>Etude pour une corrida</i>			✓		**		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human superiority • Animal symbol of <i>animal nature</i> of human

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				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Joseph Beuys	1974 Perfor- mance	<i>I like America and America Likes Me</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human communication with animal/nature
William Wegman	1974 Video	<i>The Spelling Lesson</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human communication with animal
Paula Rego	1982 Lithograph on paper	<i>Doctor Dog</i>			✓	=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthropomorphism • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Paula Rego	1982 Acrylic on paper	<i>Nanny, Small Bears and Bogeyman</i>			✓	=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthropomorphism • Challenging human and animal boundaries

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Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Sue Coe	1988 Gouache	<i>Modern Man Followed by the Ghost of his Meat</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human/societal brutality towards animals
Sue Coe	1991 Gouache	<i>Cutting the Cow's Throat</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human/societal brutality towards animals
Carolee Schneemann	1991 Photo- graphs on linen	<i>Infinity Kisses</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overt display of affection between animal and human Challenging human and animal boundaries
Carsten Höller	1995 Photograph	<i>Lover Finches</i>		✓		=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging human and animal boundaries Human

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
										communication with animal
Andreas Slominski	1996 Event in zoo with giraffe and zoo-keeper.	<i>Licking a Stamp (Anfeuchten einer Briefmarke)</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries • Human communication with animal
Diana Thater	1997 Video installation	<i>Broken Circle</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries • Human communication with animal
Carsten Höller	1997 Installation	<i>House for Pigs and People</i>		✓		=	=	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Abigail Lane	1997 Ink jet print photograph on paper	<i>Her Life Became Nocturnal</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal as symbol of the <i>mysterious</i>
Edwina Ashton	1997 Video perform- ance	<i>Sheep</i>		✓		=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
Olly and Suzi	1997 Drawing/ photograph	<i>Painting Sharks in a Cage, South Africa</i>		✓		=	=	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Edwina Ashton	1998 Video perform- ance	<i>Frog</i>		✓		=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
Xavier Veilhan	1997-98 Photograph	<i>The Palace</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and animal displacement, alienation and irony • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
Olly and Suzi	1998 Drawing/ Photograph	<i>White Wolves, Ellesmere Island, Canada</i>		✓		=	=	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries • Animal advocacy

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Australian Contemporary										
Noel McKenna	1988 Oil on canvas	<i>Park Scene</i>		✓		=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and animal rapport/affinity/communication
Noel McKenna	1989 Water- colour on paper	<i>Yearling Sale</i>			✓		*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and animal rapport/affinity/communication
Lisa Roet	1998 Photograph	<i>Ape and the Bunnyman series.; 3 wise men</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal advocacy • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Lisa Roet	1998 Photograph	<i>Ape and the Bunnyman series: The dance</i>			✓		***		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal advocacy • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
John Reid	1989 Photograph	<i>Performance for 25 Passing Vehicles, Newell Highway 23 July 1989</i>			✓	=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal advocacy • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Patricia Piccinini	1997 C Type photograph	<i>Protein Lattice</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Ronnie van Hout	1999 Video	<i>Monkey Madness</i>		✓		=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
Ronnie van Hout	1999 Video	<i>Sculp D.Dog</i>		✓		=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries
Euan Heng	1999 Relief linocut	<i>Juggling</i>		✓			*		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human-animal companionship

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				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Rebecca Ann Hobbs	2001 Ink jet print	<i>Dense and Woolly</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human-animal communication • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Rebecca Ann Hobbs	2001 Ink jet print	<i>A Pseudo- female Fish</i>		✓			*	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human-animal communication • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Patricia Piccinini	2001 Type C photograph	<i>Science Story</i>		✓			**	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Kathy Temin	2002 Photograph mounted to aluminium	<i>Audition for a Pair of Koalas (blue) Part 1</i>		✓		***				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries

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				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Kathy Temin	2002 Photograph mounted to aluminium	<i>Audition for a Pair of Koalas (blue) Part II</i>		✓		***				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries
Louise Hearman	2002 Oil on masonite	<i>Untitled #989</i>			✓	=	=			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries and ambiguities
Sharon Goodwin	2002 Acrylic, watercolour & foam core	<i>Escape from Neverlands</i>			✓	=	=		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging human and animal boundaries (<i>hybrids/metamorphose</i>)

Table 3.2.1 Animal and Human Interactions in Art: Historical Perspectives

cont.

Artist/ Art Period	Dates/ Medium	Title of Work/s	Image of Work	Nature of Animal-Human Interface and/or Relationship						Signification/ Visual Implication
				<u>Nature of Interaction</u>		<u>Dominance</u>		<u>Human Gender</u>		
				+	-	A	H	F	M	
Catherine Bell	2003 Video perform- ance	<i>“This little piggy ...fades to pink” (detail)</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal advocacy • Challenging human-animal relations
Jazmina Cininas	2003 Reduction linocut	<i>Never Mistake a Wolf for a Fox</i>		✓		=	=	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging/blurring human and animal boundaries

3.3 Mapping the Changing Perspectives on Animal and Human Interactions in Art

Table 3.2.1 evidences the interconnectedness of animal and human lives across the span of history: it is indicative of the types and trends of animal-human relations portrayed in artworks throughout history and presents a wide array of animals from pets, farm animals through to wild animals, all in some form of relation with humans. Egyptian, Roman and Greek art, for example, depict humans and animals interacting in many different contexts such as hunting, as sacred or symbolic and as pets in the form of wall relief, sculpture, mosaic, wall painting and drawing: a multitude of these types of images exist in this ancient art time period alone.

At the same time, the overview of animal-human interaction artworks suggests the enduring and continuing nature of the interchange. The historical and chronological format also allows a view of each particular art period's general directions, inclinations or shifts in perception towards the animal-human interchange. The intent of the artist or artwork in relation to the interconnection of humans and animals differs according to the artistic period, cultural, social, political, religious and/or artistic context and purpose of the work. In some works such as early Christian art, for example, the animal might be incorporated in the artwork for its symbolic religious message. Whereas in the works of say the American contemporary artist Diana Thater (1962-), the animal and human relationship indicated in the image is used to question the interconnection between animals and humans in particular spaces.

There might also be other issues to consider in relation to the variations in the number of works represented in some art periods such as those noted by Baker (2000) in his observation of animal representation in the modernist period. His hypothesis that "... there was no modern animal, no 'modernist' animal ... There are therefore no animals in major cubists works ..." (Baker, 2000: 20) might

reflect the lower incidence of animal-human artworks in modernism. Indeed, Baker (2000) argues that

So might begin a rather tedious listing of the animal’s absence from much of the twentieth century’s most adventurous and imaginative visual art. Such a list would need to explain that even when the animal was visually present, it could be explained away, and that one function of modernist art criticism was to do so (Baker, 2000: 20).

Furthermore, according to Baker (2002), “The modern animal is thus the nineteenth-century animal (symbolic, sentimental), which has been made to disappear” (Baker, 2000:22).

3.3.1 The Nature of the Interaction

Table 3.3.1 summarises the trends and developments in artwork depicting animals and humans and their various associations with one another. The columns in the table titled *The nature of the animal-human interaction* indicate significant and noteworthy features in the artworks such as the actual character of the animal-human association, that is, whether it is positive or negative; whether the animal or human dominates; and the gender of the human. Percentages are used in the columns in order to ascertain the proportion in relation to the particular whole art period so that useful comparisons between the periods can be made.

Table 3.3.1 The Nature of the Animal-Human Interaction

The Nature of interaction					
Art period	+	%	-	%	Total
Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Early Christian	3	19	13	81	16
Late Gothic, Early/High Renaissance	13	65	7	35	20
Baroque – France, England, Spain	5	71	2	29	7
Neoclassicism, Romanticism	10	56	8	44	18
Modernism	10	77	3	23	13
Postmodernism	26	70	11	30	37
Total	67	60	44	40	111

Overall, the artworks spanning art history indicate that the nature of the animal-human interaction is more positive with 67 per cent of works depicting affirmative associations while 44 per cent indicate more negative contacts. In the nature of the animal-human interaction, it is apparent that postmodern/contemporary artwork reflects more positive relations between animals and humans. Some 70 per cent of the total artworks postmodern/contemporary periods and 77 per cent of the modernist era demonstrate humans with animals in benign or, at most, non-exploitative relationships.

While there is a higher total number of artworks that portray human and animals in some form of affirmative interaction in postmodern/contemporary art than in modern art, 77 per cent of the lower number of modernist artworks indicate a beneficial or, at most, benevolent relationship. This contrasts markedly with ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman and early Christian art, which indicates a smaller percentage of artworks depicting a positive or, at most, benign interaction while a higher percentage of works indicate a negative association. It is evident that postmodern/contemporary artworks reflect a more positive or, at most, a less exploitative interaction than previous periods, particularly those epochs prior to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

3.3.2 Who Dominates?

Table 3.3.2 indicates the dominating party in the artwork – animal or human – as well as the degree of dominance from high, medium to low. The high percentages of human dominance in all art periods prior to postmodernism, except the Baroque period, contrast markedly with the low percentages of animal dominance. The nearly seventy per cent of equal or non-exploitative animal-human interactions indicated in the postmodernist period also is a significant contrast with the low percentages indicated in the previous periods.

Table 3.3.2 Animal/Human Dominance in Visual Art

Art period	A					H					A/H		T
	***	**	*	T	%	***	**	*	T	%	=	%	
Egyptian, Greek, Roman Early Christian				0	0	4	4	6	14	93	1	7	15
Late Gothic, Early/High Renaissance				0	0	6	1	12	19	95	1	5	20
Baroque – France, England, Spain		1	1	2	29	1		1	2	29	3	43	7
Neoclassicism, Romanticism			1	1	6	3	2	12	17	94	0	0	18
Modernism				0	0	1	2	9	12	92	1	8	13
Postmodernism		1	2	3	7	6	2	2	10	24	28	68	41
Total				6					74		34		114

The depiction of animal-human interaction in artwork signifies the specific relationship between the two. For example, in artworks portraying a human on horseback hunting an animal suggests that the horse is used by the human as transport and the pursued animal is used as a sport. In both cases, the human is in a dominant position in regards to the animal. Across all art periods to modernism, it is apparent that humans dominate in their relationship and interaction with animals. However, in the postmodern/contemporary era, there is a significant decrease in artworks portraying human dominance over animals.

The major factor in this change is the high number of works depicting animals and humans in an equal, or at least, a non-exploitative relationship. The work of Paulus Potter (1625-54), *Punishment of a Hunter* (1647), of the Baroque period, however, must be singled out as one work which demonstrates clear empathy for the animal's position under the domination of humans. This satirical work represents animals and humans in reverse roles with the animals carrying out the exploiting, hunting and killing upon the humans.

3.3.3 Human Gender

Table 3.3.3 indicates the gender of the humans associating with animals in the artworks.

Table 3.3.3 Human Gender

Male/Female	M	%	F	%	M+F	%	Total
Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Early Christian	15	94	1	6	0	0	16
Late Gothic, Early/High Renaissance	13	65	2	10	5	25	20
Baroque – France, England, Spain	3	43	0	0	4	57	7
Neoclassicism, Romanticism	13	72	3	17	2	11	18
Modernism	4	31	5	38	4	31	13
Postmodernism	15	52	10	34	4	14	29
Total	63	59.5	21	17.5	19	23	103

In relation to the dominant gender of the humans who are depicted with the animals, overall the weighting of the gender of human interacting with animals appears to be male. The percentages of males are higher in those artworks prior to modernism with the highest being in the Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Early Christian eras.

The balance of males to females appears to shift considerably in modernist and postmodernist works with increasingly more females represented with animals in the artworks. In modernism, there is only seven per cent difference between the percentage males to females appearing with animals; with females representing the higher percentage. Additionally, postmodern art also indicates a little more balance in the representation of males and females than in previous periods.

3.3.4 Visualising Animals and Humans

One substantial change evident in the historical overview represented in Table 3.2.1 is in the medium utilised in contemporary/postmodern artworks. The major proportion of works prior to 1960s is executed in such traditional media as painting, printmaking and drawing. Contemporary artworks evidence a significantly broader range of media including traditional media but also non-traditional or alternative media such as performance, video performance, photography and installation. It is noteworthy that photography appears to be the predominant medium. Of the forty-one contemporary works in Table 3.2.1, sixteen are photographs, ten are video and video performances, nine are painting – oil, gouache and watercolour – ten are prints, and two are installations.

The tendency towards photography in works depicting animal and human interactions – 39 per cent of the total compared with 22 per cent for painting – might reflect the increased use of photography as contemporary art medium as well as the rising use of digital photography. Photography's adaptability and suitability for the issues and subject matter of both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries might also be advanced as a possible reason for its popularity. Campany (2003) notes that, in the mid 1960s, many artists were looking to expand their horizons "... to engage with the rapidly changing world and its representations. It was in photography that they glimpsed the means to do it" (Campany, 2003: 11).

3.3.5 Signifying Animals and Humans

The most evident trend apparent from a consideration of the sixth column of Table 3.2.1, *Signification/Visual Implication*, is the shift from the symbolic representation of animal-human interactions prior to the postmodern/contemporary period to representation of animals which challenges human perceptions of animal-human relations. Table 3.3.4 indicates in the blue colour, in four tones from dark to light, the extent to which the signification/visual

implication predominated in images in the particular art period, with the darkest blue representing the highest extent and very light blue, the lowest.

Table 3.3.4 Signification/Visual Implication

Art Period	Animal Sacred/ Religious Symbol	Animal Human Symbol/ Metaphor	Animal Sport/ Entertainment/Utility	Human Superiority over Animal	Animal Advocacy/ Connection
Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Early Christian	Dark Blue	Medium Blue	Medium Blue	Dark Blue	White
Late Gothic, Early/High Renaissance	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Medium Blue	Dark Blue	White
Baroque – France, England, Spain	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Medium Blue	Light Blue	White
Neoclassicism, Romanticism	White	Dark Blue	Medium Blue	Light Blue	White
Modernism	White	Dark Blue	Light Blue	White	Very Light Blue
Postmodernism	White	Light Blue	White	White	Dark Blue

The symbolic role of animals is evidenced predominantly in the art from early Christian times to the contemporary period beginning in the 1960s with the larger number of the works portraying animals *symbolically*, whereas the majority of postmodern works challenge, blur or question the boundaries between humans and animals and the human-animal interaction. Other categories that appear with frequency in the period prior to modernism are animals as *sport, spectacle or entertainment* and animals as *war machines*. One work in the category of *sport/entertainment* can be singled out in modernism – Degas’s painting of horses being assembled before the start of a race, *Before the Start* (1870) – and no works in postmodernism fall within these classifications.

It is evident that the symbolic use of animals significantly declines at the end of modernism, while, in the postmodern period, the portrayal of animal-human relations shifts markedly to representations of interactions which blur, question or challenge the boundaries between animal and human. Table 3.2.1 indicates the predominance of images depicting human superiority over animals up to the contemporary period. Unsurprisingly, closely aligned to human superiority over animals is the predominance of images depicting animals as sport and entertainment (for humans) and animals depicted as symbols or metaphors for human characteristics.

3.4 Evidences of Shifting Patterns in Animal-Human Relations

From consideration of the selected artworks in Table 3.2.1 it is evident that there is a distinct change in the depiction of animal-human relations occurring most significantly in the postmodern/contemporary period, particularly from the late 1980s on to the present day. Some changes are evident in the modern period where, for instance, there is a balance of females and males interacting with animals not evident in previous periods; however, the works appear, in the main, to portray animals in a symbolic or metaphoric role. The works of major artists such as Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), Marc Chagall (1887-1985) and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), for example, indicate the use of animals as symbols. It is evident that the beginning of the changes, and the most radical transformations, in the depiction of animal-human relations and the meaning or signification of these relations takes place after the 1960s.

One of the first major artists to interact with animals in a radically transformed way is Beuys who, in 1965, presented a performance work, *How To Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965), in which he walked around a gallery with his face smeared with honey and covered in gold leaf, carrying a dead hare to whom he talked, or rather mumbled, apparently explaining the pictures before them. The audience for this performance was kept outside, only able to see what was happening from behind a clear screen. Beuys maintained that the work was

concerned with issues such as human and animal consciousness, and the problems of thought and language. Beuys's other well-known performance piece involving an animal is *Coyote, "I Love America and America Loves Me"* (1974) for which Beuys wrapped himself in felt and stayed in a New York gallery room continuously interacting with a live coyote for five days.

In the early 1970s, artist William Wegman (1943-), created a short video performance, *Spelling Lesson* (1974), in which Wegman and his Weimaraner, Man Ray, sit at a table where the artist (Wegman) is supposedly correcting the mistakes in a written spelling test the dog has just completed. According to Baker (2000), "Wegman is more adept than most at quietly taking the mickey out of anthropomorphism" (Baker, 2000: 43). Indeed, Wegman has created a situation for "...the dog to look philosophical, and himself [Wegman] to look stupid" (Baker, 2000: 43). The animal-human relationship depicted in the work of both Beuys and Wegman differs significantly from previous works. Indeed Baker (2000) argues that these works evidence "... postmodern enthusiasm for basic dualism (in which, typically, the *animal* as well as the artist is 'in the position of a philosopher')" (Baker, 2000: 42). Furthermore, there is a staged confrontation between the animal and the human in these works, which Baker (2000) contends is "... the clashing perspectives of the expert and philosopher" (Baker, 2000:42).

The human relations, interactions or encounters with animals depicted in contemporary art are often, as Baker (2000) argues, baffling or by no means clear. The symbolic nature of the animal in the artworks prior to contemporary art might also be complex but, nevertheless, some meaning can be discerned in these works because they are viewed more clearly from the human perspective. Baker (2000) claims that, "Symbolism is inevitably anthropomorphic, making sense of the animal by characterizing it in human terms ..." (Baker, 2000: 82). On the other hand, contemporary art characterises animals and their relations with humans in other ways. Baker (2000) suggests that the animal "... passes itself off as the *fact* or reality of that which resists both interpretation and mediocrity" (Baker, 2000: 82). Moreover,

The postmodern animal is just this ‘face of the real’. It does not so much set itself against meaning as operate independently of it. Humans have typically wanted things of animals, wanting them to be meaningful, and wanting to control and to be consoled by those meanings. Postmodernism mistrusts this comfortably centred self’s desire ... (Baker, 2000: 82).

At the same time, the meaning of the animal-human interchange has become more varied, and even uninterpretable, in contemporary art and the dominance of the human over the animal has shifted to a less hierarchical position than in prior art periods. While the dominance of humans over animals has its source in pre-Christian (Judaism and Greek antiquity) and Christian thought (Ryder, 1989; Singer, 1990) and the power and rule of humans over animals is “... so deeply ingrained in our thought that we take it as an unquestioned truth ...” (Singer, 1990: 185). Table 3.2.1 indicates that contemporary art exhibits a shift in this hierarchical thinking and, indeed, attempts to question the divide between human and animal.

While significant change is apparent in the nature and meaning/signification of the animal-human interaction in contemporary art, so too are the means by which this interchange are expressed. The use of both the taxidermic and live animal in interactions with humans, in the live performance and video work of, for instance, both Beuys and Wegman, also marks a fundamental change to the portrayal of animal-human relations in contemporary artworks. Later works, for example, *Infinity Kisses* (1991) by Carolee Schneemann (1939-), *Licking a Stamp* (1996) by Andreas Slominski (1959-) and *Dense and Woolly* (2001) by Rebecca Ann Hobbs (1976-) continue the interaction between live the animal and human in their photographic performance work. Along with the changes of the means – the media and methods – of expressing animal-human connections in contemporary art is also the transformations in the aesthetics of the works. Allied with changing aesthetics in the contemporary animal-human artwork are equally shifting questions surrounding ethical and animal advocacy issues which, in many instances, necessitate a shift in the ways these works are considered.

3.5 Contemporary Animal-Human Encounters

The major changes that occurred in art in the last third of the twentieth century which, as Wood (2004) suggests, were "... as fundamental as the change that modernism represented" (Wood, 2004: 5) are reflected in contemporary art about animal and human interchanges. These artworks are also grouped under what Wood (2004) argues is "... the convenient but confusing term of postmodernism ... The confusion arises because there is no universally accepted definition of 'postmodernism'" (Wood, 2004: 5). Consequently, confusion might also arise in the consideration and appreciation of postmodern/contemporary animal artwork. Hence, any theoretical deliberation about these works must be taken with some caution. Baker (2000) takes some heed of this caution when he states that,

... in considering the animal's relation to creativity, and thus (however warily) moving towards the question of a postmodern animal 'aesthetic', the nature of the human's encounter with the animal is a matter of some importance (Baker, 2000: 50).

Interestingly, Danto (1996) forecasts the term that Baker (2000) used – *encounter* – in his discussion on postmodern works suggesting that the word *viewer* is in need of change and an appropriate word with which to replace it is perhaps *encounterer*. Danto (1996) is of the opinion that

One must set forth to encounter the works, to meet them on their own terms, one at a time, to see what they are trying to say, and what they are trying to bring about as a consequence of the encounter. The experience of art becomes a moral adventure rather than merely an aesthetic interlude (Danto, 1996: 16).

Furthermore, and importantly, in relation to considering or encountering postmodern animal artworks, Baker (2000) contends that

It is an experience that calls for new vocabularies, and in the more imaginative art of the period since World War II, the postmodern animal appears as an image of difference, an image of thinking difficulty and differently (Baker, 2000: 54).

Baker's (2000) phrase, *new vocabularies*, is echoed in Wood's (2004) suggestion that "Postmodernist art, to use a risky metaphor, spoke a different language" (Wood, 2004: 25). In terms of Baker's (2000) call for *new vocabularies* and *thinking difficulty and differently*, then, new ideas about the appearance and the aesthetics of artworks engaging with issues surrounding animal-human relations might give rise to works that are radically different to those of previous art periods. Both the appearance of the animal and the human in postmodern or contemporary works might become somewhat altered. Thus, according to Baker (2000), in exploring "... the possibility of an 'aesthetic' appropriate to the postmodern animal" (Baker, 2000: 54), the look or the appearance of postmodern animal is "... more likely to be that of a fractured, awkward, 'wrong' or wronged thing, which it is hard not to read as a means of addressing what it is to be human now" (Baker, 2000: 54).

These postmodern/contemporary works contrast markedly with those works featured in Lucie-Smith's (1998) book titled, *Zoo: Animals in Art* which, Baker (2000) claims, offer a particular idea of an animal as "... a creature which is comforting, exotic or amusing, but always visually attractive" (Baker, 2000: 54). Furthermore, these animals "... are untroubling, unthinking, unengaged. They are not 'obstacles'..." (Baker, 2000: 54). Some ways in which postmodern/contemporary artworks representing animal and human interactions might engage a changed and challenging aesthetic or appearance are in the manner that these works are constructed, the materials from which they are made, and the ways in which the materials are juxtaposed.

Thus, the aesthetics of postmodern/contemporary artworks depicting animal-human relations is changed or even transformed which, in turn, might urge a reconsidered appraisal of the place of aesthetics in the contemporary art context. Indeed, Danto (1996) asserts that

It is an exciting moment in the history of art, but a very different moment from any our predecessors have lived through. And because of its

resistance to institutional absorption, we have to encounter this art in terms the history of viewing has not prepared us for (Danto, 1996: 16).

However, both Danto (2003) and Kuspit (2004) argue that while the authority of aesthetics, and indeed beauty, was challenged and dispensed with by Marcel Duchamp, (1887-1968) and, subsequently, others in the early to mid-twentieth century by separating these qualities from the process of making art and the work of art, aesthetics need not always be excluded from art. Within this context, it is illuminating to consider the animal-human relations works of Australian contemporary artists. A question that ought to be posed is: how do such artists address potentially contentious societal and individual issues related to our relationship and interactions with animals and negotiate the aesthetic qualities in their works?



Plate 3.5.1 Kate James, *The World is a Dangerous Place*, 2004, Pegasus print
68 x 51 cm (courtesy of the artist)

The recent work of young, emerging artists indicates possible new directions as well as thought-provoking and unlikely human encounters with animals. Kate James's (1980-) work, *The World is a Dangerous Place* (2004), (Plate 3.5.1) addresses particularly our responsibility towards animals, especially pets, and asks the question: how does the way we look after animals show how we care about

them? James's work is a colour photograph of a young woman together with a dappled white horse in an outdoor setting, possibly a paddock. The woman and the horse have white hand-knitted hoods over their heads with holes left for their eyes and in the horse's case, a large opening for his or her nose and mouth. The hoods are linked by two hand-knitted strips to the ears of both the horse and woman. With their heads covered with these balaclava-like apparatus, the two stand immobile face to face evoking a moving intimacy and continuity between them.

This compelling image is not only an encounter between a human and an animal but it is also an *encounter* in the framework of viewing contemporary artworks suggested by both Danto (1996) and Baker (2000). The processes of making the work – the carefully and sensitively photographed constructed staging of the female and horse in the hand-knitted hoods - and the work itself challenges our aesthetic responses but at the same time encompasses aesthetic issues. The dappled white horse, the white deftly hand-knitted hoods apparatus and the woman's pale blue sweater against a sky of soft clouds with pale blue peeking through and a distant horizon of trees and low hills are elements which comprise aesthetic choices that the artist has taken in the creation of the work.

The unlikely image of a woman and a horse linked by hand-knitted hoods might also force us to reconsider how, for instance, we view a horse or how we see a human in relation to a horse. The image exists in stark contrast to the earlier view of horses and humans, for example, by Rosa Bonheur (1822–99) in her oil painting, *Horse Fair* (1853-55) (Plate 3.5.2), where humans endeavour to restrain the power and strength of muscular animals, and the horses and humans by Degas in his painting, *Before the Start* (c.1870) (Plate 3.5.3), where the jockeys maintain control of the racehorses as they steady them before their race for humans' entertainment.



Plate 3.5.2 Rosa Bonheur, *Horse Fair*, 1853-55, oil on canvas
244.5 x 506.7 cm (Clark, 1977: Plate 126)



Plate 3.5.3 Edgar Degas, *Before the Start*, c.1870, oil on canvas
viewed 25 January 2008, www.artcyclopedia.com

We might ask of James's work: what is the nature of this human-animal relationship? In her work, James has shifted the perception of animals in relation to humans to a different level to that seen in Bonheur's and Degas's and other earlier works. Indeed, the reference points in regard to the relationship between animals and humans have been altered, redefined and challenged in the encounter with such contemporary artwork as James's. Moreover, in the past thirty or so years, the reference points related to traditions, orthodoxies and ideas, for instance, about aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy also have shifted. If aesthetics, ethics and concerns of animal advocacy are important to contemporary artwork with a focus on the animal and human gaze and animal-human

encounters, then the question to be posed is: In what ways have aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy changed, both separately and in relation to each other?

CHAPTER FOUR – INTERROGATING THE GAZE: ANIMAL AND HUMAN

4.1 The Scope of the Gaze

The term *gaze* is used widely in different contexts and across many fields. Brennan and Jay (1996) argue that

Whole theories have been built on distinctions between ‘the gaze’ and other types of seeing, such as ‘the glance’, or on distinctions between ‘panoptic’, ‘virtual’ and ‘mobilized’ gazes ... Scholars in fields as disparate as philosophy and anthropology now probe their disciplines’ past and interrogate their present to unveil the hidden effects of visual metaphors and visual practices on their most fundamental assumptions (Brennan and Jay, 1996: 3).

Indeed, Brennan and Jay (1996) suggest that the new fascination with modes of seeing and the enigmas of visual experience in a wide variety of fields “... may well betoken a paradigm shift in the cultural imaginary of our age” (Brennan and Jay, 1996: 3). Urry (1990) refers to the *tourist gaze* to describe when we “go away” and look at the environment with interest and curiosity while, tangentially associated, Franklin (1999) considers our desire and pleasure in looking at animals in theme parks, zoos and in the wild as the *zoological gaze*. Dorin’s (2002) and Cox and Ward’s (2003) consideration of the gaze might well be termed the *virtual gaze* with their suggestion that the gazing at animals in zoos and in the wild is competing with gazing at *images* of animals through a proliferation of electronic technology now available.

Another perspective on gaze can be found in Foucault’s (1976) account of observations within the organised and systemised bounds of science, clinics and institutions which he describes as the *medical gaze*. Finch (1993) locates her gaze within the structure of class and gender, that is, the working class and sexuality, using the phrase, the *classing gaze*. In the area of social relationships, Argyle and

Cook (1976) consider the phenomena of *the gaze and mutual gaze* – looking at others and being looked at by them – of central importance to social behaviour.

Jay (1993) notes that the importance of interpreting vision as a scopic drive is that it then must seek an erotic object outside of itself for fulfilment; this is the role of the *gaze*. Jay (1993) also suggests that, for Lacan (1901-1981), drives cannot be realised, which is why the eye and the gaze are shown in perpetual disharmony. The gaze for Lacan was the unattainable object of desire that seemed to make the other complete. Furthermore, according to Lacan, unlike some of the thinkers who follow, the eye and the gaze although split, are part of the same person; for the gaze is projected, imagined.

In the last of Lacan's four seminars presented in 1964 (titled *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*) in which he first used the term the *gaze*, he addressed the area of painting, entitling the lecture, *What is a Picture?*, in which he argued that something of the gaze is always manifest in paintings, or pictures in his terms. The spectator, according to Lacan, is invited by the artist to

... lay down his gaze there as one lays down one's weapons. This is the pacifying Apollonian effect of painting. Something is given not so much to the gaze as to the eye, something that involves the abandonment, the *laying down*, of the gaze (Jay, 1993: 366).

Bryson (1988) broadens the discussion of the gaze and Lacan's theories of the gaze to place it in the context of the wider field of vision, arguing that Lacan's concept of the *gaze* is historically extremely important in the visual arts as it represents "... a fundamental shift away from the ground on which vision has been previously thought" (Bryson, 1988: 196). Art history and theory have shifted from the nineteenth century theory of vision in which the truth of vision lay in the retina to the twentieth century in which art is "... a matter of perceptual purity: timeless, sequestered from the social domain, universal" (Bryson, 1988: 197), to acknowledging the fact that, according to Bryson (1988),

... the visual field we inhabit is one of meanings and not just shapes, that it is permeated by verbal and visual discourses, by signs; and that these signs are socially constructed, as are we (Bryson, 1988: 107).

What is at stake, Bryson (1988) maintains, is the discovery of a politics of vision. It is somewhat easier since Lacan, Bryson (1988) claims, to think "... of visuality as something built cooperatively over time; that we are therefore responsible for it, ethically accountable" (Bryson, 1988: 107). While Bryson (1988) argues that the *gaze* cuts across the field of vision – "In Lacan, something cuts across the space of sight and darkens it; the Gaze" (Bryson, 1988: 104) – the word *gaze* is now, however, broadly used by media theorists to refer both to the ways in which viewers look at images of people in any visual medium and to the gaze of those depicted in visual texts.

However, perhaps still the most pervasive accompanying qualifier of the term *gaze* is the word *male*. This began with Mulvey's (1975) theories of film criticism, which critiqued the *male gaze* and has been followed by many others. The *male gaze* generally refers to the way, in Western culture, in which men view women, that is, men are active in their looking at women while women are passive recipients of the male looking. Berger's (1972) view of the gaze in the visual arts, for example, is of the male voyeuristic kind. However, Jay (1993) notes that even

... the putatively voyeuristic 'male gaze', a number of feminist film critics have come to acknowledge, can be understood as far more dispersed and plural than might seem at first glance (Jay, 1993: 591).

While in human animals, the possession of vision gives us essential information concerning the relationship between our bodies and surrounding objects: "It enables us to pass between them, or over them, or around them, as the case may be" (Smythe, 1975: 1). Smythe (1975) reminds us of the fundamental nature of vision, arguing that eyes became an essential part of the anatomy of animals because of their necessity for the purposes of finding food and also providing warning of attack. Additionally, both animals and humans use their eyes to

perceive how close or far away objects are and whether they are stationary or moving. Other factors such as whether objects are hard, soft, dry, wet, dangerous or safe might also be determined by vision. Given the breadth and diversity of meanings and applications of the term *gaze*, it is pertinent to examine the gaze between animals and humans in artworks in the context of the broader discussion of *vision* from which a number of fundamental ideas surrounding the concept of *the gaze* emanate.

Smythe (1975) also observes that, in the past, the eye was regarded as *the gateway to the brain*. Other such phrases exist in our lexicon that indicate the importance of the eyes are: *eyes are the windows of the soul*; *open someone's eyes*; *see eye to eye*; *an eye for an eye*; *one in the eye for* [disappointment]; *with one's eyes open*; *be all eyes*; *have an eye for*; *keep an eye out*; *eye-opener* and so on (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2004: 506). According to Jay (1993), since our language is rich in visual metaphors,

If we actively focus our attention on them, vigilantly keeping an eye out for those deeply embedded as well as those on the surface, we gain an illuminating insight into the complex mirroring of perception and language. Depending, of course, on one's outlook or point of view, the prevalence of such metaphors will be accounted an obstacle or an aid to our knowledge of reality. It is, however, no idle speculation or figment of imagination to claim that if blinded to their importance, we will damage our ability to inspect the world outside and introspect the world within. And our prospects for escaping their thrall, if indeed that is even a foreseeable goal, will be greatly dimmed (Jay, 1993: 1).

The above, Jay (1993) points out, has some twenty-one visual metaphors, some of which are in words that no longer are directly dependent on these metaphors such as *inspect*, *prospect* and *introspect*, which all derive from the Latin *specere*, to look at or observe: *speculate* also has the same Latin root.

Thus, language elucidates vision and gaze. In the literary domain, the connections between literature, vision and the accompanying discussion raise some notable observations about the gaze. "The act of writing begins with Orpheus's gaze"

(Jacobs, 2001: 1) so Jacobs (2001) cites Maurice Blanchot at the end of his 1995 essay, *The Gaze of Orpheus*, about the backward glance which condemns Orpheus's bride, Eurydice, to the underworld for the second and final time. Jacobs (2001) explains that the gaze deployed in this relation may be characterised as a means of knowing and "... as a weapon of embodiment, suggesting an anxious recognition of the fundamental dependency and antipathy between the two" (Jacobs, 2001: 1). Jacobs (2001) appropriately-titled book, *The Eye's Mind: Literary Modernism and Visual Culture*, explores the perspectives on and types of visual relations in *high modernist* texts such as those by Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), Ralph Ellison (1914-1994), Henry James (1843-1916), Nathanael West (1903-1940) and others, and looks at how the eye in the text negotiates, or rather re-negotiates, as Jacob (2001) puts it, its relations to forms of knowledge and power. In her exploration, Jacobs (2001) expands and intensifies the idea and the range of the gaze through distinguishing a number of gazes in texts such as *the interior gaze*, *the scientific gaze*, *the transparent gaze*, *the authorial gaze*, *the gaze that writes*, *the anthropological gaze* and *the sociological gaze*.

As well as such discourses about vision and gaze as that of Jacobs (2001), there are also cultural and social practices that are imbued with references to vision, the gaze and the eye. Jay (1993) cites one being the cross cultural belief in the *evil eye*, which is a gaze superstitiously held to bring harm to its target. Argyle and Cook (1976) also claim that, "In a few cultures special symbolic significance is attributed to gaze, as when people believe in the evil eye" (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 169). While belief in the evil eye is strongest in the Middle East, Asia and Europe, especially the Mediterranean region, it has also spread to other areas like the Americas. The evil eye belief also reached to northern Europe, especially the Celtic regions. The *evil eye* is often seen as putting a curse upon victims by a malevolent gaze or "... a gaze or stare superstitiously believed to cause harm" (OED, 2004: 495).

In his seminal text on vision, and including gaze, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*, cultural historian, Jay (1993), explores the discourse surrounding vision in the work of such writers as Jean-Paul Sartre (2003 [1958]), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962 [1945]), Michel Foucault (2002 [1969]), Jacques Lacan (1981 [1978]), and Jacques Derrida (2002 [1997]). Jay (1993) discusses the theory of vision from Plato to Descartes, its role in the French Enlightenment and French Impressionism. He also analyses the work of the Surrealists, Roland Barthes's (1981) writings on photography and the film theory of Christian Metz (1991 [1964]). Accordingly, instead of arguing for a dominant visual system, Jay (1993) presents a case for a plurality of *scopic regimes*. Indeed,

Vision, it bears repeating, is normally understood as the master sense of the modern era, variously described as the heyday of Cartesian perspectivalism, the age of the world picture, and the society of the spectacle or surveillance (Jay, 1993: 543).

Jay (1993) argues that, because of the remarkable range and variability of visual practices, "... many commentators have been tempted ... to claim certain cultures or ages have been 'occularcentric', or 'dominated by vision' " (Jay 1993: 3). Interestingly, according to Argyle and Cook (1976), "The use of gaze in human social behaviour does not vary between cultures: it is a cultural universal" (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 169). The differences in the *gaze* across cultures lie, instead, "... in the cultural norms about looking, notably in how much people should look, and to a lesser extent where they should look" (Argyle and Cook, 1976: 169).

Brennan and Jay (1996), however, argue that, in contemporary scholarship, the *gaze*, the *look* and the *eye* have been opened to historical and cultural interpretations, which undermine their universal character of which Argyle and Cook (1976) speak. Brennan and Jay (1996) claim that

Whole theories have been built on the distinctions between 'the gaze' and other types of seeing, such as 'the glance', or on distinctions between 'panoptic', virtual," and 'mobilized' gazes ... Culturally specific

‘visuality’ ... has displaced ‘vision’ per se as the central concern of scholars in many different disciplines (Brennan and Jay, 1996: 3).

Moreover, Brennan and Jay (1996) contend that scholars in such disparate disciplines as philosophy and anthropology are examining their field’s past and present “... to unveil the hidden effects of visual metaphors and visual practices on their most fundamental assumptions” (Brennan and Jay, 1996: 3). This has had the effect of gaining a central place in the humanities for such visually aligned disciplines such as art history, film studies and the history of photography.

In his discussion of what constitutes the visual culture of modernity, Jay (1988) suggests that there are several competing visual cultures rather than one dominant visual space, best understood as a “... contested terrain, rather than a harmoniously integrated complex of visual theories and practices” (Jay, 1988: 4). While Jay (1988) finds it problematic to envision future ways of how we might gaze, glance or look and indeed what might be future visual cultures, to use Jay’s (1988) term, Olin (2003) observes that even “... to visualize looking is not as easy as it might appear” (Olin, 2003: 329).

Furthermore, she suggests that “... what might seem to be a purely visual theory, or theory of pure vision, has become lost in the mysteries of human relationships” (Olin, 2003: 329). Brennan and Jay (1996), seemingly overwhelmed by this proliferation of perspectives, nuances and theories on vision, visual cultures and the gaze, pose a range of related questions:

Can we find a figure in this bewildering carpet of attempts to explore multiple contexts of visuality? Is there a common denominator running through such seemingly disparate investigations of theories about vision, general visual cultures, specific visual artifacts like movies, and the role of visual metaphors in written texts? Although there are certain recurring themes and a frequent overlapping of arguments, the answer, it seems fair to conclude, is that no single gestalt presents itself, no matter how high the altitude or our bird’s-eye view. Instead, we find ourselves in a heterotopic space without a single totalizing vantage point. The ‘pictorial turn’, like the ‘linguistic turn’ before it, shows itself to be richly varied and irreducible to one dominant model (Brennan and Jay, 1996: 9).

All things ocular, including those of which Jay (1993) writes, are critical to the visual arts. The predominant and fundamental sense in the domain of visual arts is vision. Indeed, a term for this area would be *visuacy*, coined by Davis (2007), which involves "... the ability to create, process, critique and appreciate the spectrum of visual phenomena in the individual's external and internal environment" (Davis, 2007: 2).

4.2 Interpretations of the Gaze in the Visual Arts

Several forms or types of gaze can be identified in paintings, photographs, films and other visual images. Within the context of Elkins's (1996) broader investigation of the nature of seeing and, assuming that there are two *players* in this drama, as he terms it, one object and one person looking at it, Elkins (1996), for example, identifies ten different ways of looking at a figurative painting in a gallery context:

1. You, looking at the painting,
2. figures in the painting who look out at you,
3. figures in the painting who look at one another, and
4. figures in the painting who look at objects or stare off into space or have their eyes closed.

In addition there is often

5. the museum guard, who may be looking at the back of your head, and
6. the other people in the gallery, who may be looking at you or at the painting.

There are imaginary observers, too:

7. the artist, who was once looking at this painting,
8. the models for the figures in the painting, who may once have seen themselves there, and
9. all the other people who have seen the painting - the buyers, the museum officials, and so forth.

And finally, there are also

10. people who have never seen the painting: they may know it only from reproductions... or from descriptions (Elkins, 1996: 38-9).

Somewhat narrowing the focus of the gaze and referring, in the main, to photographic and filmic forms, Chandler (1998) considers the most common forms of gaze to be:

- the *spectator's gaze* – the gaze of the viewer at an image of a person (or animal, or object) in the text;
- the *intra-diegetic gaze* – a gaze of one depicted person at another (or at an animal or an object) within the world of the text (typically depicted in filmic and televisual media by a subjective 'point-of-view shot');
- the *direct [or extra-diegetic]* address to the viewer: the gaze of a person (or quasi-human being) depicted in the text looking 'out of the frame' as if at the viewer, with associated gestures and postures (in some genres, direct address is studiously avoided);
- the *look of the camera* – the way that the camera itself appears to look at the people (or animals or objects) depicted; less metaphorically, the gaze of the film-maker or photographer (Chandler, 1998).

Chandler (1998) also suggests that in addition to the above major forms of gaze there are several other types of gaze, less often acknowledged such as

- the *gaze of a bystander* – outside the world of the text, the gaze of another individual in the viewer's social world catching the latter in the act of viewing – this can be highly charged, e.g., where the text is erotic (Willems, 1992);
- the *averted gaze* – a depicted person's noticeable avoidance of the gaze of another, or of the camera lens or artist (and thus of the viewer) - this may involve looking up, looking down or looking away (Dyer 1992);
- the *gaze of an audience within the text* – certain kinds of popular televisual texts (such as game shows) often include shots of an audience watching those performing in the 'text within a text';
- the *editorial gaze* – 'the whole institutional process by which some portion of the photographer's gaze is chosen for use and emphasis' (Lutz & Collins 1994, 368). (Chandler, 1998).

Furthermore, Chandler (1998) argues that some theorists make a distinction between the *gaze* and the *look* with the suggestion that the *look* is a perceptual

mode open to all whilst the *gaze* is a mode of viewing reflecting a gendered code of desire. The *look* may simply connote perceptual openness to new perceptual experiences whereas the *gaze* is more deliberate. Chandler (1998) notes that Ellis (1982) and others relate the *gaze* to cinema and the *glance* to television – associations, Chandler (1998) contends, which then seem to lead to these media being linked with stereotypical connotations of *active* (and *male*) for film and *passive* (and *female*) for television (Ellis 1982: 50; Jenks 1995: 22). The *glance*, then, is possibly more random.

These connotations of the gaze are linked to Berger's previously mentioned book and television series, (1972) *Ways of Seeing*. Berger (1972) argues that, "... almost all post-Renaissance European sexual imagery is frontal – either literally or metaphorically – because the sexual protagonist is the spectator-owner looking at it" (Berger, 1972: 56).

The types of gazes identified by Elkin (1996), Chandler (1998) and others represented in visual images, whether these be photographs, film, painting or sculpture, have clear relevance for artworks that portray animals and humans. While the viewer's gaze is virtually self-evident in the process of looking at an artwork, some writers such as Berger (1972) argue for its importance from socio-political-cultural perspectives rather than solely in terms of aesthetic response. In the viewing of animal-human artworks, the societal, political and cultural contexts indicated in earlier chapters here have some bearing on the reception of the artwork. For example, the identification of the spectator of the artwork might be with the individual, cultural, societal, political or cultural experiences, attitudes or feelings portrayed within the artwork, which might themselves be clear or, conversely, contradictory.

The gaze classification work of Elkins (1996) and Chandler (1998), particularly, provides possible frameworks for the categorisation of the types of gaze that are represented in animal-human artworks. The following five types of gaze are modified from both Chandler's (1998) and Elkin's (1996) work in order to offer

more appropriate application to and usefulness in identifying the various gazes that occur in artworks depicting animals and humans. These five types of gaze include that of the viewer or spectator of the artwork in order to distinguish clearly the kind of gazing, viewing or looking *at* the artwork from the nature of gazing or looking that occurs *within* the artwork.

In consideration of the changes in the representation of the animal-human interface particularly in contemporary art, evidenced in Chapter Three, five types of gaze pertinent for artworks depicting animal-human interactions are:

1. The *viewer gaze*: the gaze of the viewer at an image of an animal/human in the artwork; *you, looking at the artwork.*
2. The *direct gaze*: the gaze of an animal/human depicted in the artwork looking out of the artwork, as if at the viewer; *individuals in the artwork who look out at you.*
3. The *indirect gaze*: the gaze of an animal/human within an artwork who look into the middle distance and are unfocused or with eyes closed; *individuals within the artwork who look at objects or stare beyond the artwork frame, into space or have their eyes closed.*
4. The *unreciprocated gaze*: the gaze of one animal/human towards another within the artwork, which is not returned; *an individual in the artwork whose look at another is not reciprocated.*
5. The *reciprocal gaze*: the gaze of two animals/humans towards each other within the artwork; *individuals in the artwork who look at one another.*

These gaze types offer both a lexicon and framework for viewing works which represent both animals and humans. With the appreciation of the various types of gaze interactions, the viewer is able to better distinguish and identify the context, meaning and ideas within an artwork. In order to demonstrate how these might be identified in practice, Table 4.2.1 applies these gaze categories to selected artworks representing animal-human interactions across art history. Table 4.2.1 is an abbreviated version of Table 3.2.1, that is, around one to three works have been

selected from each art historical period prior to the postmodernist period. Additionally, the table includes a greater number of works from the contemporary/postmodernist period because of these works higher level of relevancy to the research.

Table 4.2.1 comprise nine columns as follows:

- (a) **Column one** – the *name* of the artist or art period.
- (b) **Column two** – the *dates* and *medium* of the artwork.
- (c) **Column three** – the *title* of the artwork.
- (d) **Column four** presents a reproduced *image* of the artwork.
- (e) **Column five** presents the *viewer gaze*. The assumption is that there is always a viewer of the work/s, hence, this column is shaded in grey.
- (f) **Column six** presents the *direct gaze*
- (g) **Column seven** presents the *indirect gaze*
- (h) **Column eight** presents the *unreciprocated gaze*
- (i) **Column nine** presents the *reciprocal gaze*

As indicated, there often is more than one type of gaze within the one work, particularly if there is more than one animal and/or human represented. Note also that the gaze of several individuals in the work might also represent different types of gaze.

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Unknown Egyptian 26th Dynasty	573-525 BC Dark grey greywacke	<i>The goddess Hathor and the Pharaoh Psammetichus I</i>			✓			
Unknown Greek	c. 570 BC Marble	<i>Calf Bearer (dedicated to goddess Athena)</i>			✓			
Unknown Greek	c.490 BC Red-figure bell krater	<i>Europa and the Bull</i>				✓		

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Unknown Roman	250AD Marble	<i>Sarcophagus of the Lion Hunt</i>					✓	
Unknown Early Christian	5 th Century Mosaic	<i>Good Shepherd</i>				✓		
Jan van Eyck	1434 Oil on panel	<i>The Marriage of Arnolfini</i>				✓	✓	
Andrea Mantegna	1471-74	<i>Court of Mantua Presco</i>				✓	✓	

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Leonardo da Vinci	c. 1490 Oil on wood	<i>Lady with an Ermine</i>				✓		
Piero di Cosimo	c.1500 Oil on panel	<i>Death of Procris</i>					✓	
Domenichino after cartoon by Annibale Carracci	1602	<i>The maiden and the unicorn</i>				✓		
Peter Paul Rubens	1615-16 Oil on canvas	<i>Hippopotamus and crocodile hunt</i>				✓	✓	

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Diego Velázquez	1640-45 Oil on canvas	<i>Count Dwarf Don Antonio el Inglés</i>			✓	✓		
Paulus Potter	1647 Oil on canvas	<i>Young Bull</i>			✓	✓		
Alexandre-François Desportes	c.1699 Oil on canvas	<i>Self-portrait as a huntsman</i>			✓	✓	✓	

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
William Hogarth	1742 Oil on canvas	<i>Graham children</i>			✓	✓	✓	
William Hogarth	1745 Oil on canvas	<i>The painter and his pug</i>			✓	✓		
Joshua Reynolds	1775 Oil on canvas	<i>Miss Jane Bowles</i>			✓			

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Joshua Reynolds	1787 Oil on canvas	<i>Miss Anna Ward and her dog</i>						✓
George Stubbs	c. 1800 Oil on canvas	<i>Hambetonian, Rubbing Down</i>			✓		✓	
Francisco Goya	1790 Oil on canvas	<i>Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuñiga</i>			✓		✓	
Rosa Bonheur	1853-55 Oil on canvas	<i>Horse fair</i>				✓		

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Gustave Courbet	c. 1859 Oil on canvas	<i>After the Hunt</i>				✓	✓	
Edgar Degas	c.1870 Oil on canvas	<i>Before the start</i>				✓	✓	
Pierre-Auguste Renoir	c.1875 Oil on canvas	<i>Woman with a Cat</i>					✓	
Henri Rousseau	1910 Oil on canvas	<i>The Dream</i>						✓

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Pablo Picasso	1937 Oil on canvas	<i>Guernica</i>				✓		
Balthus (Baltusz Kossowski de Rola)	1949 Oil on canvas	<i>Nude with cat</i>						✓
Joseph Beuys	1964 Perform- ance	<i>Explaining pictures to a dead hare</i>				✓		
William Wegman	1974 Video	<i>The spelling lesson</i>						✓

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Paula Rego	1982 Lithograph on paper	<i>Doctor Dog</i>						✓
Sue Coe	1988 Gouache	<i>Modern man followed by the ghost of his meat</i>						✓
Carolee Schneemann	1991 Photo- graphs on linen	<i>Infinity Kisses</i>						✓
Andreas Slominski	1996 Event in zoo with giraffe and zookeeper.	<i>Licking a stamp (Anfeuchten einer Briefmarke)</i>						✓

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Diana Thater	1997 Video installation	<i>Broken circle</i>				✓		
Carsten Höller	1997 Installation	<i>House for pigs and people</i>						✓
Xavier Veilhan	1997-98 Photograph	<i>The palace</i>						✓

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Olly and Suzi	1998 Drawing/ Photograph	<i>White wolves, Ellesmere Island, Canada</i>						✓
Noel McKenna	1989 Water-colour on paper	<i>Yearling sale</i>					✓	
Lisa Roet	1998 Photograph	<i>Ape and the Bunnyman series, 3 wise men</i>					✓	✓

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Patricia Piccinini	1997 C Type photograph	<i>Protein lattice</i>				✓		
Rebecca Ann Hobbs	2001 Ink jet print	<i>Dense and woolly</i>						✓
Patricia Piccinini	2002-03	<i>The Young Family</i>						✓
Catherine Bell	2003 Video perform- ance	<i>“This little piggy ...fades to pink” (detail)</i>					✓	

Table 4.2.1 Interpreting Gaze in Artworks

cont.

The Nature of Animal-Human Gaze in Artworks								
Artist	Dates/ Medium	Artwork/s Title	Artwork Image	Viewer gaze	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Unreciprocated gaze	Reciprocal gaze
Jazmina Cininas	2004 Linocut	<i>Rue Dingo</i>				✓		
Kate James	2004 Photograph	<i>The World is a Dangerous Place</i>						✓
Patricia Piccinini	2006 Graphite on paper	<i>Laura (with sandwich)</i>						✓

The five categories of gaze indicated in Table 4.2.1 offers a framework by which an artwork might be considered and appreciated. This frame of reference also provides a guide to identifying and naming the types of gaze within an artwork, that is, the direction/s in which the animal and/or human are looking and whether or not their looking contributes to the meaning or concept of the work. Hence, the groupings present a system of identification in the deliberation of meaning and possible interpretations of an artwork, particularly where the forms and actions of the animal and human are significant in the work's conceptual basis.

It is evident from Table 4.2.1 that the *reciprocal gaze* occurs more frequently in contemporary art works. There is also some indication of reciprocal gaze in modernist works while very little to no indication in the prior periods. Whereas, the animals and humans represented in contemporary artwork are interacting and connecting visually and non-verbally with another in contrast to those animals and humans depicted in work of other periods which appear to be disconnected and unengaged visually.

Many artworks from this survey across history portray subjects that gaze out at the viewer; these seem to hold the viewer. As Elkin (1996) observes in *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O)* (1907) by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), the females have piercing stares, which Elkin (1996) claims, freeze him, and latch his feet to the floor. He is riveted "... as the painting's power comes streaming out from those gazes" (Elkin, 1996: 214). The history of art has numerous examples of works that "... gently push viewers toward preferred viewing positions" (Elkin, 1996: 214) and also hold the viewer, as if entranced, by the gaze within the work. The viewers are drawn to the eyes of the subjects within the works so that, in Elkin's (1996) case, "The stares ... make it difficult to go anywhere, or think anything, or see anything but the eyes that see me" (Elkin, 1996: 214).

Hence, the gaze in a work of art plays a fundamental role in the response to that work. The gaze might be, as in Picasso's work, a challenging and confronting one or it might be a less inquiring one like looking into a loved one's eyes. The gaze might also be unfocused and unaware. Whatever the type of gaze portrayed in a

work, the act of looking and seeing in the work is significant to its meaning, intent and potency. This, importantly and particularly, applies to those artworks in which the subjects are an animal and a human who engaged in reciprocal looking. Baker (2001a) goes as far as to suggest that “... two way looking can be an act of creative exchange” (Baker, 2001a: xxv). In reference to Wegman’s work of *Man Ray Contemplating Man Ray* (1978) (Plate 4.2.1), Baker (2001a) argues that this *doubled and doubling gaze*, as he terms it, complicates the question of how the animal is to be addressed in the contemporary art world.



Plate 4.2.1 William Wegman, *Man Ray Contemplating Man Ray*, 1978, photograph from the *Man Ray Portfolio* (Baker, 2001a: Plate vi)

The interaction of humans and animals through the reciprocal gaze within an artwork also suggests exclusion of the viewer of the work to the intimacy between the animal and human exchange. Piccinini is particularly aware of this in her works, *Leather Landscape*, 2003 (Plate 4.2.2) and *The Young Family*, 2002-03, (Plate 4.2.3) explaining that “The reflective gazes of these works separate them from us: they are not looking straight at us, imploring us to do something or think something. They have their own worlds, their own concerns” (Piccinini reported by Thompson, 2005: 104). Moreover, Piccinini argues that the gaze of these works is introspective, which

... is partially because I wanted to avoid the obvious theatricality of directing their gaze straight to the viewer, but mostly because I wanted the works to have a sense of independence and self-possession ... They are, in

the end, less interested in us than we are in them. This empowers them to a certain degree, as they are complete within themselves (Piccinini reported by Thompson, 2005: 104).

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Plate 4.2.2 Patricia Piccinini, *Leather Landscape*, 2003, silicone, acrylic, human hair, leather, timber
80 x 150 x 110 cm (irreg.), viewed 25 January 2008, www.patriciapiccinini.net

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Plate 4.2.3 Patricia Piccinini, *The Young Family*, 2002-3, silicone, acrylic, human hair, leather, timber
290 x 175 x 165 cm (irreg.), viewed 25 January 2008, www.patriciapiccinini.net

In Piccinini's works, the animal and human are engaged with each other by the other's gaze, a mutual gaze, hence being ostensibly unconcerned about and unconnected to the viewer's gaze. This is radically different to much of the artwork of periods prior to late modernism. The visual interchange of animals and humans in contemporary art takes the idea of the gaze in art into relatively unexamined territory.

CHAPTER FIVE – INTERROGATING AESTHETICS, ETHICS AND ANIMAL ADVOCACY

5.1 Aesthetics, Ethics and Animal Advocacy: Identifying the Scope and Parameters

The *gaze* and *mutual gaze* in the context of animal-human interactions in the visual arts are inextricably related to aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy. Given that there is no specific literature on the *gaze* in aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy, there is a need to probe the more *general* literature in these three areas in order to derive guiding principles for the research. These are necessary in order to create a framework of responsibility towards and *good use* of animals rather than irresponsibility and *misuse* of animals (on which there is a proliferation of literature). Hence, consideration of ethical principles and their significance in the domains of both aesthetics and animal advocacy is central. Figure 5.1.1, *Identifying Issues and Principles in the Intersections of Aesthetics, Ethics and Animal Advocacy*, offers a schematic overview of the scope and parameters of the three major realms and their intersection from which the working principles for the research will be educed.

While each of the major areas in Figure 5.1.1 is potentially huge, it is the triangle of interaction which is under scrutiny here. The dot points within each area offer a broad mapping of key developments which impact on the intersection. In entering the triangle, recent discussions of the aesthetic *revitalisation* and *transformation* (Crowther, 1993; Beckley, 1998; Danto, 2003; Rancière, 2004; Kuspit, 2004; and Guyer, 2005) suggest that the area of aesthetics offers both a starting point for entry into the terrain and, potentially, some insight into the complexity – both singly and relationally – of each area of consideration.

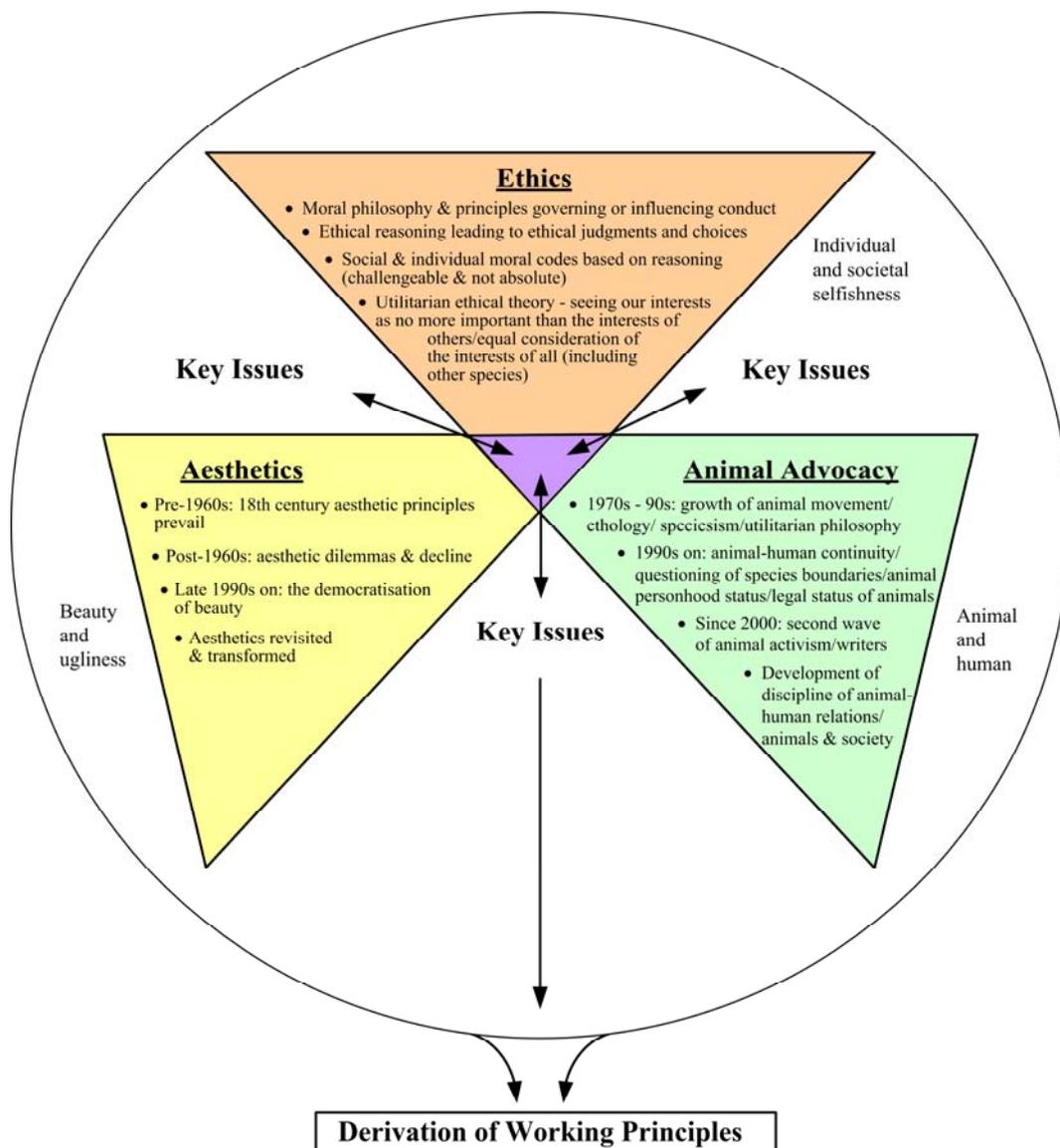


Figure 5.1.1 Identifying Issues and Principles in the Intersections of Aesthetics, Ethics and Animal Advocacy

5.2 Key Issues in Aesthetics: The Changing Landscape

The role of *aesthetics* and, in particular, evolving concepts of *beauty* and the *beautiful* are to the foreground of discourse within the context of contemporary art. Guyer (2005) reminds us, however, that aesthetics has been both integral to and yet under attack by philosophy from the beginning when Plato, to all intents and purposes, initiated Western philosophy with an assault on Greek assumptions

about the cognitive and practical value of the creation and experience of art. Yet, in so doing, Plato was also aware of the compelling nature of beauty and, as Guyer (2005) observes, attempted to guide our admiration of earthly beauty into admiration of a higher kind of beauty, not otherwise accessible to the senses, like "... the Form of Good or Justice" (Guyer, 2005: x). Nevertheless, Guyer (2005) argues, the questions that Plato raised in the third to fourth centuries BC such as

... what is the nature and value of beauty? what is the connection between art and knowledge? and what is genius, the source of artistic inspiration? ... have always remained at the heart of aesthetics, no less so when aesthetics became a recognized academic discipline early in the eighteenth century than before, and no less now than at any other time in modernity (Guyer, 2005: x).

Among the most engaging issues in recent aesthetics, according to Guyer (2005), have been questions about the importance of beauty, and "... the cognitive significance of fictions, the links between aesthetics and morality, and even the nature of genius and artistic creation" (Guyer, 2005: x). Central to Guyer's (2005) discourse on the state of aesthetics are the writings of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) whose analyses of experience, aesthetic creativity and the connections between the aesthetic and the moral, in Guyer's (2005) opinion, respond to the complexity underpinning concepts of aesthetics. Such issues include not only the sources of the value we place on the experience of the beautiful and sublime but also the continuities and discontinuities between traditional and emergent theories of beauty and of art.

5.2.1 Aesthetics in Decline

However, Guyer's (2005) view of the value of aesthetics in contemporary theories and the arts is somewhat more optimistic than that of Kuspit (2004). An eminent art critic, writer, art historian and philosopher, he argues in his book *The End of Art*, that art in contemporary times is in crisis because it has lost its aesthetic significance and, moreover, the aesthetic has been maligned. Kuspit (2004) notes that

High art has become simply another sample of visual and material culture, losing its privileged position as a source of aesthetic experience, which,

from the perspective of cultural studies, is beside the ideological point (Kuspit, 2004: 10).

What is more, art is indeed over, Kuspit (2004) argues, because

Aesthetic experience is in fact discarded as a rhetorical, idiosyncratic effect – an aspect of the illusion of personal autonomy that Trilling refers to – of a socially conditioned, even culturally mandated, impersonal construction. The artist becomes, without irony, the willing representative of society's everyday values, losing the integrity of his alienation, and art becomes the instrument of social integration – a sign of social belonging – losing aesthetic purpose and power (Kuspit, 2004: 11).

As noted in 2.5, Kuspit (2004) locates the demise of aesthetics in art unequivocally in the theories and works of artists Duchamp (1887-1968) and Newman (1905-1970) both of whom, for different reasons, sought to dispense with aesthetics, and both of whom maligned the aesthetic by separating it from the work of art and, moreover, the process of making art. Beckley (1998) suggests that the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) might well also have played a role in the abjuration of beauty and aesthetics. In 1938, Wittgenstein presented a lecture on *beauty*, which disparaged the use of the word in making aesthetic judgements, preferring instead words such as *right* and *correct* rather than *beautiful* and *lovely*.

Art historians and theorists, including Burgin (1986), Danto (1997, 2003), Carroll (2001) and Kuspit (2004) have described contemporary art (or the art since the mid-1960s) and its rejection of aesthetics and beauty as the end of art. Indeed, the titles of their books reflect this judgement – *The End of Art Theory* (Burgin, 1986); *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History* (Danto, 1997); *Beyond Aesthetics* (Carroll, 2001) and, more recently, *The End of Art* (Kuspit, 2004). Burgin (1986) suggests that art theory, the umbrella term for the interdependent areas of art history, art criticism and aesthetics, is at an end, having been replaced by the objectives of *theories of representation* in general, and “... a critical understanding of the modes and means of symbolic articulation of our *critical* forms of sociality and subjectivity” (Burgin, 1986: 204). Carroll (2001)

makes a case for an expanded view of art which, in effect, means broadening our concept of art to include forms of non-aesthetic and/or pluralistic encounters with art, while Holly and Moxey (2002) attempt to look at the links between aesthetics, art history and visual or cultural studies to establish the relevance of aesthetics in contemporary culture aiming

... to see whether it [is] possible to transcend disciplinary boundaries in such a way that aestheticians, art historians and students of visual culture might be able to see beyond the confines of disciplinary activity and the conventions of their own academic discourse (Holly and Moxey, 2002: xvi).

Danto (2003) argues that art came to an end when art recognised that there was no special way a work of art had to be, at which point

The history of the art's quest for philosophical identity was over. And now that it was over, artists were liberated to do whatever they wanted to do... There is no single direction. There are indeed no directions. And that is what I meant by the end of art when I began to write about it in the mid-1980s. Not that art died or that painters stopped painting, but that the history of art, structured narratively, had come to an end (Danto, 2003: 126).

Danto (2003) claims that "Beauty had disappeared not only from the advanced art of the 1960s, but from the advanced philosophy of art of that decade as well" (Danto, 2003: 25) and, moreover, the term "... beauty rarely came up in art periodicals from the 1960s on without a deconstructionist snicker" (Danto, 2003: 25). Gaskell (2003) concurs with Danto (2003), noting that many art historians have spurned discussions of art in terms of aesthetic qualities such as beauty. They comment instead in terms of social or, more specifically, significant functions rather than aesthetic worth. Gaskell (2003) contends that scholars avoid evaluative terms such as *beautiful* because of their association with pleasure given that part of the heritage of modernism is its disavowal of pleasure, leading to the distrust of the notion of the beautiful. According to Gaskell (2003), even with the postmodern transformation of art into a diversity of ways of addressing problems of perception and cognition, "... beauty remained nonetheless discredited and

beyond the account” (Gaskell, 2003: 272). The problem with *beauty*, Gaskell (2003) argues, is that it lacks technical precision. Truth, for instance, demands universal or, at least, general community agreement while beauty does not, although Gaskell (2003) notes that *beauty* may be no less important than truth in human reasoning and judgement. Gaskell (2003) suggests that the use of the term *beauty* with greater precision depends on the future development of *two axes of inquiry*. Gaskell (2003) explains that

The first axis concerns the cultural boundaries of the efficacious use of terms comprehended by ‘beauty’ in English and ranges from the culturally specific to the pancultural. The second axis concerns both the distinction and the relation among applications of the term ‘beauty’ to perceptual and cognitive phenomena (Gaskell, 2003: 278).

While Danto (2003) argues that Duchamp and the Dadaists – the *Intractable Avant-garde* as he names them – revolted against beauty thus signalling the end of the age of aesthetics and the beginning of our present day art, for Kuspit (2005), both Duchamp and later Newman signal the end of art. According to Kuspit (2004) the end of art means not only anti-aesthetic but also anti-imaginative, emptiness, stagnation and the *dead-ending of art*. Kuspit (2004) argues that, in their renunciation of the aesthetic, Duchamp and Newman

... do not realize that the process of making a work of art – even an abortive non-aesthetic work of art such as the readymade – is itself a transformative aesthetic experience. They do not realize that the creative process is an aesthetic process, and that the work of art that results from it is the result of the aesthetic transformation of everyday experience of reality, thus affording a fresh new experience of it, which makes it seem fresh and new, that is, to use Newman’s term, original – as though seen for the first time, and thus, implicitly re-created (Kuspit, 2004: 28).

5.2.2 Aesthetics Transformed

In order to counter Duchamp and Newman’s negation of ideas of beauty, Kuspit (2004) draws upon the writings of British aesthete William Pater (1839-1894). Kuspit (2004) refers to Pater’s (1873) belief that

...the first principle of art is aesthetic beauty, which transcends the distinction between the abstract and concrete, the intellectual and the sensuous, and which is not sentimental ... Art doesn't express thought, but rather resolves the difference between an idea and its expression, seamlessly integrating them in aesthetic experience (Kuspit, 2004: 32).

According to Pater (1873) and, later, the American art critic, Clement Greenberg (1988), aesthetic experience is heightened sense experience, segregated from all other experience. It is inherently beautiful and affords pure pleasure.

Some might well relate to Pater (1873) and Greenberg's (1988) idea of heightened sense experience but initially struggle, as did photographer Robert Adams (1996), with the words *beautiful* and *beauty*. For Adams (1996), as a student, beauty seemed an obsolete word, "... appropriate to urns and the dead inside them; what had the term to do with the realities of this century?" (Adams, 1996: 24). Since then, however, Adams (1996) has revisited his ideas on beauty and now maintains that "... the word *beauty* is in practice unavoidable" (Adams, 1996: 24) arguing, indeed, it is this quality in photographs and paintings that is his goal. While Adams (1996) claims that "Beauty is, at least in part, always tied to subject matter" (Adams, 1996: 33), his particular idea of beauty is beauty of form which, he contends, is

... a synonym for the coherence and structure underlying life. ... Beauty is the overriding demonstration of pattern that one observes, for example, in the plays of Sophocles and Shakespeare, the fiction of Joyce, the films of Ozu, the painting of Cezanne and Matisse and Hopper, and the photographs of Timothy O'Sullivan, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Weston, and Dorothea Lange (Adams, 1996: 25).

Similarly, Morgan (1998) suggests that the idea of beauty offers a sense of connectedness to the world and, "... as it arrives through the language of form and concept – is still the crown of aesthetics" (Morgan, 1998: 82). What is more, beauty is triggered by an aesthetic catalyst in a subjective, sensed experience. Indeed, the artist Louise Bourgeois (1911-) contends that the word *beauty* is not a noun; in her view *beauty* is a series of experiences (Bourgeois, 1998). In other words, the idea of beauty is experienced, Bourgeois (1998) claims; in and of itself

beauty does not exist. Hence, in spite of all that has been written or spoken about beauty, “Whether material as form or immaterial as concept, beauty declares itself to be the case ...” (Morgan, 1998: 82). Thus language is the form by which the work “... is selected, resolved or understood, [while] beauty is the effect by which it is sensed, transmitted, and, finally, remembered” (Morgan, 1998: 82).

In his enquiry into aesthetics, beauty and art, Danto (2003), however, draws an important distinction between beauty and aesthetics, arguing that beauty is just one of the wide ranges of aesthetic qualities although he acknowledges that the philosophical concept of aesthetics, particularly in the eighteenth century, was dominated by the idea of beauty. Danto (2003) further adds that “... philosophical aesthetics has been paralysed by focusing as narrowly on beauty as it has” (Danto, 2003: 15). According to Danto (2003), the need for beauty in extreme moments of life is deeply ingrained in humans. It is a *value*, like truth and goodness, by which we live and it helps define what it is to be human. Danto’s (2003) view concurs with George Santayana’s (1863-1952) theory in his book *A Sense of Beauty* published in 1896 that beauty is “... value positive, intrinsic, and objectified” (Guyer, 2005: 216).

Still further broadening the concept of aesthetics, Crowther (1993) argues for an idea of *critical aesthetics*, which he sees as a striving for objectivity in aesthetic judgement which can, in turn, facilitate the deepening of aesthetic experience. What is more, *critical aesthetics* construes art and the aesthetic “... as modes of *synthesis* – in the sense of actively bringing together different capacities, in relation to different sets of objects” (Crowther, 1993: 20). This involves keeping the aesthetic domain in proper social perspective through grounding judgements in historical knowledge, and being “... squared off against complex ethical and political considerations” (Crowther, 1993: 210) to inform the subjective or felt character of the experience of art.

Objectivity in judgement, Crowther (1993) argues, is a case of offering an artwork from which others can learn and presenting a critical assessment which enables people “... to experientially appropriate the aesthetic object ... in a new way”

(Crowther, 1993: 209). Such an approach focuses on the way art and aesthetic experience "... involve an interplay between what is constant and what is historically determined in our engagement with the world" (Crowther, 1993: 206). Crowther (1993) suggests that reciprocity of the visible and invisible is basic to the structure of perception itself and, importantly, is an essential feature of all art by virtue of being a perceptual object; therefore, art has the capacity to disclose different aspects of our most basic contact with the world. However, there are also numerous other constants involved in art and aesthetic experience. Central to aesthetic empathy, Crowther (1993) maintains, is another constant which

... is our need to recognize and articulate what we are as individuals through recognising, identifying with and learning from the achievement of other people. The work of art facilitates all aspects of this, in so far as it involves the creation of a sensible manifold inseparably bonded to a symbolic content. It draws on capacities for synthesis such as imagination and rational comprehension which are necessary features of our cognitive relation to the world. More than this, it places such capacities in a mutually enhancing reciprocal relation (Crowther, 1993: 207).

According to Kuspit (2004), the more positive future for aesthetics is a new aesthetic direction now emerging in contemporary art. Kuspit (2004) argues that a number of artists are working in, as he quaintly phrases it, a *New Old Master art* manner. That is, where "Craft is once again at a premium, but art remains conceptual" (Kuspit, 2004: 183). Importantly, Kuspit (2004) maintains, *New Old Master art* is "... at once aesthetically resonant and visionary" (Kuspit, 2004: 183). *New Old Master art* shows that, unless the concept is embodied in the object, that is, brought to life and lives through its material, there is no art. In portraying modern ugliness, the giving to the ugliness of beautiful form serves to contain it and thus make it less traumatic. Artistic form, Kuspit (2004) claims, mediates ugliness without socially and metaphysically reifying it; hence

New Old Master art brings us a fresh sense of the purposefulness of art – faith in the possibility of making a new aesthetic harmony out of the tragedy of life, without falsifying it – and a new sense of art's interhumanity (Kuspit, 2004: 192).

Cooke's (2003) proposal for a *new aestheticism* might well find accord with Kuspit (2004). Cooke (2003) suggests that, if there is a shared concern for *new aesthetics*, then

... it is based on a desire to establish not simply that and how the plurality of perspectives is essential to the aesthetic object, but also that and how there can be a plurality of perspectives at the very site of tension between the aesthetic object and its account (Cooke, 2003).

With the re-emergence of the terms *aesthetics* and *beauty* and the willingness to address the plurality of ideas about aesthetics and about beauty, Gaskell (2003) also argues that *beauty* has a future; however, only when clarifying work has generated greater precision for the term will art historians use it "... with any kind of precision other than within the historical discussion of superseded descriptive categories" (Gaskell, 2003: 279). Nonetheless, Gaskell (2003) and others such as Danto (2003) and Kuspit (2004) claim that beauty can no longer be deemed a *taboo word*, even if its use requires some elaboration, "... for aesthetic evaluation is returning to art-historical practice as part of a new theoretical turn" (Gaskell, 2003: 279). In apparent concurrence with Gaskell's (2003) argument, Guyer (2005) is convinced that both artists and the audience of art might not need just a concept but also a theory of beauty because,

... even if we cannot command that others find the same things beautiful that we ourselves do, we are always commending what we find beautiful to each other, and this is not something we can responsibly do without having some well-grounded expectation that those to whom we commend the objects we have found beautiful may also do so, an expectation that we might well ground in a theory of beauty (Guyer, 2005: xviii).

The perspectives on beauty expressed in a 2005 discussion on national radio between the presenter and two contemporary art gallery directors (ABC/RN, 2005) concur, in the main, with those of Morgan (1998). This dialogue also highlights the climate of interest in and the degree to which the term *beauty* still ignites debate but also, importantly, the current democratisation of beauty and aesthetics. Given the term's rejected status during much of the twentieth century, the gallery directors, Juliana Engberg and Chris McAuliffe (ABC/RN, 2005),

however, agree that, since the mid-1990s, the term *beauty* has increasingly been used to describe not only formal qualities of a work of art such as perfection of structure, form, symmetry, proportion and harmony but also perfection and quality of ideas, concepts, research and pursuits of artists. Indeed, there was no longer hesitation by the Sydney Museum of Contemporary Art to use the word *beauty* in describing the work of Jacky Redgate (1955-) as combining *conceptual rigour and formal beauty* on the invitation to her exhibition (MCA, 2005). The term *beauty* along with aesthetics, then, has taken on a new credibility in art. It has also broadened so that within the concept of aesthetics, reside suggestions and connotations of the poetic and/or spiritual.

As an example of current artwork that embodies such poetic and spiritual ideas of beauty, Engberg (2005) refers to the British 2005 Turner Prize winner, *Shedboatshed*, 2005 by Simon Starling (1967-). This prize-winning work is a wooden shed the artist made into a boat, floated down the Rhine and then rebuilt as a shed. In awarding the prize to Starling, the judges said: “He transforms and reframes existing objects using a rigorous process of research to develop his sculptural installations” (Majendie, 2005). Engberg and McAuliffe (2005) argue that the concept and research behind Starling’s work might well be termed beautiful but so too might the object itself, whose beauty lies not in its perfection of formal qualities but in its ordinary and humble nature.

Hence, in more recent years, it is evident that beauty and aesthetics have experienced somewhat of a resurgence in the sense that contemporary art engages with ideas of beauty, the beautiful or the sublime in a new way. Some artists exhibit cognisance of the potential of ideas of aesthetics and beauty in art and, indeed, deliberately and simultaneously both critique these ideas and embrace them in their work. An example of an Australian artist who intentionally creates beautiful works in an eighteenth century aesthetic sense is Marian Drew (1960-). Drew’s photographs reconceptualise Australian wildlife road kill within the context and formal arrangements of seventeenth and eighteenth still life paintings. Her work celebrates the value and beauty of these animals and acknowledges the relationship we have with these animals but at the same time evidences the harsh

reality that the animals have been killed by us on the roads. Drew's work appeals on an aesthetic level but also references eighteenth century painting and aesthetics.

Considerations of the revitalisation of the traditions and principles of aesthetics or indeed a theory of beauty, and a democratisation of the ideas of beauty at the beginning of the second millennium might equally apply to the traditions and principles of another area of theory, change and discourse, that of ethics.

5.3 Key Issues in Ethics: Finding Frameworks and Foundations

Ethics and/or moral principles are fundamental to the lives of humans in all societies. Ethics and moral principles help us consider and resolve contentious and difficult issues in such areas as abortion, euthanasia, reproductive technologies, racism, criminal punishment, poverty, war and terrorism. Ethical theories in these and other areas relate to *applied ethics*, which means that ethical theories are applied to particular situations and actual problems in particular fields such as legal, medical, environmental, corporate and business.

Debate and discussion of applied ethics are brought into the public domain particularly when contentious issues cause controversy. An example of such controversy was when, in 2001, the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) cancelled the exhibition *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection* after the difficulties that the Brooklyn Museum in the United States had encountered with the show. Kennedy claimed that "... Brooklyn had become embroiled in an ethical situation, which was dividing its own museum staff by allowing Charles Saatchi to effectively curate his own show" (Kennedy, 2001: 3). Art critics and others in the Australian arts media attacked Kennedy and the NGA Council's decision to cancel the exhibition due to *an issue of museum ethics*. Kennedy notes that this inability of critics to accept the *bona fides* of the NGA in matters of ethics "... emphasises the lack of attention paid and importance given to these matters" (Kennedy, 2001: 1). Kennedy also highlights the distinction

between ethical standards and legal standards, stating that the Gallery "... is highly sensitive to accusations of malpractice and inappropriate behaviour" (Kennedy, 2001: 1). The problem with the *Sensation* exhibition, Kennedy (2001) acknowledges, came about because there were no written and agreed ethical guidelines about how exhibitions of works of art borrowed from private collections should be treated. Unfortunately, major ethical issues in museums tend to be ignored.

But as the NGA possibly discovered, to its cost, ethics can be ignored for only a short time because, as Singer (1981) argues "Ethics is part of the natural human condition" (Singer, 1981: 23). Every human society has some code of behaviour, indeed, "The core of ethics runs deep in our species and is common to human beings everywhere" (Singer, 1981: 27). According to Singer (1981), the basis for ethics is biological and we have inherited it from pre-human ancestors. While this idea has prompted resistance from people who prefer to draw sharp boundaries between humans and other animals, over the past thirty or so years, animal ethologists and scientists have found that these boundaries have indeed blurred. Singer (1981) contends that, consistent with our knowledge of evolutionary theory, kin altruism, reciprocal altruism and a limited amount of group altruism may well have developed among the social animals from whom we are descended; and have subsequently evolved into systems of ethics similar to those prevailing among humans.

Sociobiology, Singer (1981) claims,

... enables us to see ethics as a mode of human reasoning which develops in a group context, building on more limited, biologically based altruism (Singer, 1981: 149).

What is more, "The principles of ethics come from our own nature as social, reasoning beings" (Singer, 1981: 149). Ethics are not, then, based on subjective feelings, arbitrary choices or dictated to us by an external authority, "Ethical reasoning points the way to an assessment of ethical judgements from an objective

point of view” (Singer, 1981: 149). Singer (1981) cautions, however, that neither the universality nor biological base of human ethics is a necessary justification.

The question is, then, what particular ethical theory/theories or set of principles from the number of traditions and theories of ethics, or the *morass of ethics*, as Singer (1981) phrases it, are relevant to the intersection (see Figure 5.1.1). This necessitates a broad overview of the theoretical terrain in ethics. According to Hinman (2002), the *basic moral orientations* are: *divine command theories* (do what the Bible, Koran or other sacred texts set out – source: the Bible, Koran and other religious or sacred texts); the *ethics of conscience* (follow your conscience and inner voice – source: often religious); *ethical egoism* (watch out for self only – source: Thomas Hobbes, 1588-1679); *ethics of duty* (do the right thing – source: Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804); *ethics of respect* (human interactions are governed by respect for others – source: Immanuel Kant); *ethics of rights* (humans have unalienable rights – source: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; United States Bill of Rights); *utilitarianism* (consider the consequences for all – sources: Jeremy Bentham, 1748-1832; John Stuart Mill, 1806-1873; William Godwin, 1756-1836; Henry Sidgwick, 1838-1900); *ethics of justice* (what is fair for one should be fair for all – source: John Rawls (1999); and *virtue ethics* (virtue ethics are to be a good person and develop good character – source: Aristotle, 384-322 BC; Plato, ca.427-ca.327; Jesuit tradition).

Like other disciplines, the field of ethics evolves and changes as traditions are questioned and modified, and as doubts are raised about ethical philosophies and theories. Singer (2000), for example, suggests it is time for a revolution of that initiated by Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries about the position of the planets in relation to thinking about issues of life and death, that is, a revolution “... against a set of ideas we have inherited from the period in which the intellectual world was dominated by a religious outlook” (Singer, 2000: 211). Singer (2000) proposes that reason and argument have roles to play in ethics so that the standard view of ethics can be challenged. The ethics concerning our attitude towards and treatment of animals is one such

area that has come under considerable scrutiny giving rise to considerable contention and debate over the past thirty to thirty-five years.

In his book, *Animal Liberation*, Singer (1990) argues for the ethical principle of extending equal consideration of interests to animals. While other philosophers such as Bentham (1988 [1828]), Sidgwick (1963 [1907]) and Godwin (1842 [2001]) have proposed the principle of equal consideration of interests as a basic moral principle, Singer (1990) includes animals as well as humans. Bentham, the acknowledged eighteenth century founder of utilitarianism, also understood this principle in relation to non-human animals. Bentham's (1988 [1828]) widely quoted passage from his publication *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1988 [1828]), evidences the radical nature of his philosophy, which foreshadowed animal rights philosophy:

The day *may* come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hands of tyranny. The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned without redress to the caprice of a tormentor. It may one day come to be recognized that the number of legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or perhaps the faculty of discourse? But a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month old. But suppose they were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor Can they *talk*? but, Can they *suffer*? (Bentham, 1988 [1823]: 310-11).

DeGrazia (1996), considered to be a current generation philosopher, applies rigorous philosophical exploration and theoretical methodology to the idea of equal consideration for animals in his publication, *Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status*, arguing support for the moral principle that equal consideration should extend to animals. According to DeGrazia (1996), "... the issue of equal consideration *may* be the most crucial to animal ethics" (DeGrazia, 1996: 38). DeGrazia (1996) claims that the ethical study of animals is now accepted under the term *animal ethics*.

Matheny (2006) offers a clear and concise argument for the principle of equal consideration and for the philosophical moral theory of utilitarianism as a reasonable theory which "... includes animals in its moral consideration, and ... obliges us to make dramatic changes in our institutions and habits" (Matheny, 2006: 24). Utilitarianism, Matheny (2006) argues, is an ethical theory "...with the rule, 'act in such a way as to maximize the expected satisfaction of interests in the world, equally considered'" (Matheny, 2006: 14). Another way of thinking about the principle of equal consideration, Matheny (2006) suggests, is to "... imagine which actions I would choose if I had to live the lives of those affected by me" (Matheny, 2006: 14). Given that the rule of utilitarianism represents a simple operation upon a principle of equality, Matheny (2006) claims, "... it is perhaps the most minimal ethical rule we could derive" (Matheny, 2006: 14).

Matheny (2006) explains the properties of utilitarianism, which allow us to make our important moral judgements as being *universalist*, *welfarist*, *consequentialist* and *aggregative*. According to Matheny (2006),

Utilitarianism is *universalist* because it takes into account the interests of all those who are affected by an action, regardless of their nationality, gender, race or other traits that we find, upon reflection, are not morally relevant ... Utilitarianism is *welfarist* because it defines what is ethically 'good' in terms of people's welfare, which we can understand as the satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) of people's interests ... particularly those in a pleasurable, relatively painless life ... Utilitarianism is *consequentialist* because it evaluates the rightness or wrongness of an action by that action's expected consequences: the degree to which an action satisfies interests. These consequences can often be predicted and compared accurately with little more than common sense ... Finally, utilitarianism is said to be *aggregative* because it adds up the interests of all those affected by an action ... I choose the action that results in the greatest net satisfaction of interests – 'the greatest good for the greatest number' (Matheny, 2006: 14-15).

It is significant to the consideration of the focal intersection in Figure 5.1.1 that the principle of equal consideration of interests applies to non-human animals. The work of Dawkins (1980, 1986, 1998, 2006), Singer (1990), Ryder (1981, 1989), Rollin (1989), Regan (1983, 2004), DeGrazia (1996) and others evidences

the nature of the sentience of animals and show that animals have preferences, dislikes, find certain things pleasant or unpleasant and also feel pain. Moreover, DeGrazia (1996) argues that, in the minimal means-ends sense of thinking that is basic to belief-desire psychology, it would appear that "...all animals who have beliefs and desires – probably most or all vertebrates and some invertebrates – can think" (DeGrazia, 1996: 165). In relation to self-awareness in animals, DeGrazia (1996) agrees with Rodd (1990) that "... self-awareness is not all-or-nothing but comes in degrees and in different forms" (DeGrazia, 1996: 182), and it would appear that, as Rodd (1990) points out, for animals the evolutionary pressure for reliable prediction of the behaviour of others, either of their own species or another, would give an important selective advantage to self-conscious animals within a group who were already conscious. DeGrazia (1996) also argues that there are different kinds and degrees of moral agency and that "... the crude statement that no nonhuman animals are moral agents cannot be sustained" (DeGrazia, 1996: 204). The proposition put forward and held by French philosopher, René Descartes (1596-1650), that animals are automata and do not feel pain has long and clearly been refuted.

Just as we accept that another human feels pain, even though we cannot feel the intensity or type of their pain ourselves and thus cannot know for certain that it is pain they are feeling, we similarly have good reason to accept that non-human animals feel pain. For example, the sentience of the cats and dogs with whom they live would be clearly evident to their carers. Actions, for instance, such as writhing, moaning and flinching by their dog or cat offer clear signs of the presence of pain, discomfort or fear. Hence, if non-human animals are able to feel pleasure and pain, then Matheny (2006) proposes, we are obliged to consider "... the interests of all those who are capable of feeling pleasure and pain – that is, all those who are *sentient*" (Matheny, 2006: 17), Moreover, "If an animal can feel pleasure and pain, then that animal possesses interests" (Matheny, 2006: 19). The view of utilitarians regarding the principle of equal consideration of interests of others, then, includes the interests of non-human animals. In Singer's (2000) words,

If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. No matter what the nature of the being, the principle of equality requires that its suffering be counted equally with the like suffering – insofar as rough comparisons can be made – of any other being ... So the limit of sentience (using the term as a convenient if not strictly accurate shorthand for the capacity to suffer and/or experience enjoyment) is the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others (Singer, 2000: 35).

The ethics or moral philosophy of utilitarianism discussed by Singer (2000) and Matheny (2006) makes a fundamental contribution to the intersection. The ethical position of utilitarianism is a clear and minimal one. It is evident that utilitarianism is, as Matheny (2006) observes, a *reasonable* ethical theory that includes animals in its moral consideration. Indeed, according to DeGrazia (1996), unless and until a solid argument is found to support unequal consideration then the theoretical virtues of the *coherence* model (a methodology he devised to employ on animal ethics questions in order to transcend the utility-versus-rights debate) favour equal consideration for animals. DeGrazia (2006) suggests that, “Despite differences, the moral frameworks affording the strongest protection for animals agree that animals deserve *equal consideration*” (DeGrazia, 2006: 49).

5.4 Key Issues in Animal Advocacy: Current Perspectives

Deliberations on the interests and equal consideration of animals lie at the heart of animal advocacy. A brief overview of the background and rise of the animal rights movement might, to some extent, illuminate current perspectives on animal advocacy. It is well documented (Ryder, 1989; Jasper and Nelkin, 1992; DeGrazia, 1996; Singer 1990, 2006) that, since the 1960s, a new and powerful moral concern, as Ryder (1989) phrases it, emerged for animals. This change in consideration towards animals represented a radical shift from *animal welfare* to *animal rights*. Animal rights differed to a major degree from animal welfare in that it had a reasoned moral philosophical basis. Currently, the two major directions of work for animals continue but now the animal rights movement has grown into a worldwide movement involving a multitude and diversity of

organisations, groups and individuals in most countries working for the cause of animals in factory farms, research laboratories, zoos, circuses, in the wild, and other such places and situations where animals are exploited and are suffering.

Where and how, then, did animal rights begin? The moral philosophical basis for the treatment of animals had begun to draw the attention of philosophers around 1965 when Brophy's (1989 [1965]) article titled the *Rights of Animals* appeared in *The Sunday Times*. She pointed out that

The relationship of *homo sapiens* to the other animals is one of unremitting exploitation. We employ their work; we eat and wear them. We exploit them to serve our superstitions: whereas we used to sacrifice them to our gods and tear out their entrails in order to foresee the future, we now sacrifice them to science, and experiment on their entrails in the hope – or mere offchance – that we might thereby see a little more clearly into the present. When we can think of no other pretext for causing their death and no profit to turn it to, we often cause it none the less, wantonly, the only gain being a brief pleasure for ourselves, which is usually only marginally bigger than the pleasure we could have had without killing anything ... (Brophy, 1989 [1965]: 123).

Just prior to Brophy's article, in 1964, Harrison presented a groundbreaking exposé of the growing factory farming system of animal production in her book, *Animal Machines*.

In addition, a new animal activism emerged in the United Kingdom when members of the *League Against Cruel Sports* started radical action to stop the hunting of foxes with hounds (incidentally, a ban on hunting foxes came into force in Britain in February 2005). In 1963, this group became the *Hunt Saboteurs Association* (and still continues, even after the ban, comprising many local active groups throughout the United Kingdom working to prevent the illegal hunting with hounds of fox, hare, and deer). The development of moral philosophical deliberations about our treatment of animals emerged some time later when a group of young graduate philosophers at Oxford University, Rosalind and Stanley Godlovitch and John Harris, edited a publication titled *Animals, Men and Morals*, (1974), which contained contributions from other Oxford students at the time such

as Stephen Clark (1977a) and Andrew Linzey (1989) as well as Richard Ryder (1989) who was a psychologist working at the Warneford Hospital. All contributors have since written influential publications on animal rights.

The Australian philosopher, Peter Singer, was also at Oxford in the early 1970s with the Godlovitchs and Harris and was stimulated by the media indifference to the release of their book, *Animals, Men and Morals*, (1974), to write an article for *The New York Times Review of Books* on 5 April, 1973, in which he discussed their publication and the treatment of animals. The words *animal liberation* appeared, for the first time, on the front page of this issue. In a reflection on this article, thirty years on, Singer (2003) revisits his argument that humans and non-human animals share the capacity to suffer and hence humans cannot ignore their interests simply on the ground that they are members of another species. Singer's (1990) book, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*, grew out of the essay he wrote for *The New York Times Review of Books*, and is often credited as launching the animal rights movement. Jasper and Nelkin (1992) observe in their book, *The Animal Rights Crusade: The Growth of a Moral Protest*, "Philosophers served as midwives of the animal rights movement in the late 1970s" (Jasper and Nelkin, 1992: 90), while Singer (1990) is often referred to as the *father* of the animal rights movement and his book, the *bible* for the animal rights movement. Singer (1990) articulated ideology that linked, as Jasper and Nelkin (1992) observe, feelings to actions on behalf of animals.

Among a number of thinkers in the early years of the animal rights movement, well-known philosophers such as Midgley (1979, 1983) and Regan (1983) have also made significant contributions to animal rights discourse. Indeed, DeGrazia (1996) holds the view that "... philosophical work is essential to understanding animals" (DeGrazia, 1996: 2). The early 1980s saw a rapid growth of the animal movement and increasing debate about the issues with new animal rights organisations forming and more people entering the discussion. However, to a considerable degree, philosophy continues to be the discipline in which occurs much examination and theorising in regard to questions about non-human animals: the debates are moral ones from varied moral positions that might seek

reform and/or abolition of exploitation of animals. The concerns and clashes of basic moral values in competing world views, as Jasper and Nelkin (1992) phrase it, continue and, in some cases, moral positions cause groups to polarise. However, within the fervour, sound discussion continues.

In *The New York Times Review of Books* article of 1973, Singer (2003) also used the term *speciesism*, which was originally coined by Ryder (1989) in 1970 when he first used it in a privately-printed leaflet published in Oxford that same year to describe the moral argument that species alone is not a valid criterion for discrimination against and inflicting suffering on members of another species – animals. Like race or sex, Ryder (1989) claims, species denotes some physical and other differences but in no way does it nullify the capacity to suffer, which both humans and non-human animals share. In relation to suffering, DeGrazia's (1996) rigorous investigation concludes that "... the available evidence suggests that most or all vertebrates, and perhaps some invertebrates, can suffer" (DeGrazia, 1996: 123). Species, then, is not a reason for treating some beings as morally more significant than others: in Singer's (2003) words,

... a difference of species is not an ethically defensible ground for giving less consideration to the interests of a sentient being than we give to similar interests of a member of our own species (Singer, 2003: 5).

Singer (2003), in his reflections on the thirty years after the publication of *The New York Times Review of Books* article in 1973, *Animal Liberation at 30*, suggests that a number of significant changes have occurred in terms of our attitude towards and treatment of animals. For example, in Europe, some industries are in a state of transformation because of public concern for farm animals. Also, the avoidance of the use of animal products (vegetarianism and veganism) is far more widespread in Europe and the United States than they were thirty years ago. Indeed, such practices as battery hen cages are being phased out in the European Union. However, he notes that despite "... the generally favourable course of the philosophical debate also about the moral status of animals ..." (Singer, 2003: 9), the idea of equal consideration of the interests of all beings irrespective of species, is far from widespread acceptance. Indeed the

numbers of animals being consumed is now much greater than it was thirty years ago.

According to DeGrazia (1996), there have been two generations of scholars in animal ethics. The first generation include such major philosophers as Singer (1990) and Regan (1983). DeGrazia (1996) observes that, interestingly, what is most remarkable about the first generation of scholars is that "... they all agree on the basic idea of extending equal consideration to animals" (DeGrazia, 1996: 6) whereas the vast majority of people and philosophers do not grant animals' interests equal consideration. The second generation of scholars, for DeGrazia (1996), is signalled by Midgley's (1983) *Animals and Why They Matter*. Much of Midgley's (1983) work, DeGrazia (1996) claims, is devoted to discrediting the view that animals are morally unimportant, thus bringing fresh theoretical air to the debate. DeGrazia (1996) cites the work of Sapontzis's (1987) in *Morals, Reason, and Animals*, Rodd's (1990) *Biology, Ethics and Animals* and Carruthers's (1992) *The Animal Issue: Moral Theory in Practice* as important publications and contributions to the second generation of philosophising about animals. DeGrazia (1996) views his own contribution, *Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status*, as transcending the utility-versus-rights debate by offering a methodology based on the fact "... that many animals have moral status and that much of our current use of animals is ethically indefensible" (DeGrazia, 1996: 10).

In a more recent observation of the state of the animal movement, rather than looking separately at the philosophical work on animals, Singer (2006) argues that the movement has grown and matured to the extent that a new generation of thinkers and activists has emerged. The most obvious difference between the current debate over the moral status of animals and that of thirty years ago, Singer (2003) contends, is that

... in the early 1970s, to an extent barely credible today, scarcely anyone thought that the treatment of individual animals raised an ethical issue worth taking seriously. There were no animal rights or animal liberation organizations (Singer, 2003: 2).

Now, the term *speciesism*, which did not exist thirty-five years ago, is in most reputable dictionaries. Singer (2006) claims that, while the view that species is in itself a reason for treating some beings as morally more significant than others is still often assumed, it is less often defended. What is more, Singer (2006) argues that

The continuing failure of philosophers to produce a plausible theory of the moral importance of species membership indicates, with increasing probability, that there is no such plausible theory (Singer, 2006: 4).

One important issue relating to species membership that has arisen is cross species boundaries and the idea that non-human animals can hold the status of persons. According to Francione (2004), animals will become moral persons if we extend to them the right not to be property. Furthermore, Francione (2004) argues, to say that a being is a person is merely to say that the being has morally significant interests to which the principle of equal consideration applies and that the being is not a thing.

In his considerations on *personhood* beyond the human species, DeGrazia (2006) argues that some non-humans possess the characteristics that have been suggested as marking the special moral significance of humans such as the ability to reason, self-awareness and language, among others. Singer (2006) suggests that these criteria do not mark the greater moral significance of humans as such, but rather "... that of most humans and some nonhumans over some humans and most nonhumans" (Singer, 2006: 4). The more that becomes known about the great ape species, for example, the argument for these non-human animals as a *bridge species* in Singer's (2006) terms, in genetic, behavioural and cognitive senses as well as morally, is increasingly becoming more persuasive. DeGrazia (2006), however, cautions that personhood might be overestimated and indeed that it is not the only morally significant characteristic in non-human beings, and argues that, "Even if personhood proves to have some moral significance, sentience is far more fundamental and important" (DeGrazia, 2006: 49).

Balluch (2006) reminds us that it is when the changes in awareness are accompanied by new laws that changes in awareness might gradually transform our treatment of animals. Some of the most far-reaching changes have occurred in Austria. The Austrian animal movement helped bring about a ban on battery cages in Austria, effective from January 2009 and, in the wake of this success, was able to achieve other changes for animals. For example, it is now illegal to trade in living cats and dogs in shops or display cats and dogs publicly in order to sell them. It is also illegal to kill any animal without good reason, even painlessly. Furthermore, the Austrian constitution will include the following statement alongside human rights: ““The state protects the life and wellbeing of animals due to the special responsibility of mankind with respect to animals as their fellows”” (Balluch, 2006: 162). The civil code in Austria also states that animals are not things and the law requires state and local governments to provide financial support for more animal-friendly husbandry systems. According to a new law, brought into effect in January 2005, the use of all wild animals in circuses is illegal.

Even though powerful corporate, political and economic interests, along with the growth of factory farming and meat eating in Asian countries, have almost outweighed the benefits and gains for animals that the animal movement has made, now a greater number of people than thirty or even twenty years ago are more enlightened about the general issues of animal rights. As Balluch (2006) argues, “Lasting change begins with a change of awareness” (Balluch, 2006: 165). To some extent, changes in awareness have been brought about by drawing attention to animal issues in a number of formats and venues within a range of public domains including radio, television, theatres, cinemas, streets and galleries. For example, in the daily news, whether newspapers, television, radio or online, we might witness a group of people such as Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd activists putting their lives at risks on the oceans while they endeavour to defend whales and thwart the activities of those people hunting and killing whales (ABC News Online, 2006, 2008; Pash, 2006). Animal issues might be examined at some depth such as on the program on ABC’s Background Briefing, *Factory Farming* –

Enough is Enough? (ABC, 2004), which included interviews of experts in animal welfare from the United Kingdom and Australia.

Also, through the media, we might see the work of individuals who work for the cause of animals and bring about changes in awareness in a variety of different ways. The ABC television program, *The Sherman Fortune on Australian Story* (ABC, 2005), featured gallery owner (Sherman Galleries) and business man, Brian Sherman and his daughter Ondine, for instance, who started the organisation, *Voicelless*. In response to the Sherman's concern about animals, particularly farm animals, this new kind of organisation for the cause of animals features a grants program to support the work of existing animal protection organisations, and also has a legal arm which works on public policy and law plus an educational program which promotes compassion for animals to school-aged children. A patron of *Voicelless*, author Coetzee (2006), maintains that

Voicelless acts in the most practical of ways to fund projects across the country whose goal is to ameliorate the lives of animals. *Voicelless* is a small part of what has become a large and I would hope irreversible movement among human beings to make this planet a less harsh and deadly place for all those to whom it is the one and only home (*Voicelless*, Coetzee, 2006).

The presentation of animal issues in these forums also reminds us that contradictions and dichotomies in people's attitudes towards and treatment of animals abound.

There are indications of changes too in the growing awareness of the cognitive functions of such little understood animals as chickens, fish and sheep. There is an increasing level of research being undertaken into not only the behaviour but also the mental and emotional lives of these animals, which indicate that even fish have memories and use tools. Recent research on sheep, commonly thought to be among the stupidest of animals, evidences that they feel complex emotions and are capable of conscious thought. Findings from studies such as those conducted at The Babraham Institute in the U.K. and Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts show that sheep are capable of remembering the faces of other

sheep, and even people, for many years at a time. Dr. Keith Kendrick and his colleagues at the Babraham Institute in Britain reported that sheep can recognise visually as many as fifty sheep faces, even if they have not seen them for more than two years. The studies also demonstrate that sheep vocalise to indicate stress as much as humans (PETA, 2006). Pigeons too have perceptual abilities and intelligence in vision that we are just beginning to understand and appreciate. A number of studies have involved pigeons' discrimination of visual images. One such research project involving an experiment with eight pigeons demonstrated that these birds successfully learned to discriminate colour slides of paintings by Monet and Picasso. Following some training, the birds discriminated paintings by Monet and Picasso that had never been presented during the discrimination training. The experiment results suggested that pigeons' behaviour can be controlled by complex visual stimuli in ways that suggest categorisation. (Watanabe, Sakamoto and Wakita, 1995).

As noted in Chapter Two, a new and broad academic interest in animals and animal-human relations has emerged over the past five to ten years, raising the level of debate across a wide variety of disciplines both internationally and in Australia. The *Animals & Society (Australia) Study Group*, inaugurated in July 2005, is becoming part of the international animal studies forum. Such forums bring together diverse perspectives on animal issues and questions and the potential to explore relatively unexamined territory regarding human interaction with animals. In his book, *In Defense of the Animals: The Second Wave*, Singer (2006) suggests that, although the gains of the animal movement are limited, we are moving in the right direction. The wider forum of discussion about animal issues, which includes the visual arts, also represents a positive shift.

5.5 Intersections between Aesthetics, Ethics and Animal Advocacy

The intersection and, indeed, the underpinning of moral and ethical issues in animal advocacy is evidenced in section 5.3 where the utilitarian ethical

philosophy is proposed as a clear moral philosophical principle for considering how we should treat animals. The interconnection of moral principles with animal advocacy is extensively argued but how do ethics and animal advocacy intersect with aesthetics? Perhaps, more broadly, how does ethics interface with aesthetics? Is it even possible to maintain an ethical position such as utilitarianism within the realm of art and aesthetics? In an artwork, are there possibilities of shifting the balance of ethics and aesthetics so the one outweighs or dominates the other? Indeed, what balance is desirable?

As indicated in section 5.2, aesthetics is a changing, challenging and complex subject not, least of all, because of its association with other experiences and disciplines. Indeed, the interface between aesthetics and ethics excites the interest of a number of writers, philosophers and theorists (Levinson, 2001; Sontag, 2003; Guyer, 2005). Levinson (2001) suggests that the intersection of aesthetics and ethics can be viewed as *three spheres of inquiry*.

The first is that of problems or presuppositions common to aesthetics and ethics, the two traditional branches of value theory. The second is that of ethical issues in aesthetics, or the practice of art. And the third sphere is that of aesthetic issues in ethics, theoretical and applied (Levinson, 2001: 1).

In relation to the first two spheres of inquiry, writers such as Sontag (2003) advocate an aesthetic approach to the consideration of culture in their work. It was observed in *The New York Times* (2004) obituary for Sontag (1933-2004) that, “The theme that runs through Susan's writing is this lifelong struggle to arrive at the proper balance between the moral and the aesthetic” (Fox, 2004). Indeed, in the preface to her well-known publication, *On Photography*, Sontag (1977) notes that the book “... all started with one essay – about some of the problems, aesthetic and moral, posed by the omnipresence of photographed images” (Sontag, 1977). Provoked by contemporary photographic images of war and disaster, Sontag’s (2003) book, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, continues with the deliberations on the intersections of the aesthetic and moral issues. Dilemmas of a moral and aesthetic nature arise, Sontag (2003) argues, when artists take

photographs of war rather than, for example, use paint to depict war in all its horror. Photography, Sontag (2003) suggests, "... that bears witness to the calamitous and the reprehensible is much criticized if it seems 'aesthetic'; that is, too much like art" (Sontag, 2003: 76). In this view, in other words, photographs that show suffering should not be beautiful.

In the examination of ethics and art, a question that is frequently posed is: can we appreciate a work of art as aesthetically good while at the same time censure it as morally bad? First, in clarifying what is meant by morality, Shepherd (1987) suggests that morality might be thought by some to be a *moral code* which governs our relationships with others or in terms of *virtues* such as kindness, generosity or honesty. Sometimes morality is also used to refer to a general *outlook on life* and an overall *system of values* rather than codes or virtues. Morality in all these senses is relevant to art.

Some works of art address societal and individual moral codes or questions about animal issues very directly. For example, the work of Australian artist, Piccinini, *The Young Family*, 2003, raises a number of ethical and moral concerns including xenotransplantation and organism bio-engineering. This work represents a human sow with primate legs and arms suckling her litter of human-like piglets. The mother's skin is wrinkled, blotched and has other imperfections of normal human skin. She casts a human-like maternal gaze upon her endearing babies. Thus, according to Randles (2004), this work confronts us with difficult and emotional questions about bio-engineered creatures, for instance: What will become of these creatures when they have fulfilled their purpose? Relatedly,

We already breed animals to eat – would breeding animals to create body parts for our use be different? Should creatures have more rights than we currently afford animals if they contain genetic material that is, in fact, derived from humans? (Randles, 2004: 2).

Another work by Piccinini also raises questions pertaining to ethics, aesthetics and animals. *Game Boy Advanced*, 2003, concerns matters of cloning. Two boys, intently absorbed in their Game Boy device, at first glance look normal, however,

on closer scrutiny we can see they are genetically identical, in other words they are clones and are obviously prematurely aging. This work relates to the cloning research on Dolly the sheep who was born old and died at the age of six. Randles (2004) asks: “Will they share the same fate as Dolly?” (Randles, 2004: 3). Randles (2004) suggests that Piccinini’s works also raise questions about our attitudes towards physical disability and to the controversial matter of pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, that is, the screening of embryos to allow for the selection of physical attributes that seem more desirable. Hence, moral principles and ethical questions about our treatment of both human and non-human animals are integral to Piccinini’s art and aesthetics. The unnerving reality of the pieces, the perfection of finish and detail and the life-size scale of the works all come into play in an aesthetic response. While some of the works might make us feel uncomfortable or even shock us with their life-like qualities, their perfection and beauty compels us to look closer and longer, and deliberate on their nature and meaning. Indeed, the works are powerful in their effect upon us.

Another example of work which gives rise to issues of ethics, aesthetics and animal advocacy is the work of the New Zealand artist Singer (1966-) who clearly takes an animal rights position in her use of animal parts in the creation of her works. In her sculptural works exploring trophy hunting, Singer uses donated old taxidermy trophy kill from which she strips the skin in order to construct her work. Singer claims that her practice does not allow her to work with living animals or have living creatures killed or otherwise harmed for her art. Indeed, Singer contends that all the animal materials used in her art are old, donated and/or discarded as refuse. Singer hopes that her work will “... make the viewer consider the morality of our willingness to use animals for our own purposes” (Criminalanimal, 2006).

Plato and Tolstoy (1828-1910) believed that the kind of art to which we are exposed can affect the kind of people we become. They are, in Shepherd’s (1987) view, concerned with moral character rather than moral rules. But there is some difficulty in assessing whether good art has a morally improving effect or whether aesthetic excellence guarantees good moral effects. Indeed, generalisations about

the moral effects of art are questionable. The claims that morally bad work will corrupt, Shepherd (1987) contends, are more often made about representational work where the problem of the relationship between art and morals is at its most acute. Importantly, Shepherd (1987) reminds us that arguments about morality and representational art often confuse moral questions about the content of art with moral questions about its effects.

In asking the question, *how bad can good art be?* and addressing the question of both morality and immorality in art, Hanson (2001) argues that, for both artist and audience, there is, on balance, no inherent immorality in engaging with art. Interestingly and somewhat counter to the views of Hanson (2001), Danto (1981) raises a concern about art's separation from moral life, suggesting that "... there would be cases in which it would be wrong or inhuman to take an aesthetic attitude" (Danto, 1981: 22). Danto (1981) believes that placing certain realities at a *psychical distance* is wrong, that is,

... to see a riot, for instance, in which police are clubbing demonstrators, as a kind of ballet, or to see the bombs exploding like mystical chrysanthemums from the plane they have been dropped from. The question instead must arise as to what one should do. For parallel reasons ... there are things it would be almost immoral to represent in art, precisely because they are then put at a distance which is exactly wrong from a moral perspective (Danto, 1981: 22).

Hanson (2001) claims that what needs to be clarified in these issues is "... the extent to which – wilfully or not, appropriately or not – we intertwine or even fuse moral and aesthetic judgement" (Hanson, 2001: 214). Shepherd (1987) levels these two sides of discourse with the observation that works of art are, however, not isolated from the artists who create them, from the world which supplies their material or from the audience to whom they are presented.

This integration of artists with their world is an important aspect to consider. Aesthetic judgements and moral judgements, Neill and Ridley (2002) contend, have much in common, both being kinds of value judgements, and both expressing "... attitudes or views which may be of intense, and even overriding,

significance to the person making them” (Neill and Ridley, 2002: 337). Understanding the relationship between the two becomes urgent, Neill and Ridley (2002) suggest, when it is seen how often “... the two have been pitted against one another” (Neill and Ridley, 2002: 337). For example, the reformers of the sixteenth century vandalised churches because of their moral objections to the decorative representations found in them, and the Nazis mounted an exhibition of so-called *degenerate art* (which was some of the best works from the first part of the twentieth century) for the works’ supposed moral decadence.

The above are examples of moral values and judgements (in these cases moral objections) overtaking aesthetic values and judgements. Walton (2002) argues that it is much harder to think of cases where we allow our aesthetic values to outweigh our moral values. One of the reasons he suggests is that, in order to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of an artwork, it is necessary to engage with the work imaginatively and the more a work of art distorts the moral world, the harder it is to engage imaginatively with that work and, therefore, appreciate it. Tanner (2002) on the other hand, suggests that, since neither aesthetic nor moral values are unconstrained by other considerations, we should not expect either of them, always, to outweigh the other: artworks are more complex than that.

Others also consider the junction of aesthetics and ethics a compelling and potent area for examination. In drawing together essays by a number of philosophers in the fields of both aesthetics and ethics, Levinson (2001) argues that “... the ground common to aesthetics and ethics is a fertile one” (Levinson, 2001: 25) and, moreover,

The attention aestheticians have recently given to moral aspects of art and art criticism, and that ethicists have recently paid to aesthetic aspects of moral life and moral evaluation, give hope of ending this rather artificial isolation, though without necessarily forcing us to accede in Wittgenstein’s gnomic dictum that ‘ethics and aesthetics are one’ (Levinson, 2001: 1).

However, while the debate about the relationship and intersection of ethics and aesthetics is tempered by some qualifying distinctions, there would seem to be no

fundamental disagreements. For Miller (2001), aesthetic judgements parallel moral and scientific ones, sharing some of the same level of objectivity, yet in a deeper way. Moreover, according to Gaut (2001), "... the ethical criticism of art is a proper and legitimate aesthetic activity" (Gaut, 2001: 182) which he terms *ethicism*. Gaut (2001) suggests that "... the ethical assessment of attitudes manifested by works of art is a legitimate aspect of the aesthetic evaluation of those works" (Gaut, 2001: 182). While using different language, Guyer (2005) supports Danto (2003) arguing that the interconnection of aesthetic values such as beauty and sublimity are interconnected with prudential and moral values and argues that

... there are inescapable connections between aesthetics and moral values, for that we make our aesthetic recommendations responsibly is itself a moral responsibility (Guyer, 2005, xviii).

After a long period where a barrier existed between aesthetics and ethics under the aegis of such catchphrases as the *autonomy of art* and *art for art's sake*, more recently, there has been renewed debate about the relation between aesthetics, morality and ethics. Guyer (2005) argues that the focus of the discussion is on questions such as

... whether criticism of the moral attitudes expressed by a work of art is a proper part of aesthetic criticism of the work, whether works of art should be free of censorship ... and whether the experience of art plays an indispensable role in the development of the capacity for moral reasoning and judgement (Guyer, 2005: 190).

Guyer (2005) draws upon and acknowledges the contribution of Kant's work, *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* (Meredith, 1952), for new insights into the relations between the aesthetic and the moral, which Kant organises into three groups.

First, Kant recognizes that art may have content, and indeed explicitly moral content, without sacrificing the freedom of play between the imagination on the one hand and understanding and/or reason on the other. Second, Kant argues that aesthetic experience can reveal something about

our own capacities of morality to us without sacrificing what makes it distinctly aesthetic. Finally, Kant suggests that the experience of beauty in both nature and art can be understood as evidence of the fit between nature and our own objectives that is the fundamental regulative principle of his teleology (Guyer, 2005: 183).

Art, then, can have morally significant content or concepts without undermining the potential of a distinctive aesthetic response to it.

Despite Kant's connection between aesthetics and ethics, Guyer (2005) contends that the crucial missing element in Kant's theories is "... a recognition that our moral sensibilities are often immediately engaged in our experience of nature and art itself" (Guyer, 2005: 191). George Santayana (1863-1952), in Guyer's (2005) view, offers a synthesis of Kant's disinterestedness, on the one hand, and the emotionalism of, say, the Scottish philosophical writer, Archibald Alison (1757-1839) on the other. Santayana (1896) rejects Kant's view that the distinguishing characteristic of the judgement of taste is that it is disinterested and the assumption that the justification of the aesthetic must be its ethical value. Santayana (1896) argues that ethics is only the means by which we can be in a position to enjoy the positive and intrinsic value of the aesthetic.

The relationship of aesthetics to ethics, then, might potentially expand and increase our aesthetic experience of art. The intersection of aesthetics and ethics, indeed, might contribute to a more insightful and, perhaps, even profound experience of art. What is more, as Shepherd (1987) claims, "Enriching our aesthetic experience goes together with developing our powers of imagination and understanding" (Shepherd, 1987: 154). While it might be excessive to claim art's capacity to transform either society or an individual's character, art and aesthetics have some influence on the realm of moral values. If we regard art as offering insights into other people or perspectives upon other ideas and attitudes, it is possible to see that art might have moral influence by giving us *imaginative insight*, in Shepherd's (1987) words, into other people; thus, art might inculcate values and attitudes in more subtle and indirect ways.

Ultimately, as Levinson (2001) argues, it is our responsibility to connect our responses to representations to our attitudes “... *vis-à-vis* the real-world counterparts of those representations, and that we can do this in a morally responsible manner or not” (Levinson, 2001: 16). Indeed, there is a benefit for art to take an inclusive view of both the aesthetic and the moral, and as Hanson (2001) claims,

Art’s capacity to keep alive certain moral perspectives, even if these views diverge radically from our present moral outlook, can help us remain alert to life’s possibilities and our own potentialities. This is a benefit that is neither merely aesthetic, not solely moral: it is both at one (Hanson, 2001: 222).

Works, then, such as Piccinini’s *We are Family* (2003) and James’s *The World is a Dangerous Place* (2004) which demonstrate a seamless intersection between aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy or animal issues, also show us how these realms might be orchestrated to create challenging yet compelling artworks.

5.6 Towards Working Principles

In considering the intersections between and commonalities within the literature on aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy there is an opportunity to crystallise working principles to shape a conceptual frame for visual art research. Any consideration of the intersection, however, must ensure an appropriate balance in the contribution of the components. The integration and balance of aesthetics, ethics and animal advocacy, then, clarify potentially interrelated yet discrete working principles for the research. These key principles, deriving from 5.1 to 5.5, *imaginative insight*, *ethical aesthetics*, *impartial advocacy* and *experiential discipline* are thus elucidated in the following sections.

5.6.1 Imaginative Insight

Creative and artistic processes are essentially transformative, inventive, inspired and perceptive processes. As Hanson (2001) reminds us, art can facilitate our

awareness of other possibilities and potentialities in life. The experience of art which stimulates imagination by engaging the senses, emotions and intellect might also influence our consideration, knowledge and understanding of challenging ideas and attitudes. Indeed, art has the capacity to consider different moral perspectives, even those that depart from our own or prevailing societal moral viewpoints. In art, an understated and subtle consideration of ethical issues, attitudes and values proposes a principle of relevance to the research – *imaginative insight* – a term coined by Shepherd (1987), which brings together understanding and vision; perception and creativeness; and awareness and inventiveness. These are dynamic combinations where one informs and enriches the other. Illuminating perspectives upon and insights into the various aspects of our relations with animals have the potential to influence values and attitudes in more subtle and indirect ways.

5.6.2 Ethical Aesthetics

The interconnection of aesthetics and ethics in the exploration of animal-human relation questions and issues is fundamental. As Levinson (2001) reminds us, this involves three commonly understood spheres of enquiry. The first regards aesthetics and ethics as two traditional branches of value theory; the second encompasses ethical issues in aesthetics or art; while the third sphere is that of aesthetic issues in ethics.

Both realms are critical to the research; however, their convergence opens up the possibility of engaging questions of ethical values and judgements with those of aesthetic values and judgements in both viewing and making a work of art. This is especially important given the conceptual basis and aims for the research, which involve serious ethical and moral philosophical questions about the interaction of animals and humans. The convergence of aesthetics and ethics also considers Gaut's (2001) proposal of *ethicism*, which holds that the ethical appraisal of attitudes revealed in works of art is also a legitimate aspect of the aesthetic evaluation of those works.

There are also cognitive commonalities of aesthetics and ethics (for example, Aristotle, Dewey (1859-1952) and Kant suggest that there is an important connection between aesthetic matters and our cognitive interest in our understanding of the natural and human worlds – and, in this context, non-human worlds might well be included). Indeed, Miller (2001) speculates that “... aesthetic experience may ... parallel cognitive and ethical enquiry in structure” (Miller, 2001: 4). Such a conjunction of aesthetics and ethics would embrace the more recent ideas of aesthetics and aesthetic judgements as being complex but, as Guyer (2005) contends, are “... all the more fittingly described as a free and harmonious play between imagination and understanding because of that complexity” (Guyer, 2005: 294). This principle might be conceived of as *ethical aesthetics*.

5.6.3 Impartial Advocacy

The philosophy and ethics related to animals that guide this research, discussed in 5.5, is that of equal consideration of interests of animals. As Singer (2008) notes

Equal consideration of interests is consistent with utilitarian ethics, but it is not, strictly speaking, a utilitarian principle, for it is also compatible with non-utilitarian views in ethics (Singer, 2008).

Equal consideration of interests, as both Singer (1990) and DeGrazia (1996) point out, does not mean that animals have or require *equal* treatment to humans, such as access to education or the right to vote. Equal consideration of interest, however, means that if a human and a pig suffer equally, then this suffering has the same moral weight or importance. As Singer (1990) argues,

If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. No matter what the nature of the being, the principle of equality requires that its suffering be counted equally with the like suffering – insofar as rough comparisons can be made – of another being (Singer, 1990: 8).

While the area of animals and animal advocacy gives rise to powerful emotions and sentiments, these responses play little part in disinterested animal advocacy. The complex issues surrounding animals and our treatment of them, together with the prejudices and traditions of our attitudes towards animals, are examined and reflected upon with philosophical reasoning and empirical theory. Indeed, the theoretical and philosophical work of the past thirty or so years such as that of Midgley (1983), Singer (1990) and DeGrazia (1996) offer rational and reasoned arguments for the cause of animals.

Hence, the principle of *impartial advocacy* relates to animal advocacy which considers the moral status as well as the mental life of animals. Impartial advocacy is theoretically grounded in moral philosophical discourse and theory about our relationship with and treatment of animals. Foundations of philosophical consideration has for some thirty years guided complex and difficult questions regarding our treatment of animals. A number of philosophers (Midgley, 1983; Regan, 1983; Singer, 1990; and DeGrazia, 1996, among others) have applied empirical rigour to the philosophical examination of animals. DeGrazia (1996), for instance, offers a most thorough discussion of and contribution to the question of whether equal consideration should be extended to animals' interests.

The principle of *impartial advocacy* is critical to the ideas underpinning and driving research in this area and an important base from which to approach the making of artwork that focuses on animal-human interaction. Moreover, while the impartial advocacy principle might indeed counter responses of proselytising, cliché, emotionalism and sentimentality, accusations which the area of animal advocacy sometimes receives, the significance of the principle of impartial advocacy lies in the strength of powerful moral and ethical argument.

5.6.4 Experiential Discipline

The literature evidences the increasing level of discussion about our understanding of and interaction with non-human animals. Various disciplines,

and recently cross-disciplines, have examined and still are exploring the questions relating to animals such as: What is an animal?; Do animals have minds, if so, what sort of minds?; Do animals think?; Are animals self-aware?; Do animals grieve?; Do animals have language?; Do animals have feelings, beliefs or desires? These questions give rise to others such as: Do animals have moral status? The question that Singer (1990), DeGrazia (1996) and other philosophers then ask involves the extent to which we should consider seriously the interests of animals when they conflict with human interests? Philosophers, ethologists, anthropologists and others explore and even redefine the traditions and doctrines of their disciplines in order to answer these questions more effectively.

Our interaction with non-human animals is increasingly being questioned and examined from the perspective of the non-human animal's experience of the world rather than only from the viewpoint and interest of humans. How we regard and treat animals in factory farms, zoos, research laboratories, circuses, in the wild and in our homes are issues being discussed in relation to the view that animals are sentient beings with interests of their own. While there is a proliferation of literature regarding empirical studies of animals and their behaviour, most people who live with cats or dogs need little convincing that their non-human animal companions display a range of behaviours normally attributed to humans and indeed have interests of their own. Psychologist Masson (2002), for example, over the course of his life, has observed cats and argues that playfulness is one of their key emotional states, which give rise to emotions for which we do not yet have names. Masson (2002) suggests this is because play occupies us so little as adults – plus cat play has been less studied than dog play.

Given that the research derives from the experience of humans with non-human animals, the interaction of people and animals from the perspective of both a personal and societal level is important. The direct participation and observation of how humans and animals relate or how humans treat animals leads, therefore, to the working principle of *experiential discipline* as significant to the formation of a conceptual frame.

The principles of *imaginative insight*, *ethical aesthetics*, *impartial advocacy* and *experiential discipline* are fundamental precepts of the conceptual framework for the visual interrogation of our relations with animals and the reciprocal gaze. Figure 5.6.1 presents this framework schematically as a basis for the derivation of the methodology of the study in Chapter Six.

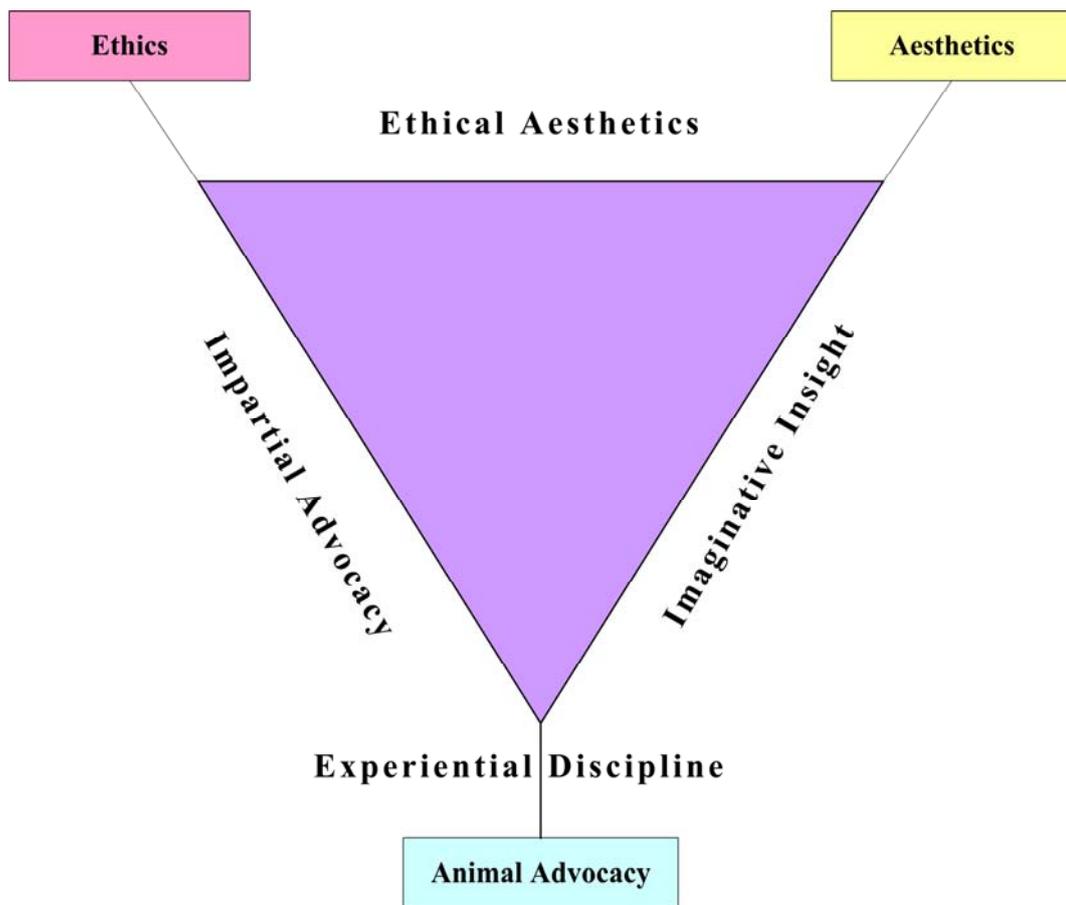


Figure 5.6.1 Towards Balanced Principles

CHAPTER SIX – METHODOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS AND APPROACHES

6.1 Directions from the Literature: Towards a Synthesis of Contemporary Art and Reciprocal Gaze

The literature indicates the parameters of the animal-human interface and the extent to which this area is a focus of cross-discipline studies and contemporary art. The literature evidences interrogation of the questions posed in Chapter One, section 1.5, which are: To what extent might the visual interchange and interface of *mutual gaze* be critical to animal-human relationships?; What role, indeed, might non-verbal communication play in the shaping of animal-human interactions, particularly in relation to domestic pets?; To what extent might there be continuity in this exchange, as Noske (2004) argues or, alternatively, discontinuity?; and What, if any, is the evidence of the engagement of visual artists with the sensitivities and aesthetics of such issues?

The *question of the animal* and the animal-human interface involves boundary-blurring and shifting as evidenced in Chapter Two and reveals the extent to which animal-human margins are being explored and confronted. This is frequently seen in our treatment of and attitude towards our pets and our attempts to explore the *possibilities of mutuality*, as Franklin (1999) phrases it. In the past decade, the barriers between animal and human have been dissolving at an accelerated rate. Indeed, Thompson (2005) suggests that

Somehow, while we were cleaning the house and heading out to work, the separation between human and animal diminished from an absolute biological distinction to an increasingly delicate web of ecological, social and personal relationships (Thompson, 2005: 8).

Fudge *et al* (1999) talks about *porous boundaries* between the individual human and the animal, while Noske (2004) goes further, as noted in Chapter Two, suggesting a continuity between animals and humans, and discusses this in terms

of the *humanlike-ness* of animals and the *animallike-ness* of humans. Moreover, artists such as those who exhibited in *Becoming Animal* (2005) are “... acutely aware of the diminishing space between animal and human existence, and the extraordinary opportunity – and mutual threat – this shrinking space provokes” (Thompson, 2005: 7). The research reported here also indicates that more and more artists are probing animal-human encounters to a level which questions the very nature of this encounter. Indeed, it implies that contemporary discourse on animal-human relations and contemporary visual art with an animal-human relations focus are inextricably linked.

Research reveals not only the nature and interaction of the animal and human in visual art (both across art history and in contemporary art works) but also, and importantly, indicates the significance of the *gaze* and *mutual gaze* in animal-human relations. It identifies that *gaze* plays a significant role in reciprocity of both non-verbal and verbal communication between humans and between non-human animals. Indeed, the research suggests that sustained eye contact indicates the close nature of the animal-human relationship and the importance of eye contact and face-to-face interaction between humans and non-human animals, especially humans and their pets. While Argyle and Cook (1976) consider the phenomena of the *gaze* and *mutual gaze* – looking at others and being looked at by them – of central importance to social behaviour, Sanders (2003) argues that, “gaze and mutual direction of attention [are] central elements of the intersubjectivity that supports interspecies friendship” (Sanders, 2003: 407).

Current literature indicates, moreover, that contemporary art with a focus on the animal calls for new ways of thinking about interacting with animals: in Baker’s (2000) words, “... new vocabularies, new forms of openness – in this case, openness to animals” (Baker, 2000: 189). New ideas about and approaches to the appearance and the aesthetics of artworks engaging with vexing issues of animal-human relations might, then, give rise to works which differ from those of previous art periods. Baker (2000) argues that, while the form of the animal in contemporary artworks varies considerably, in considering the animal in relation to creativity and moving towards the question of a *postmodern animal aesthetic*,

“... the nature of the human’s encounter with the animal is a matter of importance” (Baker, 2000: 50). For art practice, then, a key determination lies in the choice of meaningful visual language, *new vocabularies* and, importantly, an appropriate aesthetic poised mindfully encompassing both ethics and animal advocacy. Hence, a critical foundation for the research is the synthesis of contemporary art, animal-human relations and reciprocal gaze for the development of the conceptual frame.

The synthesis of literature has also given rise to the working principles of *imaginative insight*, *ethical aesthetics*, *impartial advocacy* and *experiential discipline* elucidated in Chapter Five as the basis for the development of the conceptual frame for the research.

6.2 Directions from the Researcher’s Previous Research/Practice

The previous research (Dover, 2004), *Imaging Animals: A Visual Exploration of our Relationship with Animals*, has the potential to inform the current research as well as to determine critical connections and continuity. While both studies have an animal focus, each centres on distinct facets of animal issues and pursues differing aims. The earlier research aimed

... to synthesise animal issues in the visual realm, and accept the challenge of a visual arts perspective on the moral and ethical issues of the human-animal relationship. The research particularly engaged with and interrogated the question: Why, in our consideration and treatment of animals, do we make ethical and moral differentiations between species of animals? ...

Specifically, the research focused on the issue of exploitation through the development of a body of artwork for exhibition, which

- (a) confronted the issue; and
- (b) simultaneously held the aesthetic in counterpoise (Dover, 2004: 23).

The previous research exhibition, *Animal Matters* (2003) (e.g., Plate 6.2.1), engaged with issues underlying human attitudes towards and treatment of non-human animals and the moral differentiations made between the species through the works' specific focus on the ordinary, less companionable and personally endearing animals such as cattle, chickens and horses.

The current research, however, turns the focus to the companionable and endearing animals in order to probe the parameters of the human-animal interface, specifically aiming to explore *reciprocity of gaze* between the animal and human in visual art as evidence of the animal-human relationship.



Plate 6.2.1 *Animal Matters*, 2003, Cairns Regional Gallery

First-hand experience of the animal rights movement and continuing concern for animal advocacy, together with lifelong work and involvement in the arts, provides the contextual setting and conceptual underpinnings for both the previous and the current research. At the time of development, the earlier study was positioned within a shifting and developing area of art and contemporaneous arena of rising recognition – the subject of animal issues in art.

An important implication of the previous research was its search for an approach to the interrogation of the boundaries of our interaction with animals within an aesthetic framework. However, the overriding implication of the previous research on the present research is that then, as now, animals and contemporary art continue to raise a range of complex issues and dilemmas. For example, when confronted with Tony Trembath's (1946-) artwork (Plate 6.2.2) in 1984, the researcher was faced with the question of how we should best represent animals and animal-human relation issues in art.



Plate 6.2.2 Tony Trembath, *Interior of Stevenson's Screen*, 1984, wood, plastic, paper, wire, paper, paper clips, taxidermic hens and electric light
185 x 69.5 x 52.7 cm (Dover, 1985: 14)

The major issue raised by Trembath was the use of real chickens in the works and the manner in which these chickens were sourced. For *Interior of Stevenson's Screen*, 1984, Trembath purchased and killed the chickens for use in his work. Killing animals for the sake and purpose of art, for this researcher, raises ethical issues, hence the need for an ethical dimension to the conceptual framework for the current research.

While deliberations on how to best represent animals and animals in art, which were crucial to the previous research, remain equally critical to the current research, one series of works, *Anon*, 2003 (Plate 6.2.3 and Plate 6.2.4), provides a clear path to the present research art practice.



Plate 6.2.3 Barbara Dover, *Anon*, 2003, acrylic, transparencies, mixed media
60 x 60 cm each, overall variable



Plate 6.2.4 Barbara Dover, *Anon*, 2003, acrylic, transparencies, mixed media
60 x 60 cm each, overall variable

These works focused on the faces of the animals and addressed the exchange of scrutiny between the animal (in the work) and the human (viewer of the work). The prior research notes that Berger (1980) astutely articulates this animal-human

visual interchange in his essay, *Why look at animals?*, and is referred to in Chapters One and Two.

While consideration of face to face interaction between animal and humans links the previous and the present research, a major difference distinguishes them. The 2003 work represented the face to face confrontation of *anonymity* while the current research focuses on *intimacy* and *connectedness*. In this respect, the previous research and the current research are operating at opposite ends of the spectrum. In addition, a significantly differing feature between the prior and current works is the *direction* of the gaze. The gaze of the animal in the *Anon* series was *towards the viewer* of the works, that is, the face and the eyes of the cows and horses were directed *out of the work* towards the human viewer, whereas the gaze between the animal and human in the current research art practice is *reciprocal* and *mutual*, that is, directed towards each other. In the latter, the human viewer of the work is an observer of the mutual gaze and, as such, is incidental or even irrelevant to their gaze interaction of the human and animal within the work. Importantly, furthermore, the actual and physical intimacy, proximity and connectedness between humans and their companion animals are critical to the current research.

6.3 Art Practical Research Drivers and Decision-Making

For this researcher, there are a number of essential decisions in the representation of animal-human relations and reciprocal gaze which have emerged from the research. Given that the literature demonstrates that the *gaze* is not necessarily species specific, the first, and perhaps most obvious of these decisions, is the choice of the particular animal or animals on which to focus the research. The literature indicates a wide array of species of animal depicted by artists ranging from zoo animals, farm animals, and companion animals to animals in the wild. For example, chimpanzees are the focus for Roet; accessible animals such as dogs and possums living in inner city parks are of interest to Hobbs; while wolves enthrall Cininas.

Additionally, given that the research involves humans in mutual gaze with animals, the decision which naturally follows that of which animal to focus upon is the type of human or humans that are likely to engage in visual interchange. Some contemporary artists, in depicting humans in their work, employ models or inveigle friends and acquaintances. Piccinini, for example, in *Science Story* (2001) used anonymous models (who might also be friends or acquaintances) to represent the scientists holding Piccinini's creature. Roet's *Ape and Bunnyman series* (1998) portrayed unidentified figures gazing at the chimpanzee in the glass enclosure. Other artists use themselves as the featured figure in the work. Wegman, for instance, in *Spelling Lesson* (1974) involved his own dog, Man Ray, and himself, in the video; and *Infinity Kisses* (1991) by Schneemann is an exchange between the artist herself and her cat, Cluny II. Some artists utilise imagination to represent the figure. In *Modern Man Followed by the Ghost of his Meat* (1998), Coe depicts a figure to represent *every-man* while in *Park Scene* (1988) McKenna also portrays an imaginary *every-person* human figure.

The research decisions pertaining to the representation of the animal and the human give rise to another critical decision. This determination relates to the visual forms and media to be utilised in depicting animal-human reciprocal gaze. The appropriate visual approaches in which such a concept as animal-human reciprocal gaze can be expressed might range, for instance, from the precise photo-realism of Piccinini's sculptures and photographs to the traditional figurative representation of McKenna's paintings; and from the other-worldly photographic method of Hobbs to the raw graphic realism of Coe's pen and ink drawings or Rego's gouaches.

6.3.1 Critical Issues for Practice

Analysis of James's contemporary artwork, *The World is a Dangerous Place* (2004), in the initial stages of the research served to coalesce a number of key factors, which proved to be crucial to the conceptual and creative development of the practice. The most significant of these is the concept of *reciprocal gaze* which initiated the discourse of gaze. However, reciprocity is only one part of the

equation as it does not necessarily imply shared participatory action which, for this research, is the crucial determinant, that is, the essence of shared experience between the animal and human. The nature of this gaze is mutually interactive in a context of sharing, participation, connection and, most importantly, reciprocal care and responsibility. This gaze acknowledges the ethical and moral philosophy of equal consideration of the interests of animals and is appropriate to the visual investigation of animal-human relations within the joint considerations of animal advocacy and ethics.

Another issue raised by James's work, and also critical to the concerns of the research art practice, is the concept of *continuity*, which is expressed by and essential to the idea of reciprocal gaze. James's work also indicates that such continuity and dissolving of boundaries between animals and humans gives rise to some apprehension. James constructs visibly the concept of continuity with knitted strips linking the woman and horse. Other contemporary artists realise the concept of continuity in different ways. Some artists, for example, take on the idea of *becoming animal* which, rather than imitating an animal, creates a space for animals and human to communicate. For Piccinini, in works such as *The Young Family* (2003), continuity is expressed in recognising animal traits in humans and human traits in animals. Indeed Piccinini (in Thompson, 2005) suggests that

... it is more interesting to recognize that many of these so-called 'human traits' that we see in animals are just animal characteristics that we share in common ... 'Becoming animal' is about acknowledging that our place in the world of life is less supreme than we would like to think (Thompson, 2005: 105).

Piccinini's work might well represent, in visual form, Noske's (2004) suggestion of *natural* continuity that exists between animals and humans as well as her ideas of *animallike-ness* of humans and *humanlike-ness* of animals.

The research dialogue with James's work, then, re-enforced a number of pertinent issues critical to the formation of the principles of the conceptual framework, including that of the representation of an encounter between an animal and human

within an *aesthetic frame*; importantly, the need to achieve an appropriate expressive and meaningful visual language, which combines the beauty of this animal-human connection with an edge of anxiety. Although the work's message challenges our aesthetic response in that James's animal-human interface emanates from beyond conventional animal-human interactions, the process of making the work – photographing the carefully constructed staging of the female and horse in the hand-knitted hoods – together with the intrinsic attraction of the photographic image, resolves aesthetic issues. The potent discourse on animal-human relations elicited by James's work emerged as pertinent and critical deliberations that contributed significantly to the formation of the principles of the conceptual frame.

Furthermore, the animals of focus for much of the discourse on animal-human relations and reciprocal gaze are companion animals – pet cats and dogs. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, these are the animals who are closest to us in our everyday lives, indeed, they are most often chosen by us for their capacities to be companionable and to share our lives. The bonds we form with cats and dogs are unlike those we have with other animals such as farm animals or animals in the wild. Humans have a primary urge to care for others, including other species. The resolution to focus on companion animals for the art practice also gives rise to the options for subjects for the other half of the relationship, that is, the humans.

6.3.2 Resolution of Focus, Media and Processes

Another main issue of resolution was the decision relating to media and processes. This choice was determined by a number of factors including the previous research artwork, the trial artwork, the choice of pets as the animal focus and by the literature. The survey on changing perspectives, trends and directions in contemporary art depicting animals indicates that most singular substantial change evidenced in contemporary/postmodern art since the 1960s is the medium utilised. Prior to the 1960s, the majority of the works were executed in traditional media such as painting, printmaking and drawing, whereas post 1960s witnesses a

significant broadening of media. Contemporary works depicting animals include the range of traditional media but also alternative or non-traditional media such as performance, video performance, installation, photography and photographic and digital technology. The increasing use of photography, photographic technologies and digital imaging across contemporary art is also reflected in works addressing animal issues.

The versatility and the verisimilitude of this medium are particularly apt for the concept and precept of work with a focus on animal-human relations. The details and features of both the animals and humans are important in this context: reciprocal gaze is expressed through the eyes. Contemporary representations of animals and humans which address issues such as transgressing animal-human boundaries in a frame of moral responsibility calls for media that offers such flexibility that enables it to be used in a number of combinations and ways. Importantly, photography presents potential to combine effectively with other media and realia.

6.4 Towards a Conceptual Frame

Sections 6.1 to 6.3 suggested powerful directions for the parameters and principles to underpin the conceptual frame. Fundamental to both the conceptual frame and the aims of the research are the central research questions: To what extent might the visual interchange and interface of *reciprocal gaze* be critical to animal-human relationships?; What role, indeed, might non-verbal communication play in the shaping of animal-human interactions, particularly in relation to domestic pets?; and, To what extent might there be continuity in this exchange, as Noske (2004) argues?

Figure 6.4.1 illustrates the relationship and interlocking of the working principles with the key principles. Together, the working principles and key principles orchestrate the significant elements of the research to form the underpinning conceptual frame for the art practice.

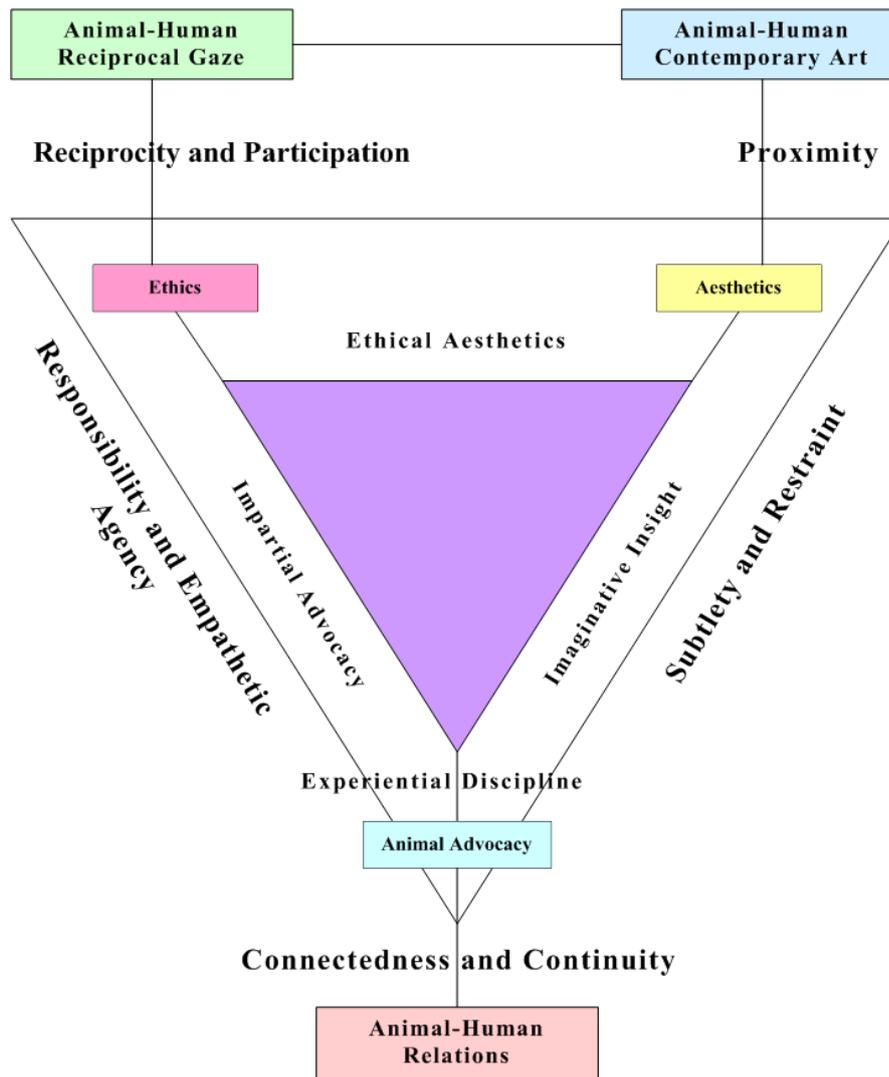


Figure 6.4.1 Interlocking of Key Principles with Driving Principles

A number of key principles, interrelated yet discrete, thus form the conceptual frame of this work. The important tenets of the key principles of *imaginative insight*, *ethical aesthetics*, *impartial advocacy* and *experiential discipline* are explicated in section 5.6, while the essential driving principles for the art practice of *reciprocity*, *participation*, *proximity*, *connectedness* and *continuity*, *responsibility* and *empathetic agency*, *subtlety* and *restraint* are elucidated in the following sections.

6.4.1 Reciprocity and Participation

Reciprocity and participation between animals and human are critical to the *raison d'être* of the research. This principle is pivotal for the art practice: it is fundamental to the research. Chapters One and Two, particularly 1.4 and 2.2, established that, for both humans and animals, vision is a primary means of communication, thus reciprocal gaze between animals and humans plays a significant role in their relations and participatory behaviours with one another. Responsiveness of one to the other in an animal-human relationship involves reciprocity and participatory interaction. Such exchanges, according to Haraway (2008) are, in her words, *mindful encounters*. These encounters between the animal and human are mutually responsive where both subjects are relating attentively to each other.

6.4.2 Proximity

Proximity of animals and humans to one another is fundamental to their relations. Our relations with those animals we eat such as sheep or cattle are, for the majority of us, remote or, more commonly, absent. Few people could imagine themselves actually killing or even witnessing the killing of a sheep or a cow who has been happily grazing in their back garden to eat for their evening meal. While, for the majority of people, proximity to the flesh of these animals as we ingest them is of the closest kind, the proximity to the everyday lives of these animals is nonexistent which, to a great extent, allows us to consume them without compunction. However, our proximity to some other animals is much closer, that is, it is actual and physical. The relationship we have with our pets, for example, with whom we live and share the kinds of intimacies of companionship and contact, sometimes exceeds any we may have with other humans. Humans' physical proximity to their pets is also bound up with their emotional or psychological proximity to them.

The proximity we seek in relation to animals also involves the gaze as noted by Argyle and Cook (1967). Thus proximity refers not only to physical contact but

also to visible and visual contact and exchange. The visual and physical distance between the animal and human, then, becomes an important factor and essential part of the acknowledgement of the animal-human interface. While the Oxford English Dictionary (2004) defines proximity as "... nearness in space, time and relationship ..." (OED, 2004: 1157), proximity in the context of this research, between the animal and human, becomes physical, psychological, emotional and visual.

The multiple nuances of the term proximity are relevant to the context of the art practice and, thus, proximity is a fundamental principle in forming the conceptual frame.

6.4.3 Connectedness and Continuity

Connectedness and continuity are necessary principles from which to approach the making of an artwork that centres on the relationship between animals and humans. These principles are also aligned to the principle of proximity. Connectedness and continuity impart particular action to proximity implying an active linkage between objects or subjects. They take proximity much further to suggest ideas of bonding or union. Implicit in the principle of connectedness in the context of this research is its emphasis on relations and relationship. It gives prominence to the interaction, interchange and interface of animals and humans.

The principle of connectedness also, importantly, suggests ideas of continuity and of dissolving boundaries that are raised by Noske (1997, 2004), Franklin (1999), Ingold (1994), Cavalieri and Singer (1993) and others as noted in Chapter Two. Baker (2000) claims that the radical concept of *becoming-animal* as it is used in his publication "... will shape the ways in which both the human and the animal forms of the postmodern animal may be understood" (Baker, 2000: 103). Being connected to animals within the idea of becoming-animal, thus, has diverse meanings and artistic outcomes for different artists. For Piccinini, it means that "... we are finally recognizing our own animal-ness" (Thompson, 2005: 105), while Michael Oatman (1964-) sees "... becoming-animal as a kind of

partnership” (Thompson, 2005: 91) and Nicholas Lampert (1969-) takes the view that becoming-animal is about bridging the gap between the environment, animals and humans and “... placing these concerns at the forefront of our priorities ...” (Thompson, 2005: 81).

The principles of connectedness and continuity also have associations with the sensibilities and sensitivities of empathy, sympathy and compassion for non-human animals. For many, these understandings give rise to kindness to animals, animal advocacy and ethical and moral principles of equal consideration of the interests of animals.

6.4.4 Responsibility and Empathetic Agency

The principles of proximity and connectedness require the related principles of responsibility and empathetic agency in order to ground them soundly in both ethics and animal advocacy. These joint principles are critical to the conceptual frame of art practice, which specifically explores our ethical and moral responsibility towards animals. Thus, these principles of responsibility and empathetic agency are essential to the integrity of an artwork if the *raison d'être* of the artwork lies in interrogation of the animal-human interface and reciprocal gaze. Furthermore, these principles, in the context of works addressing animal-human relations, imply moral obligation, care, trust, accountability and integrity in regard to others (human or non-human animal). These associated ideas are important to art practice involving issues of animal-human interface. The artist Lampert notes that, in the main, concern for animals is left to scientists, environmentalists and farmers, thus conferring responsibility on these so-called specialists. He suggests that artists also have a role in the dialogue on animals and “... through visual work, an artist can encourage more discussion on the subject” (Thompson, 2005: 80).

The principles of responsibility and empathetic agency are essential to the conceptual framework of work dealing with animal-human reciprocal gaze. Reciprocity suggests a mutually beneficial exchange; however, responsibility

plays an essential role in this exchange. Argyle and Cook (1976) suggest that mutual gaze has the special meaning that two people are *attending to* each other, which is usually necessary for social interaction to both begin and be sustained. Also, mutual gaze is sometimes experienced as a special kind of intimacy and mutual access. Such special significance of mutual gaze might be attributed to animals and humans who are attending to each other and, for the human, it is critical that this attendance is accompanied by responsibility and care.

Principles of responsibility and empathetic agency also extend to ethical and moral responsibility towards animals, as examined in Chapter Five, especially 5.1, 5.3 and 5.5, and our obligation to consider the interests of sentient beings, that is, those who are capable of feeling pleasure and pain, fall within the ambit of the principles of responsibility and empathetic agency. Equal consideration of the interests of animals, also discussed in Chapter Five, relates directly to the principles of responsibility and empathetic agency for art practice with a focus on animal-human relations. Therefore, these principles are an essential base for the conceptual framework of the art practice.

6.4.5 Subtlety and Restraint

The overarching precepts and principles of the conceptual frame address issues of animal and human relations, particularly pets and humans, within the scope of ethical and animal advocacy concerns. This has the potential to venture into realms of emotion and sentiment. The prevalent diminution of animals as a serious subject for art is, in part, because of its association with such emotion and sentiment. Baker (2000) claims that the artists Dion, Olly and Suzi, share a common perception that their concerns, as artists, have only recently come to be acknowledged as valid and serious and, what is more,

Dion notes of his own development that in the 'slick world of Conceptual and media-based art' in the early 1980s, 'no one seemed interested in the problem of nature'; Olly and Suzi recognize a continuing widespread reservation over the idea of the animal 'as a serious subject in contemporary art' (Baker, 2000: 20).

Contemporary art, then, far from approaching the question of the animal in a superficial or trivial way or with veils of sentimentality or emotionalism, takes a serious approach to the complexities surrounding animals. Such seriousness is validated by the intense interest given by academia in cross-disciplinary studies on animal-humans relations evidenced in Chapter Two. Even though contemporary art increasingly reflects this wider serious discourse on the subject, some vestiges of the attitude towards animals as a less than serious subject remain.

The significance and validity of the current research are important as counterpoise to perceived excesses of emotion and sentiment in the area of animal-human relations. The principles of subtlety and restraint as critical elements for the conceptual frame come into play. These principles imply less grave or sombre aspects of seriousness. In other words, seriousness can also embrace optimism or buoyancy.

The principles of subtlety and restraint are fundamental to a conceptual frame which underpins art work dealing with non-verbal communication between animals and humans. Subtleties of the eye to eye contact, that is, the gaze and mutual gaze in the animal-human interface, suggest the principles of subtlety and restraint. Understated, low-key and minimalist reciprocal gaze is quiet contemplation, one with another. Reciprocal gaze is the antithesis of the elaborate, the excessive and the conspicuous. The ideas of suggestion, evocation and reflection of gaze and reciprocal gaze are implied in the principles of subtlety and restraint. Therefore, these principles, in the production of the art works, are particularly important to the integrity of the works.

The conceptual frame of the research with the guiding principles of *reciprocity* and *participation*, *proximity*, *connectedness* and *continuity*, *responsibility* and *empathetic agency*, *subtlety* and *restraint* thus renders both a sound foundation and a clear perspective from which the challenging issues about our interaction with animals might be realised visually.

6.5 Translating Research Aims into Methodology

Figure 6.5.1 offers a diagrammatic overview of the parameters and overall structure and shape of the research in the realisations of the research questions, rationale for and aims set out in 1.5.

Table 6.5.1, following Figure 6.5.1, presents the methodological framework for the research in relation to the research aims arising from the overarching research questions.

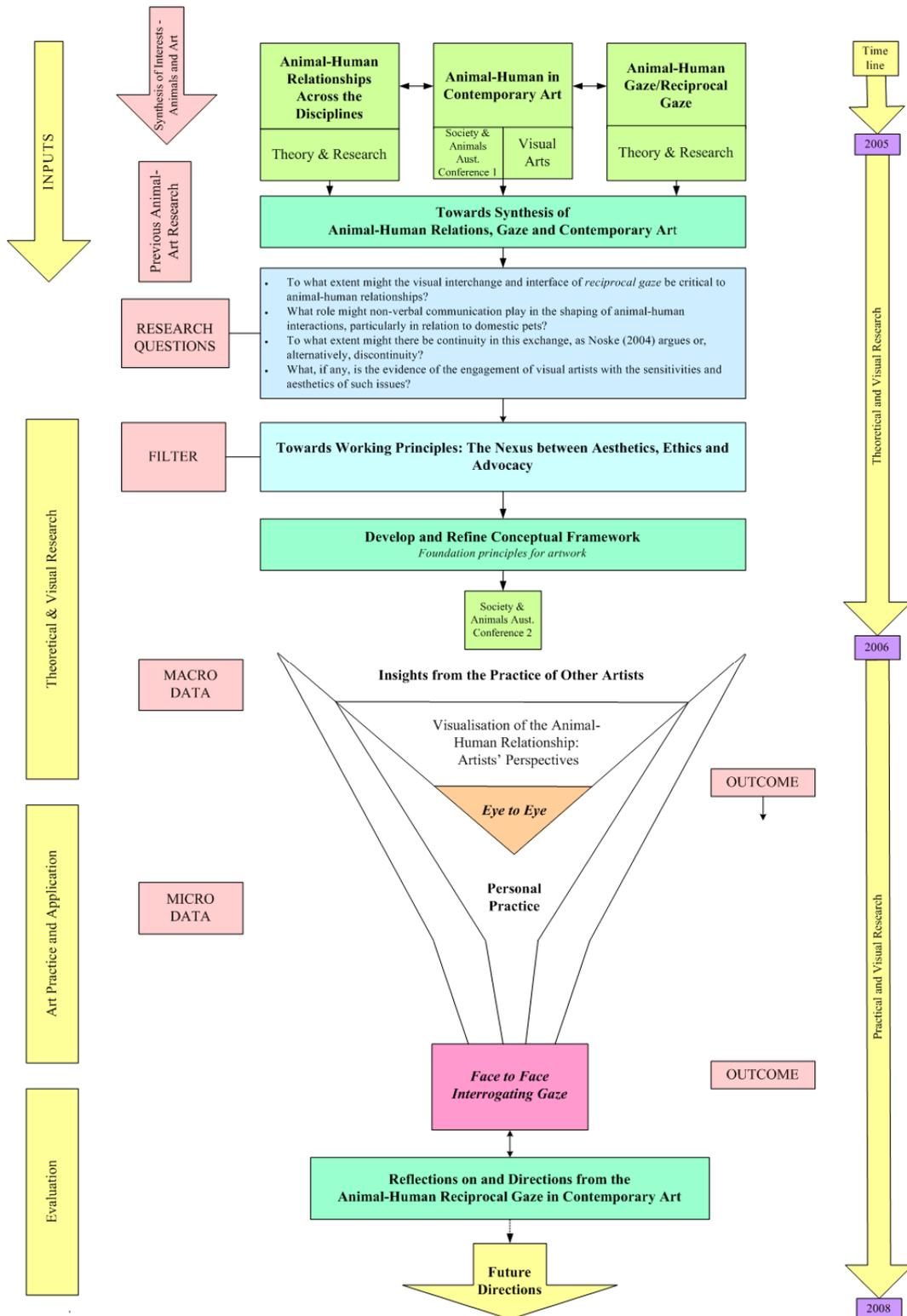


Figure 6.5.1 The Overview of the Shape of the Research

Table 6.5.1 Methodological Framework for Research in Relation to Aims

Research Aims	Specific Objectives	Methodological Strategies
1. To explore the visual interchange and interface of mutual gaze of the animal and human in visual art as evidence of the animal-human relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify animal-human interactions, gaze and mutual gaze research across disciplines • Identify scope of animal-human interactions relating to contemporary visual arts • Identify historical perspectives of animal-human relations in visual arts • Identify Australian contemporary artists who engage with animal-human reciprocal gaze in their work; and investigate imagery that conveys the visual representation of personal philosophical positions re animals-human relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frame and test interview questions for contemporary artists • Seek Ethics Committee approval for Interviews • Gather data from interviews of the selected number of Australian contemporary artists who utilise animal-human reciprocal gaze in their work • Exhibit the work of the artists in a group exhibition
2. To investigate the ethics and aesthetics implicit in visual reflections of animal-human relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify visual perspectives on aesthetics and ethics of animal-human interaction/gaze in western art history and contemporary art • Critically evaluate extant visual perspectives re <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) aesthetics (b) ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and tabulate artworks pertaining to animal-human interactions • Analyse animal-human interface artworks • Develop working principles in relation to ethics, aesthetics and animal advocacy • Analyse data from interviews and aesthetic/ethics perspectives for conceptual frame • Develop key principles and integrate with working principles for conceptual frame
3. To utilise the data derived from 1. and 2. above to re-focus animal-human interactive looking and mutual gaze through the development of visual artwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop conceptual framework • Trial conceptual frame towards resolution • Identify scope of work • Identify key factors in the artistic process – time, equipment, skills required, material availability, media and processes • Review and re-focus trial work • Consolidation and final planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial collaborative working methods • Trial/prototype photographic work re animal-human reciprocal gaze interactions • Trial/prototype sculptural/installation work • Final determination of media and processes • Development of final work towards the exhibition

6.6 Selecting Contemporary Australian Artists

As is clear from Table 6.5.1, fundamental to this research is probing Australian contemporary artists who engage with animal-human interchanges and reciprocal gaze and to showcase their different visual perspectives.

In the consideration and selection of artists, three criteria formed the basis for selecting contemporary Australian artists for further investigation:

1. Imagery which depicts the animal-human interface and/or animal-human reciprocal gaze as a focus of their work.
2. Representation of the animal principally considers the animal in his or her own right rather than only as a symbol or metaphor for a human state or behaviour.
3. Artwork exhibited and/or work published in journals, books and other publication forums.

Given that the very nature of contemporary art is to utilise a variety of both traditional and non-traditional media for its expressive purposes, the particular media and method of making the work employed by the artist are of lesser relevance and thus do not form part of the selection criteria.

Among the number of contemporary artists under initial consideration for selection who currently engage with the subject of animals included Catherine Bell (1963-), Kate Breakey (1957-), Jazmina Cininas (1962-), Marian Drew (1960-), Emily Floyd (1970-), Sharon Goodwin (1973-), Juli Haas (1952-), Louise Hearman (1963-), Euan Heng (1945-), Rebecca Ann Hobbs (1976-), Stephen Holland (1960-), Linde Ivimey (1965-), Kate James (1980-), Hayden Fowler (1974-), Noel McKenna (1956-), Jennifer Mills (1966-), David Noonan (1969-), Patricia Piccinini (1965-), John Reid (1955-), Lisa Roet (1967-), Lynne Roberts-Goodwin (1954-), Kate Rohde (1980-), Kathy Temin (1968-), Jane Trengrove (1967-), Ronnie van Hout (1962-), Jenny Watson (1951-), Yvette Watts (1963-),

Louise Weaver (1966-) and Michael Zavros (1950-). A number of these artists have appeared in exhibitions such as *Animality* (2003), *Instinct* (2004), *Pelt* (2004) and the *Idea of the Animal* (2006), each of which addresses animals and the animal issue as their central subject matter.

Table 6.6.1 provides an overview of the selected artists, a signature exemplar of their artwork and indicates, by the presence/absence of a tick, the relevance of the artist and their work in the context of the selection criteria.

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Catherine Bell (1963-)	<i>"This little piggy ...fades to pink"</i> (detail, 2003 Video performance)		✓		✓
Kate Breakey (1957-)	<i>Lesser Goldfinch I</i> 2001, photograph/acrylic			✓	✓
Jazmina Cininas (1962-)	<i>Never mistake a wolf for a fox</i> , 2003 Reduction linocut			✓	✓
Marian Drew (1960-)	<i>Pelican on Linen</i> , Photograph			✓	✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Emily Floyd (1970-)	<i>The Cultural Studies Reader: 38 Topics For A Group Show</i> , 2001, installation				<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
Hayden Fowler (1974-)	<i>Nursling I</i> , 2006 Photograph		<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
Sharon Goodwin (1973-)	<i>Escape from Neverlands</i> , 2002 Acrylic, water-colour foamcore				<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			<p>Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.</p>	<p>Representation considers animal in his/her own right.</p>	<p>Exhibits work and/or has work published.</p>
<p>Juli Haas (1952-)</p>	<p><i>Dream, 2001</i> Drypoint and watercolour</p>			<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
<p>Louise Hearman (1963-)</p>	<p><i>Untitled #989, 2002</i> Oil on masonite</p>			<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
<p>Euan Heng (1945-)</p>	<p><i>Juggling, 1999</i> Relief linocut</p>			<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Rebecca Ann Hobbs (1976-)	<i>Dense and woolly</i> , 2001, Ink jet print		✓	✓	✓
Stephen Holland (1960-)	<i>Being</i> , 1998 bread and pigeons			✓	✓
Linde Ivimey (1965-)	<i>Aquamanile: Cow</i> 2001, steel armature, cotton fibre, fowl and cow bones, ostrich egg, ostrich feathers, string, earth				✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Kate James (1980-)	<i>The World is a Dangerous Place</i> , 2004 Photograph		✓	✓	✓
Noel McKenna (1956-)	<i>Park Scene</i> , 1988 Oil on canvas		✓	✓	✓
Jennifer Mills (1966-)	<i>Untitled</i> , 1999 Watercolour and oil pastel on paper			✓	✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
David Noonan (1969-)	<i>Prey</i> , 2003 bleach painting			✓	✓
Patricia Piccinini (1965-)	<i>Science story</i> , 2001 Type C photograph		✓	✓	✓
John Reid (1955-)	<i>Performance for 25 passing vehicles, Newell Highway 23</i> July 1989, 1989 Photograph			✓	✓
Lisa Roet (1967-)	<i>Ape and the Bunnyman series</i> :, 3 <i>wise men</i> , 1998 Photograph		✓	✓	✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Lynne Roberts-Goodwin (1954-)	<i>Gulf Desert Saqqar #9</i> , 2003, Photograph		<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
Kate Rohde (1980-)	<i>Perfect Specimen</i> , 2004, Installation			<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
Angela Singer (1966-)	<i>Sore 1</i> , 2003, Taxidermy Installation			<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Kathy Temin (1968-)	<i>Audition for a pair of koalas (blue)</i> , 2002 Photograph mounted to aluminium			✓	✓
Jane Trengrove (1967-)	<i>Plague</i> , 2005 Oil on canvas			✓	✓
Ronnie van Hout (1962-)	<i>Sculp D.Dog</i> , 1999 Video				✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Jenny Watson (1951-)	<i>First pony, Child's Play</i> , 2003 lithograph on paper			✓	✓
Yvette Watts (1963-)	<i>Beastly</i> , 2004 Oil on canvas		✓	✓	✓
Louise Weaver (1966-)	<i>Fox</i> , 2000 Crochet over animal ornament			✓	✓

Table 6.6.1 Selection Criteria Related to the Artists

cont.

Artist	Title/Date/Medium	Artwork	Selection Criterion 1	Selection Criterion 2	Selection Criterion 3
			Depiction of animal-human <i>reciprocal gaze</i> as focus of work.	Representation considers animal in his/her own right.	Exhibits work and/or has work published.
Michael Zavros (1950-)	<i>Canali</i> , 2005 Oil on canvas			✓	✓

Of the artists surveyed in Table 6.6.1, eight satisfy all three criteria, 18 satisfy two and four only one criterion. Of those who satisfy two criteria, the majority satisfy only criteria two and three. Eight artists thus potentially presented for further analysis.

6.7 Potential for Further Investigation

Options for probing artists' perspectives might include examining published material on and by the artists, presenting a questionnaire to and interview with the artists, or a combination of these options.

Given the nature of the research, it was important to be able cross reference artists in relation to the key research issues (for example, animal-human reciprocity of gaze, connectedness of animal-human and the role of animal advocacy, aesthetics and ethics) and, thus, it was important that there be consistency in the nature of the questions posed to each artist.

While the purpose of the face to face interview with the selected artists was to gather primary research data, the process of contacting the artists necessitated following certain protocols. To seek and request permission to interview the artists, the preferred access to the artists was through their representative gallery. Therefore, contact was made via a written letter (see Appendix C.1 for sample gallery/artist letter and C.2 for Ethics Committee Approval details). Letters introduced the research, the scope of the research and the subject matter of the interview as well as provided an opportunity for the artist to consider acceptance or rejection of the interview invitation.

6.7.1 Framing the Questions

Given that specific data was sought from the interviews, the framing of the questions related explicitly to the research questions, purpose and aims. The literature offered a clear guide to both the content and framing of the questions

(especially Chapters Two and Four). Thus the questions relate to the specific interface between animals and humans in artwork, the aesthetics and ethics related to artwork, animal advocacy and animal exploitation concerns and the gaze and reciprocal gaze in relation to their work. The preliminary questions concerning the artist's personal relationship with animals and the conceptual background to their use of animals in their work sought to ascertain the general background to the artist and their work. Questions were framed so as to determine the extent to which animals are a focus of their work. The list of 42 interview questions was divided into four sections (Appendix D). It was envisaged that not all questions would be relevant to all artists necessitating that the interviewer be sensitive to the context of the interview and the relevance of questions to participants. The time of each interview was estimated to take between sixty minutes and ninety minutes.

In the development stage, the interview questions were tested with a range of people to ascertain their substance, sense and relevance. One response from a PhD (Theatre) candidate noted that she found them to be *well organised, cohesive and in logical order, and that they seem to provide scope for a detailed response from the artist/s*. Another response from a PhD (Visual Arts) candidate stated that the interview questions were *excellent, comprehensive and covered all possible aspects of the area*. An additional comment related to the issue of the interviewer asking questions only when relevant.

These considerations and reactions to the interview questions, along with Ethics Committee approval for, provided a sound and necessary foundation from which to proceed to interview.

6.8 Exhibition Planning

As illustrated in Figure 6.5.1, the research involves the planning and organisation of two exhibitions. The exhibition of the group of artists interviewed evidences the strategies that these artists use in their consideration of animal-human

connectedness, while the solo exhibition of the research art practice brings the research outcomes into the public arena.

6.8.1 The Group Exhibition

The choice of Dubbo Regional Gallery, Western Plains Cultural Centre for the group exhibition was one that was obvious and well-substantiated since a major policy focus of this arts organisation is that of the animal in art. This involves an annual exhibition developed around the theme of the animal as well as an acquisition policy for the collection of works relating to the animal in art. This exhibition and collection focus was initiated in response to the pastoral and rural community in which Dubbo is situated and also to Dubbo's largest tourist attraction, Western Plains Zoo.

Within the context of this strong animal in art focus, the researcher developed a collaborative and cooperative connection with Dubbo Regional Gallery during the Masters research at which time an annual lecture on animals in art was delivered around that research, *Imaging Animals: A Visual Exploration of our Relationship with Animals*. This prior contact and rapport with the venue was also important to the success of the group exhibition proposal. An invitation from Dubbo Regional Gallery to deliver a second annual lecture on animals in art coincided with pre-publicity for the proposed exhibition almost one year before the group exhibition was planned to open.

6.8.2 The Solo Exhibitions

As indicated in Figure 6.5.1, the two solo exhibitions represent the outcomes of the micro level research. While the gallery space for which an exhibition is planned has substantial bearing on the number and scale of artworks that might be exhibited, it is critical that all the works, in concert, represent and encapsulate the complexities of the exhibition's conceptual framework. An important consideration for the body of works to be produced for exhibition is that they

explicate and elucidate the concepts driving the works to achieve both clarity and focus, and the coalescing of the technical and aesthetic processes involved in creating these works (see Chapter Nine).