

This file is part of the following work:

**Tanner, Heather Anne (2018) *Migrancy: a journey of yearning and a quest for home in the context of contemporary art*. PhD thesis, James Cook University.**

Access to this file is available from:

<https://doi.org/10.4225/28/5af8e5713a7b2>

Copyright © 2018 Heather Anne Tanner.

The author has certified to JCU that they have made a reasonable effort to gain permission and acknowledge the owner of any third party copyright material included in this document. If you believe that this is not the case, please email [researchonline@jcu.edu.au](mailto:researchonline@jcu.edu.au)

# Migrancy: a Journey of Yearning and a Quest for Home in the Context of Contemporary Art

Heather Anne Tanner

BTEC Nat. Dip. General Art and Design, BA (Hons) Constructed Textiles.

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Creative Arts).

College of Arts, Society and Education  
James Cook University, Queensland, Australia.

January 2018



# Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my primary advisor: Associate Professor Robyn Glade-Wright, secondary advisor: Professor Stephen Naylor, and Dr Barbara Dover from the College of Arts, Society and Education, James Cook University for their academic support for which I am extremely grateful. I also wish to acknowledge the support of my PhD colleagues for peer review and critique.

I am particularly indebted to Associate Professor Robyn Glade-Wright for her immense knowledge and consistent mentorship, guidance and support throughout this research and migratory journey. My appreciation extends so much further than I can express here.

In addition to this academic research, the topic's nature has also included intensely personal aspects of my life. As such, I wish to thank my family, partner and friends for their support and encouragement.

Every reasonable effort has been made to gain permission and acknowledge the owners of copyright material. I would be pleased to hear from any copyright owner who has been omitted or incorrectly acknowledged.

## Statement of the Contribution of Others

<b>Nature of Assistance</b>	<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Names, Titles and Affiliations of Co-Contributors</b>
Intellectual support - Exegesis	Exegesis review and critique.	Associate Professor Robyn Glade-Wright, JCU Professor Stephen Naylor, JCU Dr Barbara Dover, JCU
Intellectual support - Works of art	Works of art in progress review and critique.	Associate Professor Robyn Glade-Wright, JCU Dr Barbara Dover, JCU PhD candidate group, School of Arts, Society and Education, JCU
Exhibition space (LUX Gallery Cairns campus JCU)	Exhibition space made available free of charge for staging exhibitions of works of art.	Associate Professor Robyn Glade-Wright, JCU
Financial support	This research has been supported by the Australian Government's Research Training Scheme.	
Non-financial support	This research was supported through the Employee Study Leave Program at Cairns Regional Council 2012-2015.	

# Abstract

My experience of migrancy is at the heart of this practice-led research. As a migrant, the grief of missing family and homeland prompted investigation of how visual art might communicate the experience of migrancy in the dual form of a body of creative works of art and exegesis. To investigate the topic of migrancy, the work of social theorists, stories told by migrants and works of art by artists who explore migration in their practice was examined. In addition, theories of art relating to emotion and aesthetic cognitivism were investigated.

Through a reflexive and reflective process, I created works of art to test ideas, then returned to the literature, analysed the works and returned to thinking, reflecting and responding. Over time, this interactive cycle led to works of art that evoked my own experience of migrancy. The process of practice-led research enabled an understanding of the veracity of feelings associated with my migration. This cycle of gathering information, thinking deeply about a topic, coming to a greater understanding of my situation, and creating works of art, was a transformational experience. As I wrestled with the research, a shroud of personal grief was slowly replaced by insight and considered understanding.

This research tests the capacity of art to enable artists to delve deeply into their life and to recognise their longings, emotions and states of mind. The thesis of art theorist, R. G. Collingwood has been tested in this research. Through the process of practice-led research the underlying emotions and states of mind that were the source of personal disquiet have been identified. This finding indicates the value of making art for people with emotional unease, as it provides a means for investigating and grappling with a concern, therefore enabling one to identify the underlying emotions at the heart of the matter.

The practice-led research process enabled the refinement of my research question from the representation of migration in visual art, to one of representations of migrancy and longing for home. The exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* demonstrated how I attempted to create works of art that are evocative and redolent of personal experience. Analysis of early works suggested that a sensitive refinement was necessary to create a poetic or metaphoric character in the works. Furthermore, a finding of this research is that works of art need to be evocative and involve a reference to an idea in a manner that suggests new ways of seeing

and imagining. This knowledge of art along with the self-knowledge that can be gained, indicates the significant value of the arts for individuals and communities both at home and in new terrains.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Statement of the Contribution of Others.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Plates.....	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction and New Terrain.....	1
Chapter 2: Migrancy.....	4
Migrants and Australia.....	4
Greener Pastures.....	5
Dashed Hopes and Dreams.....	6
Uncertain Ground.....	7
Rootedness and Rootlessness.....	8
Nostalgic Yearning.....	9
Rose-tinted Glasses.....	9
Return.....	10
Boomerang.....	11
Conclusion.....	12
Chapter 3: Theories of Emotion and Understanding in Art.....	13
Catharsis.....	13
Expressivism.....	14
Sincere Expression.....	21



Aesthetic Cognitivism .....	21
Conclusion.....	24
Chapter 4: Visual Context .....	25
Simryn Gill.....	25
Hew Locke .....	28
Zenib Sedira .....	30
Mona Hatoum.....	32
Hossein Valamanesh .....	34
Conclusion.....	38
Chapter 5: Methodology .....	39
Practice-led Research - the Journey .....	39
Situating Concepts – the Literature Review.....	40
Studio Practice, Exhibition and Peer Review.....	41
Exegesis Analysis and Reflection .....	42
Conclusion.....	45
Chapter 6: Migrancy and Yearning for Home.....	46
Migrancy .....	46
Symbolism and Metaphor .....	47
Memory and a Sense of Loss .....	48
Disconnection and Isolation.....	50
Nostalgia and Longing .....	53
Transformation and Change.....	60
Suitcases.....	64
Exhibition.....	67
Concluding Remarks .....	70
Chapter 7: Conclusion and Return.....	71

Bibliography .....	73
Appendix 1: Works of Art Exhibited in <i>Migrancy and Yearning for Home</i> .....	82
Appendix 2: Copyright Permissions .....	94

## List of Tables

*Table I*      Table outlining practice-led research processes and timeline. Images: Heather Tanner.

## List of Figures

*Figure 5.1*      Diagram of practice-led research. Image: Heather Tanner.

## List of Plates

*Plate 2.1*      Michael Meszaros, 2008, *The Reuniting Family*. Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria. Photograph: Heather Tanner, February 2012.

*Plate 3.1*      Paloma Varga Weisz, 2011, *Rug People*. Bronze and carpet. Image from: Schlieker A (ed.), 2011, *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media, London, p.114.

*Plate 3.3*      Ford Maddox Brown, 1852-1855, *The Last of England*. Oil on panel, 82.5cm x 75cm. Image from: [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

*Plate 3.4*      Joe Greenberg, 1949, *Emigration Poster: Australia, Land of Tomorrow*. Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.

*Plate 3.5*      Abraham Solomon, 1854, *Second Class - The Parting: 'Thus part we rich in sorrow parting poor'*. Oil on canvas, 694cm x 966cm. Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.

- Plate 3.7* Mona Hatoum, 1998, *Measures of Distance*. Colour video with sound, duration 15 minutes 35 seconds, A Western Front video production, Vancouver, 1988 Copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy the artist.
- Plate 3.8* Dorothea Lange, 1936, *Migrant Mother*. Photograph. Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.
- Plate 4.1* Simryn Gill, 1993-5, *Washed up*. Engraved sea-washed glass, detail from installation. Image from: Storer, 2008, *Simryn Gill*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.48.
- Plate 4.2* Simryn Gill, 1996, 1998, *Forest*. Photographs, installed. Image from: Storer, 2008, *Simryn Gill*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.88.
- Plate 4.3* Simryn Gill, 1999 onwards, *Pearls: The Angus and Robertson Atlas of the World, (2005)*. Detail. Image from: Storer, 2008, *Simryn Gill*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.93.
- Plate 4.4* Zineb Sedira, 2011, *Lighthouse in the Sea of Time*. Film still. Image from: A. Schlieker (ed.), 2011, *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media, London, p.14.
- Plate 4.5* Mona Hatoum, 2000-1, *Doormat II*. Stainless steel, nickel-plated brass pins, canvas and glue 3 x 72.5 x 42 cm Image copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy of Alexander and Bonin, New York (Photograph: Oren Slor)
- Plate 4.6* Mona Hatoum, 1999, *Map*, 14mm glass marbles, Dimensions variable Installation view at Casino Luxembourg. Copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy Casino Luxembourg (Photograph: Christian Mosar)
- Plate 4.7* Hossein Valamanesh, 1998, *Recent Arrival*. Lithograph, 76.4cm x 56.8cm. Image from: Knights, M. 2011, 'Longing Belonging', in Knights, M. and North, I. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.81. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.

- Plate 4.8* Hossein Valamanesh, 2002, *Earthwork*. Earth, 7cm x 1500cm x 900cm. Image from: North, I, 2011, 'Profiling Hossein: a Conversation with the artist', in Knights, M. and North, I. *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.17. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.
- Plate 4.9* Hossein Valamanesh, 1997, *Longing Belonging*. Colour photograph, Persian carpet, black velvet, 215cm x 305cm. Image from: Knights, M. 2011, 'Longing Belonging', in Knights, M. and North, I. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.78. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.
- Plate 6.1* Heather Tanner, 1995, *Hong Kong Sketchbook*. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.2* Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Cotton, cotton thread. Each handkerchief measures 13cm x 13cm. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.3* Heather Tanner, 2012, *Sketchbook*. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.4* Heather Tanner, 2012, *Emotions*, installed in 2012, Lux Gallery, James Cook University. Digital image, tissue paper, metal, wire, plant fibre, string, acrylic paint, acrylic binder. Each piece measures approximately 10cm x 30cm. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.5* Alfred Ducôte, 1832, *E-migration or Flight of Fair Game*. Image: National Library of Australia. obj-135585009.
- Plate 6.6* Heather Tanner, 2013, *Nostalgia I*. MP4 format digital installation over 2 screens, duration 60 seconds. Still image: artist.
- Plate 6.7* Heather Tanner, 2013, *Sketchbook*. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.8* Heather Tanner, 2013, Studio work in progress; experimentation for *Nostalgia II*; teacups, saucers and electric lights. Photograph: artist.

- Plate 6.9* Heather Tanner, 2014, *Nostalgia II*. Digital installation over 2 screens, duration 80 seconds. Still image: artist.
- Plate 6.10* Heather Tanner, 2016, *Hope*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.11* Heather Tanner, 2015, Studio work in progress; experimentation for *Grafted*. Digital images, plants and wire. Photographs: artist
- Plate 6.12* Heather Tanner, 2016, *Grafted*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Digital photographs each 21cm x 30cm. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.13* Heather Tanner, 2015, *Return*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Card, digital photographs, glue and sticky tape. 23 boxes, various dimensions. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.14* Migrant's suitcase and contents c1950s, installed in 2013, *Collectomania* at the Queensland Museum. Photograph: Heather Tanner, 2013.
- Plate 6.15* Heather Tanner, 2016, Digital maquette of *Greener*. Image: artist.
- Plate 6.16* Heather Tanner, 2016, *New Beginnings*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Suitcase, plastic beach balls, plastic ball, paint. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.17* Heather Tanner, 2016, model of the proposed exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*. Photograph: artist.
- Plate 6.18* Heather Tanner, 2016, exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, installed at KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



# Chapter 1:

## Introduction and New Terrain

The issue addressed in the research is how art can elucidate the experience of migrancy. A 'migrant' is a person who migrates, whereas 'migrancy' describes the experience associated with a migrant's movement 'in which neither the points of departure nor those of arrival are immutable or certain' (Chambers, 1994, p.5). Therefore, migrancy can be viewed as a state of flux where a person oscillates between a world of memories of their former homeland and their new situation in a foreign land. Despite this state of transition, many migrants revel in their new situation, enjoying opportunities that were not available in their homeland such as education, housing, employment, safety and an increased standard of living. Each migrant's experience is unique and includes a wide range of outcomes from highly positive to deeply disappointing. I enjoyed a honeymoon period when I migrated, by choice to Australia, however, over time migration proved to be emotionally challenging. In contrast to the migration of some, in my experience, the romance of migration disguised the human cost of leaving my family and my homeland (Hoffman, 1998, pp.44-45).

A dull feeling of sorrow pervaded my life at the commencement of this practice-led research journey. My disquiet was due to two decades of migration experiences between Hong Kong, England and Australia. Feelings of sadness caused by my separation from family and friends had recently been exacerbated because of health issues of loved ones in my homeland. Making art has provided me with a haven in which I can examine my longings away from the demands of day-to-day life. The opportunity to delve deeply into the subjective experience of migration through a reflective and reflexive research process has yielded knowledge about the practice of art and its relationship to emotion and understanding.

Practice-led research often commences with a general concern and the research question is refined as the research progresses (Glade-Wright, 2017, p.93). To address my concerns regarding migrancy, I conducted a review of literature pertaining to experiences faced by migrants; this is presented in Chapter Two. The aspects investigated include: departure from home and homeland; familiarity and unfamiliarity; belonging and not belonging; a sense of



rootlessness; culture shock; challenges to one's identity; nostalgia; yearning for home and the 'boomerang' of return. This review of literature has been supplemented by gallery visits and a review of contemporary artists' work that focuses on the question of migrancy; this is examined in Chapter Four.

Drawing on the theories and themes of migrancy addressed in Chapter Two, and combining them with an analysis forming a theoretical relationship to discussions in Chapter Three, the works of art of five contemporary artists who examine ideas of migrancy, or utilise similar strategies that relate to my practice, are investigated in Chapter Four. The artists are selected because their experiences of migrancy drive their arts practice and inform their works of art. This reflective analysis of contemporary arts practice situates the field of contemporary art and migration studies within which my own practice and works of art are positioned. Studio research commenced in tandem with gallery visits and text-based research. A praxis occurred where my studio work was informed by my exhibition visits and reading about migrancy, while, at the same time, my creative work suggested lines of enquiry for further investigation. This intertwined web of making, thinking and reading continued as the research progressed.

A further and significant area of study has been theories of emotion and understanding in art, discussed in Chapter Three. The study of catharsis, expressivism, sentimentality and sincerity in art enabled me to analyse my practice and generate a philosophical basis for the work. Investigation of the seminal works of theorists R. G. Collingwood, Nelson Goodman and Derek Matravers, has allowed me to adopt an analytical approach. Furthermore, in Chapter Three, I reflect on works of art from the mid nineteenth century to the contemporary, in order to discuss how theoretical considerations can be applied to visual art that depicts topics of migration. Applying theoretical considerations to my own work, I recognised that early studio prototypes of electrical plugs and cables chosen to indicate feelings of being disconnected from homeland were more obvious than poetic. The reflexive process involved in practice-led research – working between the fields of text and creative practice – generated a change in my understanding where my work became increasingly metaphorical. Furthermore, the fog of sorrow evident at the start of the research became a story populated with ideas and concepts that I could articulate. The insights of artists and social theorists, along with my studio work, meant that I could now fathom my grief.

In Chapter Five, I elucidate how practice-led research was formative in creating the works of art exhibited in *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* and the exegesis, which together answer the research question, *How can an emotional experience of migrancy and yearning for home be communicated in the form of visual art?*

I describe how practice-led research is a reflexive and reflective process that combines theoretical understanding, situating concepts and studio practice in the conception, production and analysis of my work using the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. I illuminate how I exploit a personal perspective where my intuition, creativity and lived migration experience constitute part of the research journey. Then, looking beyond myself, I explain the processes employed and the ideas that have been considered in order to make my findings available for others in the field of creative arts practice.

A reflective discussion explaining the conceptual basis and practical development of the works of art in the exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* is presented in Chapter Six. I describe how the studio has functioned as a laboratory, hosting the investigative processes of creative experimentation, exploration, findings and discoveries. An explanation of concepts and strategies employed in making these works of art is presented. I discuss my aims for the works of art and describe how the processes of researching, making and reflecting upon these works of art have allowed me to uncover new knowledge in the form of my deepest feelings about my migration. Importantly, my creative work exposed my longings. It is evident that the creative works can divulge ideas that I might have attempted to suppress. I was moved by the observation of R. G. Collingwood who claimed that an artist's creative work is instigated by a 'psychic disturbance,' and that it is only during the process of making the work that the artist recognises the underlying emotions. These revelations, indicated through a combination of text-based and creative research, have enabled me to articulate new knowledge about the experience of migrancy and the capacity of creative arts practice to reveal understanding.

In the Conclusion, I explain the significance of the new knowledge disclosed through this research. The new knowledge is two-fold. Firstly, I explain how making works of art through a practice-led research process, provided an arena in which my own disquiet was explored and revealed in the form of new self-knowledge. Secondly, I describe how new knowledge of practice may help other creative arts practitioners.

## Chapter 2: Migrancy

Migrancy is the problem at the heart of this research and it is the catalyst for this practice-led research journey. The review of literature regarding migrancy indicated that the experience includes feelings of: familiarity and unfamiliarity; belonging and not belonging; a sense of rootlessness; culture shock; challenges to one's identity; fragmentation and hybridisation; transience; transformation; nostalgia and yearning for home. Insightful descriptions cited below include those by migrant writers Iain Chambers, Salman Rushdie and Linda Janssen, in addition to the ideas of social theorists including James Hammerton, Alistair Thomson, Lynellyn Long, Ellen Oxfeld, Mary Holmes, Roger Burrows and Jan Duyvendak.

Like many migrants, I have experienced a range of emotions and in this chapter I contextualise my experience by reviewing stories, reflections and observations of others, many of whom have lived far from their homeland. Literature regarding theories of migrancy and migrant themes reviewed in this chapter has had a formative impact on my life, and this information helped me to clarify my feelings and longing. This has supported my decision to return home to England after living in Australia for 18 years.

### Migrants and Australia

In Australian post-colonial history, its governments have socially engineered a particular kind of society through migrant intake (Jupp, 2007, p.6). This has been achieved through controlled immigration including targeting certain skills for projects designed for economic growth. Specific requirements have included the need for miners (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.192), rural farm labourers (Jupp, 2004, p.115), factory and construction workers (Jupp, 2007, p.27), and Snowy River Hydro labourers and engineers (Walsh, 2001, p.190, Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.192). Many of the target demographic for recruitment were British, however, with the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Australia attracted many from other war ravaged countries (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.9). This brought about a multicultural population which has played a major role in both the economic and cultural development of Australian society (Jupp, 2007, pp.218-219).

Australia's population is around 24.7 million and an estimated 28.5 percent (approximately 6.9 million people) were born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Migrants from the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland), Channel Islands and Isle of Man, currently comprise approximately five percent of the Australian population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Many people from the United Kingdom have found their way to Australia through organised group migration and government schemes such as 'Bring Out a Briton' more commonly known as the 'Ten Pound Tourists' (Jupp, 2004, p.138), or the 'Ten Pound Poms' (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.1), while others have been admitted as partners and family members of Australian citizens. The sculpture by Michael Meszaros (2008), *The Reuniting Family* (Plate 2.1) formerly located on Collins Street, Melbourne, portrays a migrant wife/mother and children arriving to join the previously arrived husband/father in their new country. The sculpture was commissioned to commemorate 'Italian Immigration and all Migrants to Australia', (Monument Australia, 2017) and embodies a migrant experience of arrival in a new country with the intent of establishing a new home.



Plate 2.1 Michael Meszaros, 2008, *The Reuniting Family*. Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Photograph: Heather Tanner, February 2012.

## Greener Pastures

'The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence', is an English proverb that suggests life is better elsewhere. It may be envy of a neighbour's life literally 'over the fence'

or indeed, it may be the idea that life in another country might promise a better future. In the United Kingdom, there has been a common view that Australia is an attractive, sunny place, replete with opportunity and therefore the grass is always 'greener' (Thomson, 2011, p.2). This view has been reinforced by the British Broadcasting Corporation's *Wanted Down Under* television show depicting many who are considering a move to greener pastures in Australia and New Zealand.

Despite the appeal of a warmer climate, the decision to migrate is usually multifaceted and the promise of adventure, employment and improved future family prospects can motive migration (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.190), (ibid. p.193), (Jenkins, 1969, p.22).

My motivation to migrate from England to Australia in 1997 and to subsequently take Australian Citizenship in 2005 was due to marriage to an Australian Citizen and was anticipated as a positive move toward greener pastures. However, once the grass had not proved to be greener for me in Australia, the ties that connected me to my family, loved ones and homeland eventually drew me home. In my case, the proverb 'The grass is always greener' came to suggest the green hills surrounding my English homeland town. This desire to return home was so strong as to render all other future considerations such as financial impact and career opportunities moot points.

In a deliberation of the expectation and euphoria of the move to Australia along with my subsequent anguish and disquiet, I appraised the literature, which clarifies the complexities of the migrancy experience.

## Dashed Hopes and Dreams

For many migrants, a new country can offer opportunities for education, prosperity, a better job and a higher standard of living. Migrancy might be seen as an attractive, interesting and potentially glamorous opportunity (Hoffman, 1998, p.44). Despite this positive assessment of migration, the literature reveals instances of dashed expectations and adverse emotional challenges for migrants following a 'honeymoon' period of novelty and fascination (Janssen, 2013, p.38). The grass is not necessarily greener and the picture postcard image of Australia with blue skies and sunshine can become tempered by nostalgia and longing for family and friends at home.

## Uncertain Ground

Social theorist Alistair Thomson elucidates aspects of a British migrant's experience of Australia when he writes 'that climate and outdoor life [test a migrant's] ability to endure and adapt to very different physical conditions' (2011, pp.112-113). The unfamiliar can cause uncertainty and culture shock. Culture shock is described as the 'physical and emotional discomfort, disorientation, or loss of bearings a person experiences when moving to/ from one culture to another' (Janssen, 2013, p.38). Over time, the culture shock dissipates as the new surroundings become familiar and the migrant assimilates to their new terrain (Ben-Ze'ev, 2010, p.42-43). Despite new situations becoming familiar, migrants may sense impressions of impermanence (Hughes, 2004, p.194), and of not belonging (Rushdie, 2010, p.15). Transience due to migration can result in feelings of alienation, helplessness and of being lost (Janssen, 2013, p.35). A sense of transience is captured by the writer André Aciman when he writes, 'that my feet are never quite solidly on the ground, but also that the soil under me is equally weak, that the graft didn't take' (1997, p.22).

Author and migrant, Salman Rushdie, wrote: 'Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools' (2010, p.15). Falling between cultures impacts on a migrant's sense of identity which is variously described as partial (Rushdie, 2010, p.15), plural (*ibid.*), fragmented (Constable, 2004, p.114), hyphenated (Gupta, 2013, p.87), or hybridised (Gupta, 2013, p.90, Storti, 2001, p.54, Chambers, 1994, p.27). However, Alistair Thomson reports that these challenges are not necessarily detrimental as migrant identities can be transformed by 'experience ... circumstances, ideas and by significant people' (2011, p.126). Transformation of identity might include personal enrichment through experiences of other cultures (Gupta, 2013, p.90) and broader perspectives (Janssen, 2013, p.1). In this view, enrichment can be an empowering experience, allowing migrants to reinvent themselves (Bottomley, 1992, p.65), form and reform their identity (Chambers, 1994, p.24), exploit transnational and multicultural connections (Baldassar, 2001, p.8, Tsuda, 2004, p.139, Harper, 2005a, p.12) and identify who they wish to become (Janssen, 2013, p.37).

## Rootedness and Rootlessness

Part of the decision to migrate can be a combination of a repulsion from one place or situation and attraction to another according to findings by researchers (Vingender, Mészáros and Kis, 2009, p.206). Repulsion may be due to dissatisfaction with job opportunities, oppression, conflict or war, high cost of living, bad weather or unsatisfactory housing. Housing and a sense of home is a critical concept in a migrant experience. A sense of home affords a continuity between pre- and post-migration lives which can assist a migrant to settle (Glenn, Bouvet and Floriani, 2011, p.2). Curiously, not all people need home to be a fixed place. Some 'rootless' people have the capacity to feel at home if a place meets the ideal criteria of somewhere familiar, secure, safe and comfortable (Duyvendak 2011, p.34, p.38). For these people, home can be in many places and not just in their homeland.

By contrast, the historic perspective of the early twentieth-century German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, saw 'Heimat' (homeland), as created by people's relationships with history, language, tradition and land (Bambach, 2003, p.75), binding people with the earth through a form of 'rootedness' (Bambach, 2003, p.4). Heidegger held that 'homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world', demonstrating concern that many people had lost their 'rootedness' and relationship with home and homeland (Moran, 2000, p.244). However, the early twentieth-century French philosopher, Gaston Bachelard, outlines the importance of a person's relationship to a physical location as being through the subjective experience of how it makes them feel. This feeling continues to impact on them when they move away from home (1994, p.6). When a person moves away, the relationship with home can be transformed and engaged with through imagination and memory;

‘and it is because our memories of former dwelling-places are relived as daydreams that these dwelling-places of the past remain in us for all time’  
(Bachelard, 1994, p.6).

Bachelard further reports that once a person is in a new home, comforting memories of other past homes and the security and the protection they afforded can be re-lived (1994, p.6). A sense of safety may be generated through nostalgic memories of homes in the past.

## Nostalgic Yearning

Despite the opportunities on offer, transition to a new country is not successful for all people. Enduring homesickness and '[m]issing your home during a time away from it' is a major factor affecting many migrants (Waite, 2012, p.345). Mary Holmes and Roger Burrows' research indicates that a sense of homesickness is statistically the second most likely reason for a migrant to return to the United Kingdom from Australia (2012, p.108). Homesickness and nostalgia are often cited as issues for migrants. The Oxford English dictionary (2012) states the origin of 'nostalgia' is from the Greek *nostos* meaning 'return home' and *algos* meaning 'pain' (Waite, 2012, p.489). Experiencing nostalgic emotions occurs 'when a change is evaluated as relevant to our personal concerns' (Ben-Ze'ev, 2010, p.44). If the present situation is a painful and unpleasant place, memories about home and home country may act as an imaginative refuge (Long and Oxford, 2004, p.7).

When strong feelings are endured, cognitive assessment and evaluation no longer function effectively, and the situation can appear distorted (Ben-Ze'ev, 2010, p.47-48). Dissatisfaction with one place can make another place seem better than it really is. Memory can have failings and the past can be viewed with rose-coloured glasses (Hughes, 2004, p.21, Levy, 2004, p.93). Furthermore, emotions can be selective (Thomson, 2011, pp.298-299), blocking out experiences such as the original repulsion that motivated the person to migrate. Despite this, an evaluation of the situation can motivate migrants to reclaim and restore their seemingly rosier past (Rushdie, 2010, pp.9-10).

## Rose-tinted Glasses

Reclaiming or restoring a former time with the aim of relieving the emotional pain of homesickness is a beguiling concept. Seeking a return to the past is described as *restorative* nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia suggests 'the past must be reconquered at the cost of the present' (Duyvendak, 2011, p.108). However, peoples' pasts exist in memory, life moves on and attempts to retrace the past is complicated. A homeland may have changed and bear little resemblance to the one that is remembered (Rushdie, 2010, p.12, Hughes, 2004, p.171).

Returning home may cause a migrant to disregard their achievements in their new country and inadvertently destroy their new life in a quest for something they remember and yet,



sadly, is not what they were seeking. For example, a British person now living in Australia may yearn for the long, light, summer evenings and halcyon days; however, the reality was more likely to have been damp, drizzle, heavy traffic and thick fog (Good cited in Thomson, 2011, p.39). Therefore, if a migrant recalls the initial repulsion from homeland with honesty, and acknowledges that the past is gone, they can realise that they may have gained for the better (ibid.).

Recalling the past and seeking to build on what has been gained for the better is the strength of *reflective* nostalgia. This occurs when continuity is sought 'between the past and present' through 'reflection on the value of the (remembered) past for present purposes' (Duyvendak, 2011, p.108). Continuity assists people's settlement through discovering common ground with their new country and community, and in finding a sense of belonging (Rushdie, 2010, p.20).

## Return

A sense of belonging is an existential need for migrants (Duyvendak, 2011, p.106). A lack of sense of belonging has been found to be one of the key reasons influencing United Kingdom migrants to return from Australia (Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.106). Other reasons that may instigate a return home include; successes and failures (Wyman, 2005, p.21); rejection of life in the new country (ibid.); family obligations (Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.106, Harper, 2005b, p.54); seeking a spouse (ibid.); healthcare (ibid.); to take over a family business (Wyman, 2005, p.21); to assuage homesickness (Harper, 2005b, p.54); to study (McSpadden, 2004, p.47); career (Long, 2004, p.73); or marriage breakup (Gmelch, 2004, p.212).

The philosopher Aaron Ben-Ze'ev writes: 'Emotions typically occur when we perceive positive or negative *significant changes in our personal situation*' (2010, p.42). Emotions may be transient as the situation changes and develops, however, they might have lasting impact (Ben-Ze'ev, 2010, p.46). Feelings of underlying disquiet of varying intensity may be constantly present, becoming heightened by particular moments or memories (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.286).

For some returnees, such as the homesick, the trigger to return might be an underlying discomfort which has been present for many years before causing emotion which alerted them to attend to the situation. For others, such as those with broken relationships, the decision to return can be with the intent of seeking the support of family and friends who are no longer in close proximity at the time of upset. Others may experience excitement rather than distress, such as those with career opportunities awaiting them.

The return rate of migrants from Australia back to the United Kingdom is approximately twenty-five percent (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.264). Return to homeland is an expensive and emotionally challenging experience (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.300). Many people are financially disadvantaged by the move with capital directed to the cost of flights and removals (ibid., Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.115). Despite this, many migrants find the allure of homeland and pull of family ties too strong, choosing to be financially disadvantaged by a return move rather than staying in an unhappy situation. Return often has an emotional foundation given that it is a stronger motivating factor than economic drivers (Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.108). However, economic constraint does mean that some migrants are unable to afford to leave their new country and become 'trapped' (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.300).

Some return migrants may enjoy an idyllic 'honeymoon' period where everything is rosy when they first repatriate (Constable, 2004, p.110, Storti, 2001, p.51). Others encounter challenges such as gaining suitable housing, setting up a new home and finding a new job (Stefansson, 2004, p.172). Difficulties can also include dealing with unexpected attitudes, such as resentment from friends and family who remained in the home country while the migrant was away (Storti, 2001, p.23). Return migrants can find themselves in unfamiliar territory and experience a reverse culture shock (Storti, 2001, p.51).

## Boomerang

A reported experience for return migrants is the discovery that people and places have changed and therefore, the homeland is simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar (Storti, 2001, p.5). This means that the return migrant is unable to reclaim the sense of belonging they sought. Lack of familiarity can bring about a repulsion and the re-emergence of Australia's

allure (Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.115). This might be the case even for people who viewed their move back to homeland as permanent. When the return migrants' intention and the eventual reality do not necessarily match (Long and Oxfeld, 2004, p.11), the option to migrate a third time is initiated. In Australia, those who re-migrate are known as 'boomerang migrants', the 'to and froms' (Thomson, 2005, p.106), or the 'ping pong poms' (Holmes and Burrows, 2012, p.115). Despite a migrant's desire for return to take them full circle (Thomson, 2005, p.117, Gmelch, 2004, p.211), there may be no conclusive or final destination involved in migration (Hammerton and Thomson, 2005, p.296, Chambers, 1994, p.25, Baldassar, 2001, p.10). Migration for some might prove to be an ever moving and continuing state of 'being rootless, of living between worlds, between a lost past and a non-integrated present' (Chambers, 1994, p.27).

## Conclusion

Literature pertaining to migration reveals that despite the opportunities and benefits experienced by the majority of migrants, the challenges of migrancy mean that some people elect to return home. Regardless of a return home, the experience of migrancy can bring with it challenges of emotional distress.

The decision to migrate can suggest a form of being repelled by home and yet the move to unfamiliar territory can induce homesickness and nostalgia. Emotional distress due to being far from home might include simultaneous feelings of familiarity and unfamiliarity; belonging and not belonging in addition to emotional experiences of rootlessness; culture shock; challenges to one's identity; fragmentation; hybridisation; transience; transformation; nostalgia and yearning for home.

The literature investigation further reveals that emotional pain might bring about a migrant's evaluation of their situation and, in turn, return migration to their homeland. The investigation further suggests that there might never be a final destination for a migrant but rather a continuing state of migrancy.

## Chapter 3: Theories of Emotion and Understanding in Art

Theories of emotion and understanding in the arts are examined in this chapter including catharsis, expressivism and aesthetic cognitivism. These are investigated through the texts of the Ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, through to contemporary theorists Monroe C. Beardsley, Dennis Dutton, R. G. Collingwood, Eileen John and Alex Neill among others.

The theoretical concepts investigated are foundational in my analysis of my creative practice. This is discussed further in relation to my practice-led research methods in Chapter Five and then in relation to works of art in Chapter Six. Furthermore, this review of relevant art theory has enabled me to delve deeply into my understanding of practice and to glean and articulate how creative work has contributed to self-knowledge and to knowledge of practice. Strong emotions have been a feature of my migrancy experience. Theories of emotion and the arts and art and understanding, or aesthetic cognitivism, appraised in this chapter, consider the potential of learning through the processes of making and viewing art. There is a synergetic relationship between art and understanding and art and emotion. In my research practice, these two theoretical fields coalesce. This has resulted in self-knowledge and knowledge about the value of contemplating and making art.

### Catharsis

Catharsis describes the bifacial situation of relieving or draining harmful emotions, therefore resulting in a state of calm balance (Heath, 1996, p.xxxix). A catharsis of harmful emotions was believed to heal because an individual would attain a calmer and more balanced state of mind (Heath, 1996, p.xxxix). The arts have long been considered to have the capacity to purge audience members of previously pent-up emotional excess and therefore to have a cathartic value (Heath, 1996, p.xxxix). The Ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, held that the experience of engaging with the arts, for instance, attending a play, can lead to a catharsis of emotions such as pity and fear (Pappas, 2005, p.18).

In recent times, the cathartic value of the arts is supported with the work of American philosopher of art, Monroe C. Beardsley, who notes the benefits of a purging of otherwise harmful emotions. The cathartic value of the arts lies in ‘reliev[ing] tension and quiet[ening] destructive impulses’ (Beardsley 1995, p.549), therefore restoring a sense of balance and perspective (ibid., p.550). However, the idea of catharsis is not accepted by all.

Contemporary philosopher of art, Gordon Graham, mounts a strong argument refuting the virtue of catharsis in art (2005, p.36). Graham holds that if it is possible to purge negative emotions, it can also be possible to purge positive emotions (Graham, 2005, pp.36-37).

Therefore, the overall effect of catharsis is neutral and consequently its value in the arts is questionable (Graham, 2005, p.37).

Despite Graham’s objection, Beardsley and art theorist Denis Dutton hold that artists and audiences can gain benefits from the cathartic effect of making or experiencing art. Making a work of art may be ‘psychologically beneficial’ as it can relieve overbearing emotions during periods of crisis and unease by providing comfort and soothing nerves (Dutton, 2009, p.87).

A further benefit of the cathartic effect of making art is the capacity to enable the artist and audience members to view problems and emotional situations from a different perspective (Beardsley, 1995, p.550). Therefore, art making and engagement in art can be a ‘tonic’ that results in calmer state and a clearer mind which is beneficial for both artist and audience (ibid., Dutton, 2009, p.87).

My work, *Tears*, is a work of art which had a cathartic impact. The slow process of embroidery and the contemplation of the messages facilitated an outpouring of my distress due to my separation from family. It enabled me to drain off some of my excess emotion. The act of creating the work was a ‘tonic’ and the release of emotions led to a revelation regarding the extent of my unease due to the distance between myself and my family.

## Expressivism

The term expressivism is used to describe works of art that are expressive of emotional content invested by an artist and recognised by an audience (Ridley, 2003, p.212). Works of art are considered to be *expressive* of emotion rather than an *expression* of emotion (Graham, 2005, p.46). Graham makes the distinction between something being an *expression* of

emotion and being *expressive* of emotion. For example, when someone cries out in pain, it is an *expression* of emotion, however, to cry out once the source of pain has gone is *expressive* of that pain (ibid.). This is an important distinction, since works of art cannot express emotions, however they can be *expressive* of emotion.

Expressivism is a useful theory because it counteracts some common views and limitations associated with artists and making works of art. For example, noted nineteenth-century Russian author, Leo Tolstoy, presents a commonly held and naïve view of an artist when he writes that an artist conveys, through the clarity of their artwork, their sincerest emotion and the artwork then infects the viewer with the experience of that same feeling (Tolstoy, trans. 1995, p.39). According to Tolstoy's version of expressivism, an artist makes art in response to their personally experienced emotion and communicates those same feelings effectively to others (Tolstoy, trans. 1995, p.38). Therefore, those who view the work would receive the same artistic impression in the form of aroused emotion (ibid.). The aroused emotion would enable the audience to enter into a 'communion' with an artist and simultaneously with all others 'infected' by the work (ibid.).

Graham cites several objections to Tolstoy's view, noting that artists have the imitative capacity to present believable renditions of emotions. This is evident in the numerous characters that Shakespeare presented in his plays, yet Shakespeare could not have experienced the personal lives of so many people and felt all of the emotions (Graham, 2005, p.37). This indicates that artists have the imaginative capacity to overcome the limitation of not having experienced an emotion themselves (Graham, 2005, p.46).



Plate 3.1 Paloma Varga Weisz, 2011, *Rug People*. Bronze and carpet.

Image from: Schlieker A (ed.), 2011, *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media, London, p.114.

Graham also questions Tolstoy's assertion that artists convey 'their sincerest emotion', when he observes that a work of art may exhibit more than a single sincere emotion (2005, p.33). For example, in *Rug People* by Paloma Varga Weisz (Plate 3.1), (Schlieker, 2011, p.114), we find multiple emotions exhibited such as those associated with sorrow, vulnerability and loneliness. Weisz formed *Rug People* to convey the sense of disorientation encountered by migrants encamped at Calais, France, who are attempting a perilous journey towards the allure of a better life in England (Schlieker, 2011, p.19). The work of art is complex and the 'range of emotions' represented is too wide to assert which particular emotion is represented (Graham, 2005, p.33). Furthermore, the 'sincere emotions' in *Rug People* have not been personally encountered by Weisz but formed through creativity and imagination. Therefore, although the emotions forming the basis of the work are conveyed sincerely, there are multiple emotions being imaginatively expressed.

The mid-twentieth-century theorist, R. G. Collingwood, provides an insightful view of the relationship between art, emotion and understanding. Collingwood claims that an emotion is not the basis of an artist's work (Graham, 2005, p.41). Collingwood argues that the stimulus for an artist to commence making a work of art is personally experienced 'psychic disturbance' (Graham, 2005, p.42). Furthermore, Collingwood claims that the 'psychic disturbance', which might be a sense of joy or disquiet is the impetus which stimulates

action. It is only through the process of making the work of art that artists can discover, unpack or come to identify the underlying emotion (Collingwood, 1938, p.109). According to Collingwood's view of expressivism, it is through the process of making the work that transformation occurs in the artist's unknown muddle of feelings into an understanding of a 'certain kind' (Collingwood, 1938, p.114, Ridley, 2003, p.224).

The artist, Louise Bourgeois, has often employed her personal and emotional 'psychic disturbances' as the theoretical basis of making her works of art. For example, in *The Runaway Girl*, Bourgeois explores the emotional upset brought about by her migration. The artist depicts herself with a suitcase in her hand, hovering over lands divided by water, suggesting loneliness, distance and separation (Coxon, 2010, p.13). Reflection on works, such as *The Runaway Girl*, allowed Bourgeois to gain a self-understanding of the psychic upsets fuelling her creative arts practice. Bourgeois wrote: 'Art is the guaranty (sic) of sanity' (cited in Coxon, 2010, p.59). This demonstrates the relationship between emotion, art and understanding where Collingwood's theory of 'psychic disturbance', helps explain the impetus for the work of art and the way in which it allowed Bourgeois' to gain an understanding of her emotions, and therefore, greater self-knowledge (Collingwood, 1938, p.291, Graham, 2005, p.46).



Plate 3.2 Ford Maddox Brown, 1852-1855, *The Last of England*. Oil on panel, 82.5cm x 75cm.

Image from: [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

In *The Last of England* (Plate 3.2), Ford Maddox Brown uses imagination to depict himself as a migrant leaving England destined for Australia, despite the fact that Maddox Brown did not make that journey. Maddox Brown imagined the emotions surrounding such an event and



attempted to express these feelings in the painting (Graham, 2005, p.37). According to Graham, the special skill of many artists is not only revealing emotions that they have endured, but their imaginative ability to express emotions that extend beyond their personal experience (2005, p.38). Expressivism considers that works of art can be expressive of emotion, how works of art may commence with a 'psychic disturbance' and how artists have the imaginative insight to present believable representations of emotions that they have not experienced.

## Arousal Theory

The arousal theory offers further explanation of the synergic relationship between art, emotion and understanding. According to the arousal theory, the importance of a work of art is its capacity to evoke an emotional response in the viewer (Graham, 2005, p.37). Tolstoy claimed that audience is 'infected' with the same intensity of emotion as the artist experienced, or imagined, while making art (Tolstoy, trans. 1995, p.121). However, the arousal of feelings as intense as those of an artist is questioned by theorist Derek Matravers, an exponent of the arousal theory. Matravers notes that it is 'implausible' that a work of art will arouse the 'full-bloodied emotion' of all who view it and that a more likely explanation might be that there is some form of non-cognitive element to an art experience (2005, p.451). Therefore, the properties of a work of art are both 'perceptible and perceived' in order to have an emotional effect on the viewer (Matravers, 1998, p.208).

Objections to the arousal theory are raised by the theorist Alex Neill, who considers that a work of art can be unsuccessful if the audience responds with no emotion or an inappropriate emotion. For example, a work of art might be said to be expressive of one set of emotions, and yet an audience may find that the work evokes an unintended emotion (Neill, 2003, p.425). For example, a response to a work said to be expressive of sadness, might not be sadness but pity instead (Debellis, 2005, p.670). People might have different responses to the same work of art based on their personal views, life perspective, experience or disposition (Wollheim, 1987, p.81). This indicates that an audience response might be more attuned to their personal situation than perception of an artist's intent. For example, *Rug People* by Varga Weisz might be viewed from a different perspective by a person who objects to migrants arriving in England to a person who has compassion for migrants' plight. If the

work is either clouded by predisposition, fails to elicit an emotion, or generates an unintended response, then the work may fail to successfully communicate emotive content and, therefore, might not be fully understood (Neill, 2003, p.425).

## Propaganda

Seeking to arouse an emotional response through art is a feature of propaganda widely associated with politics and ideology. A key characteristic of propaganda is the employment of images that are skilfully crafted with the aim of arousing emotion and gaining the audience's 'belief or assent' (Graham, 2005, p.55). Therefore, in propaganda, the function of art and emotion is to arouse feelings and manipulate understanding to secure agreement and action in accordance with the political or ideological point of view.

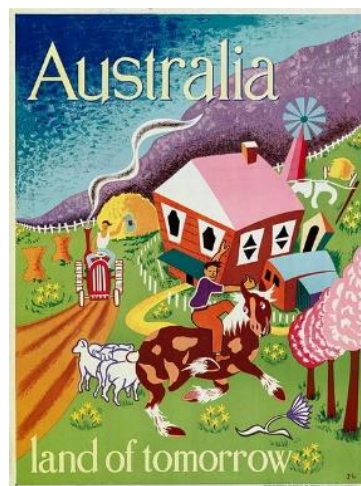


Plate 3.3 Joe Greenberg, 1949, *Emigration Poster: Australia, Land of Tomorrow*.

Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.

In the 1940's, the Australian government engaged artists to create poster style advertisements with the aim of enticing people from the United Kingdom to migrate to its shores. Following World War Two, the Australian government's policy of 'Populate or Perish' resulted in the commissioning of posters to convey an impression of a bright and sunny future on offer in Australia. These images, such as in *Emigration Poster: Australia Land of Tomorrow* (Plate 3.3), (Greenberg, 1949), were contrived to offer an attractive alternative to the bomb damage and food rationing prevalent in the United Kingdom in the aftermath of the war. Through

illustrative images of an idyllic lifestyle and opportunity, these forms of propaganda sought to elicit an emotional reaction and to entice people to migrate.

## Sentimentality

Idyllic country scenes of farms, people and animals such as those depicted in *Emigration Poster: Australia Land of Tomorrow*, are often sentimental and nostalgic images of bygone eras. Like propaganda, sentimental art is often intended to seek an emotional response from an audience. However, unlike propaganda, sentimental art is not contrived in order to gain an audience's agreement to act.



Plate 3.4 Abraham Solomon, 1854, *Second Class - The Parting: 'Thus part we rich in sorrow parting poor'*.  
Oil on canvas, 694cm x 966cm. Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.

A key feature of sentimental art is the use of emotive themes such as grief, parting and longing. In *Second Class - The Parting: 'Thus part we rich in sorrow parting poor'* (Plate 3.4) the artist, Abraham Solomon, has employed symbolic forms such as a handkerchief and black mourning clothes to convey an emotive scene of a sorrowful migratory parting. Solomon's deliberate use of forms that are symbolic of grief such as dark colours and grim faces, is to portray the sense of sadness. Art can be contrived with the intent of manipulating an audience and delivering insincere emotional content. Sentimental art is not considered to be invested with, nor expressive of, emotion that is sincerely held by the artist (Dutton, 2009, p.235). Art based on emotional manipulation such as propaganda or sentimentality differs from art where sincerity is a goal.

## Sincere Expression

Many significant works of art have the artist's sincere emotional investment, whether expressive of his or her own feelings or conceived of in his or her imagination. The art theorist, Graham, writes that great art 'must secure belief through reflective understanding' (Graham, 2005, p.55). Great art does not manipulate understanding to achieve adherence with a point of view, like propaganda, nor emotionally manipulate a response such as in sentimental art.

Great art, formed through sincere expression, might assist people by providing a new perspective from which to reflect (Beardsley, 1995, p.550). For example, Bourgeois' works of art are sincerely expressive of her emotions. If Bourgeois represented the concept behind the work *The Trauma of Abandonment* in a simplistic or overly sentimental manner, the work may fail to elicit aesthetic appreciation (Dutton, 2009, p.235). However, *The Trauma of Abandonment* successfully employs imaginative means to convey the complexities of sincere and overwhelming sadness in a succinct, sophisticated and symbolic form. *The Trauma of Abandonment* functions as a proposition for reflection through which understanding and knowledge of the emotional turmoil experienced in war and migration can be expanded (Gordon, 2005, pp.114-115).

## Aesthetic Cognitivism

Aesthetic cognitivism is a theory which proposes that understating can be attained through the cognitive response to a work of art. While experiencing art, the act of imaginative engagement creates cognitive stimulation (John, 2005, p.419). Cognitive experience has the capacity to create new, provocative and intense ideas, providing fresh knowledge, deeper understanding (Freeland cited in John, 2005, p.419) and learning (John, 2005, p.419). Theories of aesthetic cognitivism also suggest that there is a synergic role played by emotion during an art experience, where emotions are required to perform a perceptive function (Goodman, 1976, p.248). According to the theorist Nelson Goodman, emotions activate the perception of the particular properties of a work of art, which enables cognitive evaluation of the meaning of the work (1976, p.248).

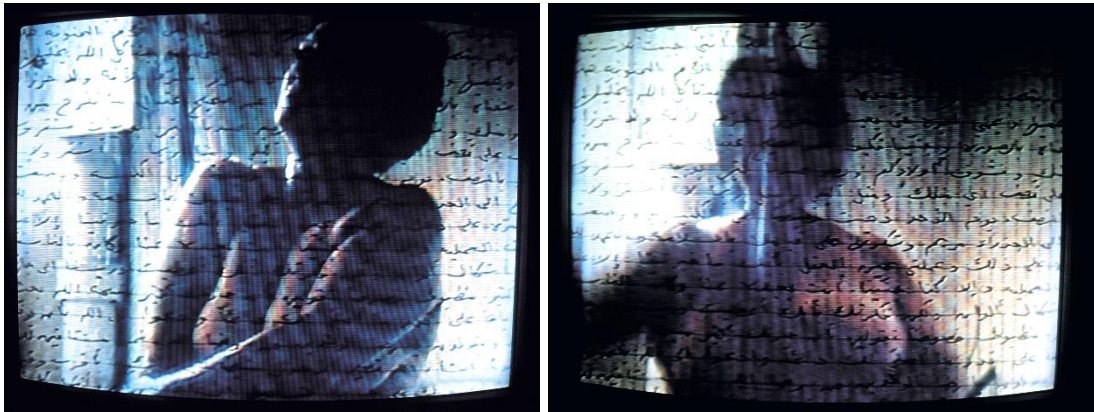


Plate 3.5 Mona Hatoum, 1998, *Measures of Distance*. Colour video with sound, duration 15 minutes 35 seconds,  
A Western Front video production, Vancouver, 1988  
Copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy the artist.

In *Measures of Distance* (Plate 3.5) the artist, Mona Hatoum, offers an opportunity for reflection on an experience of emotional disturbance endured in her life (Dutton, 2009, pp.233-234). Emotional perception of properties imbued in *Measures of Distance* might provoke reflective thought on conflict, the plight of the displaced, or new knowledge of the traumatic impact of separation of loved ones. Contemplative engagement with the work might provide information of situations that we have either not experienced or have only encountered from a specific perspective, thus ‘enhancing or enriching’ our understanding (Graham, 2005, p.55).

Viewing *Measures of Distance* stimulates cognition, emotional perception, reflection and imagination, providing insights into the painful emotional separation of mother and daughter due to war. Engagement with *Measures of Distance* might offer people an enriched knowledge of aspects of another’s traumatic life situation (Beardsley, 1995, p.550, Kieran, 2005, pp.299-300). Understanding another’s emotional experiences through art means that an audience can increase knowledge of a situation without the experience of real life displacement, conflict and migration (Dutton, 2009, pp.105-106).

## Unfinished Reflection

Works of art are performative in the way in which they present suggestions for further thinking. Art has been compared to a metaphor where there is an opportunity for ‘open-ended

exploration' (Gaut, 2003, p.439). Each exploration offers an incomplete explanation of the work of art (Goodman, 1976, p.260). There can be more to be gained by further exploration and contemplation as 'what compels is the urge to know, what delights is discovery' (Goodman, 1976, p.258). A moment of discovery according to Goodman is 'the peak of interest' in a work of art that occurs at the moment of 'revelation, somewhere midway in the passage from the obscure to the obvious' (1976, p.259). Discoveries and new understandings reached from a work of art may provide an experience that holds interest and forms a basis for peoples' further cognitive exploration (Goodman, 1976, p.260).

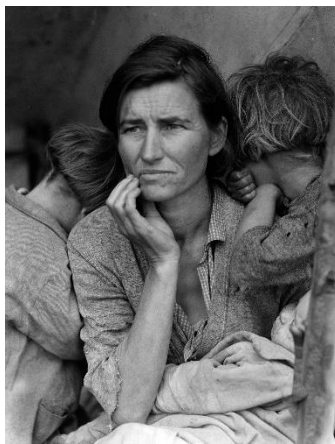


Plate 3.6 Dorothea Lange, 1936, *Migrant Mother*. Photograph.  
Image from: [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons.

The photograph, *Migrant Mother* (1936), (Plate 3.6) by Dorothea Lange, is an example of a work of art that holds value through cognitive engagement and revelation. We do not need to have endured the harsh experiences of the Great Depression to appreciate the emotion associated with the poverty and hopelessness imbued in this photograph. It is Lange's 'insight and her capacity for communication' (Glade-Wright, 2016) that leads us on a cognitive pathway; discovering new knowledge and understanding through reflective thinking. Art has the capability of prompting and stimulating our thinking, 'inviting us to unfinished reflection' (Borgdorff, 2011, p.61). Unfinished reflection leads to further exploration which encourages a viewer 'towards a critical perspective' (Borgdorff, 2011, p.47).

Unfinished thinking allows for both the audience and artist to acquire knowledge through engagement with art. Illumination of insights through contemplative reflection on works of art might confront existing ideas, offer different perspectives and broaden understanding of situations we may be less deeply aware of (Kieran, 2005, p.300). Furthermore, as the theorist Marcia Cavell writes; ‘knowing what one feels is sometimes a matter of painfully acknowledging what one knows against the pressure of a wish not to know’ (2008, p.370), offering new understandings, self-knowledge and creative outcomes that are a revelation to the artists themselves (Dutton, 2009, p.228).

## Conclusion

The theories discussed in this chapter form the theoretical basis for my research. These theories are seminal in my exploration of ideas about migrancy and the interpretation of works of art. Theories of catharsis, expressivism, arousal and aesthetic cognitivism relate directly to the theoretical framework for my creative arts practice. An important insight is Collingwood’s view that an artist’s practice commences with a ‘psychic disturbance’. Collingwood’s theories, along with the theories of catharsis and expressivism provide the foundation for the development of philosophical underpinnings and guiding principles for my practice. This philosophical and theoretical frame is informed by the arousal theory and aesthetic cognitivism, which indicate the extent to which a synergic relationship between art, emotion and cognition can combine to expand learning and self-knowledge. Art has the capacity to stimulate unfinished reflection: this is addressed in Chapter Six in the discussion of my creative work.

## Chapter 4: Visual Context

Contemporary artists who have addressed the emotional complexity of migrancy in their creative work are discussed in this chapter. In the previous chapters experiences of migrancy and theories of art and emotion are detailed, within which my research is situated. In this chapter the context of my art is extended and a review of the visual context is presented. The five contemporary artists selected, exhibit an insightful and perceptive treatment of the issue of migrancy. The artists selected for this investigation are Simryn Gill, Hossein Valamanesh, Hew Locke, Zineb Sedira and Mona Hatoum. Their practices encompass sketches, sculptural works, digital installations and mixed media assemblage to communicate their ideas. Reflective of my personal geographical moves, the artists are either based in, or have a strong connection with, Australia or the United Kingdom.

### Simryn Gill

Malaysia and Singapore raised artist, Simryn Gill, is an exemplar among those artists who deal with the migrant experience as a basis of their creative work. Gill's creative arts practice has a 'sense of metaphysical alienation [which] is exacerbated by the physical, geographical dispossession of the migrant' (de Zegher, 2013, p.69). Gill has experienced movement between countries many times, enabling her to address, through her works of art, the perceived sense that 'alienation and desolation are growing [in the world] as a consequence of movement and migration' (de Zegher, 2013, p.72). Gill exhibits across many continents and in major art events including Kassel Documenta and the Venice Biennale. Gill collects alienated items washed up by the sea, or discarded on roads and pathways. These items have become dispersed and disconnected from their origins, arriving elsewhere as dispossessed. The scattered pieces, gathered by Gill, are sorted and arranged into works of art, providing the items with a purpose, new beginnings and a sense of becoming.

Sea-worn glass pieces are intentionally used by Gill in *Washed up* (Plate 4.1), (Storer, 2008, p.38) to address the emotive migration themes of disconnection, alienation and transformation. On the surface of the glass pieces, Gill has inscribed English words that have become commonly used in Malaysia and Singapore (Storer, 2008, p.48). Like the fragmented



glass, the words have also become scattered from their origins, transformed to become a new form (ibid.). Reflection on *Washed up* inspires the understanding that the fragmented glass and words have migrated from their point of origin as people have, and invites further reflection on migration as a disconnecting, adaptive and transformative experience.



Plate 4.1 Simryn Gill, 1993-5, *Washed up*. Engraved sea-washed glass, detail from installation.

Worn books are also gathered by Gill with similar intent to the artist's collection of the alienated and discarded items from coastlines and paths. The theorist, Jessica Morgan, describes Gill's fascination with books as due to their 'ability to migrate with ease (once translated), [their] portability and ... association with the narrative of journey' (Morgan, 2008, p.60). In the series *Forest* (Plate 4.2), (Storer, 2008, p.48), Gill exploits these imbued qualities to elucidate the adaptive and transformative effects of migration. In these works, Gill transforms the pages into the sculptural forms of leaves, stems and creepers, and places them on live plants which reflects the analogy of epiphyte plants attaching themselves to trees and their ability to adapt and survive in new environments (Storer, 2008, p.48, p.51). According to Gill, plants offer adaptive and transformative symbolism (de Zegher, 2013, p.69), such as grafting, transplanting and degrading over time as 'a powerful way to think about where we find ourselves now and how we grow into and adapt to our sense of place' (Suhaya Raffel and Simryn Gill recited in de Zegher, 2013, p.69).



Plate 4.2 Simryn Gill, 1996, 1998, *Forest*. Photographs, installed.

Image from: Storer, 2008, *Simryn Gill*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.88.

*Pearls*, is a series of necklaces by Gill that are also formed through a process of transforming book pages in a similar way to that of *Forest*. However, rather than sculpted plant forms, in *Pearls*, pages are re-formed into sculpted beads. Beads hold historic connection with transitory movement as they have been traded globally for centuries, transported between countries and followed sea routes around the world (de Zegher, 2013, p.43).

One of the series of *Pearls* is formed from the pages of an atlas (Plate 4.3), (Storer, 2008, p.93). On the beads' surface, there are glimpses of countries, place names, borders, oceans and seas. The concept of migratory disconnection and journeys is reinforced with the beads abstractly nestled next to each other, illustrative of countries that share no geographical borders. For example, the blue bead marked with the name of the English seaside town of Bristol nestles next to a brown bead which alludes to a distant desert.



Plate 4.3 Simryn Gill, 1999 onwards, *Pearls: The Angus and Robertson Atlas of the World*, (2005). Detail.

Image from: Storer, 2008, *Simryn Gill*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.93.

Deconstruction of the atlas allowed its pages to undergo transformation into beads. However, despite the destruction, the reconstructed circular form of the ‘pearl’ necklace is symbolic of continuity (Cooper, 1978, p.18). In making this strand of *Pearls*, the atlas has been transformed and yet there is still continuity with the atlas’ former purpose.

## Hew Locke

Contemporary art offers ‘ways of thinking’ about present day concerns through initiating new areas for consideration, according to the writer Anthony Downey (2014, p.10). Ways of thinking about migration from home are prompted by the artist, Hew Locke, through his focus on the desirability of particular countries as destinations for migration, and the plight of migrants who are lured on perilous journeys toward their desired greener-grassed shores. These concerns are informed by Locke’s personal migratory experiences, which include moving from the United Kingdom to the former British colony of Guyana, and his return to be based in the United Kingdom and working internationally.

Locke contemplates the concern that what some people take for granted might be a treacherous dream for others. Locke observes that some people desire migration to the United Kingdom, and are prepared to risk their lives in their belief that a British passport is ‘the holy grail’ (Locke, 2017), while others take the right of abode in the United Kingdom for granted. Locke echoes the theorist Saloni Mathur’s reflection that migration is not a ‘uniform or

evenly shared experience' (2011, p.xi). This disparity is a significant concept in the consideration of Locke's works *Passport Culture* and *For Those in Peril on the Sea*.

*Passport Culture* is a large-scale depiction of the coat of arms as used on the cover of a passport of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The image is excessively decorated by Locke. In the manner of *Passport Culture*'s shrine-like decoration, Locke suggests that the United Kingdom is a revered, attractive place to live where some people, hoping to be, offer prayer. The decorations employed by Locke in this work, are mostly cheap plastic items made in Asian factories and transported to the United Kingdom. As such, the items are imbued with references to people's travel, migration and cross-cultural movement from less prosperous areas of the world to more affluent countries, intending to achieve better lives and fulfil hopes and dreams (Hoffman, 2011, p.9). Despite air travel and safe transport being available, for many migrants, migration journeys are perilous due to the long distances involved and unsafe methods of transport. This concern is further elucidated in the work *For Those in Peril on the Sea*.

In the form of a prayer for safe travel (Schlieker, 2011, p.13) and comprising a hundred votive ships suspended from a church ceiling, *For Those in Peril on the Sea* alludes to journeys, transformation, salvation and protection (Cooper, 1978, p.152). Concerns with the perils of peoples' global sea movement are reinforced by the symbolism Locke employs through using votive Junks and Dhows (Schlieker, 2011, p.13). Chinese Junks are widely associated with the Far East, and Dhows with the Middle East, rather than somewhere with closer proximity to the United Kingdom. Therefore, through these symbolic forms, Locke alludes to travel over a great distance towards a place that is longed for, which holds promise of brighter future, in addition, to the perils of the journey in rickety boats and to those people lost (Hoffman, 2011, pp.8-9).

Locke's boat forms metaphorically suggest migrant transport and travelling on the 'sea of life' (Cooper, 1978, p.152). Ship forms, employed by Locke as symbolic 'vessel[s] of transformation' (Cooper, 1978, p.152), have a relationship with the symbolic form of a ship employed by Ford Maddox Brown in *The Last of England* discussed in Chapter Three. Maddox Brown and Locke both use representations of ships to suggest migrant journeys toward a new country. In contrast to the boat forms created by Locke and Maddox Brown,

the artist Zenib Sedira represents boats with digital technology to convey concepts of movement between countries.

## Zenib Sedira

Zenib Sedira's use of moving images as a medium is particularly suited to capturing the varied temporal and physical experiences of migration, notes the writer Lizzie Carey-Thomas (2012, p.98). It is the 'intangible, mutable [and] unsettled' qualities, in conjunction with the images' temporal nature, that allow different perspectives of migrancy to 'unfold' throughout the work of art's duration (ibid.). Furthermore, Carey-Thomas suggests that artists such as Sedira who investigate issues of migrancy are;

'negotiating a line between different worlds, opening up perspectives on spaces not usually visible, while transforming our perceptions through the filter of their own experience' (2012, p.100).

In a similar way to the unfolding of a work of art that consists of moving images, Sedira's personal migratory experience has been revealed over time. As the daughter of Algerian immigrants to France, now living in the United Kingdom, Sedira draws on her experience of sea journeys to highlight her concerns. In *Floating Coffins* and *Lighthouse in the Sea of Time* (Plate 4.4), (Schlieker, 2011, p.14), Sedira depicts themes of perilous movement and migratory transition that is brought about in people's lives through the contact and interaction with a country's shoreline and sea waters.

Curator Andrea Schlieker describes Sedira's use of the sea in her works of art as a 'central metaphor ... for longing, separation and displacement' (2011, p.13). This metaphor manifests in the digital installation *Floating Coffins*, in which the artist explores abandoned boats on the shoreline of Mauritania as metaphor for the peril, chaos and fragmentation of migration (Sedira, 2010). The installation includes variously sized digital screen that emphasise the disjunction between moving images to further emphasise the fragmentary nature of migratory experience (Sedira, 2010).

Symbolic images employed by Sedira include beached ships, which suggest dashed hopes, distress and desolation, in contrast with operational boats which evoke the hope that many migrants have of rescue and escape to a better life. Redolent of emotive migration themes,

Sedira provides a sense of disconnection and fragmentation through the contrast of static and moving ships, the inclusion of migratory birds in flight and abandoned objects left behind on the shoreline by people attempting escape to a better life (Sedira, 2010).

A dynamic tension between shore and water; stillness and movement; staying and leaving is created through the juxtaposition of the static objects on the beach and the sense of movement created by waves, birds and moving boats. Highlighting the life-saving importance of connection between the shoreline and sea, Sedira employs the cables between screens in *Floating Coffins* in a highly visible strategy to appear ‘umbilical’ (Carey-Thomas, 2012, p.99).

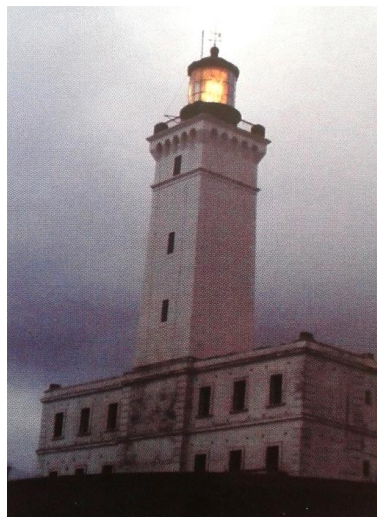


Plate 4.4 Zineb Sedira, 2011, *Lighthouse in the Sea of Time*. Film still.

Image from: A. Schlieker (ed.), 2011, *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media, London, p.14.

*Lighthouse in the Sea of Time* is a multiple screen digital installation of moving images, in a similar manner to *Floating Coffins*. Through the symbolic form of a lighthouse or beacon, Sedira invokes the migratory themes of a sense of isolation and despair (2011, p.100). This sense is further elicited by the dramatic darkened sky setting for some of the lighthouse images. For example, a still image from *Lighthouse in the Sea of Time* (Plate 4.4) is imbued with an impending sense of doom, yet the guiding light cutting through the darkness in the same image suggests a migrant’s hope of rescue (Schlieker, 2011, p.14).



## Mona Hatoum

Artist Mona Hatoum, has drawn on the experience of disorientation and displacement forced upon her when she was unable to return to Beirut after a short trip to London, due to the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon. The theorist Aamir R. Mufti, describes Hatoum's work as employing a strategy of disorientation, where everyday objects are displaced from familiar situations into threatening scenes (2011, p.178). Preoccupation with 'disparity and dislocation' are particularly evident in *Doormat II* (Plate 4.5), (Said, 2000a, p.15), a representation of a doormat commonly associated with greeting visitors at the threshold of a home. *Doormat II* depicts the word 'WELCOME' and yet the materials of the mat belie this message. Hatoum's use of upward facing pins makes the form of the doormat too uncomfortable to tolerate, hence transforming a safe place into a place of risk (Wallis, 2016, p.127). The object is displaced from its common place while the use of the term WELCOME is ironic, and the materials from which it is made are threatening and repellent due to the perilous nature of the sharp ends.



Plate 4.5 Mona Hatoum, 2000-1, *Doormat II*. Stainless steel, nickel-plated brass pins, canvas and glue 3 x 72.5 x 42 cm  
Image copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy of Alexander and Bonin, New York (Photograph: Oren Slor)

Hatoum's symbolic use of an everyday object and materials to communicate how things can be familiar yet strange when arriving in a new place, echoes theorist Edward Said's observation that items that are found to be abnormal and unfamiliar start to become normalised and less strange over time (Said, 2000a, p.12). Furthermore, when a migrant's sense of familiarity is challenged by the abnormal they will find that the ground they stand on

no longer feels solid (Aciman, 1997, p.22). In this way, *Doormat II* suggests the potential discomfort of a new home.

Enduring pain caused by displacement is a concern that the artist also expresses in *Measures of Distance* discussed in Chapter Three. In *Measure of Distance*, Hatoum employs moving images that elucidate concerns over the loss of treasured and familiar relationships, displacement from home and disorientation. The form of a doormat signifies the safety of home and of domestic comfort rather than danger. The upturned pins in *Doormat II*, are dangerous and unwelcoming rather than homely and welcoming and suggest the contradictions that denote the uncertainty associated with the experience of migrancy. Reflection on the use of dangerous materials in *Doormat II* provides a sense of disquiet and uncertainty.



Plate 4.6 Mona Hatoum, 1999, *Map*, 14mm glass marbles, Dimensions variable  
Installation view at Casino Luxembourg. Copyright Mona Hatoum. Courtesy Casino Luxembourg  
(Photograph: Christian Mosar)

Uncertain steps are also encountered in Hatoum's floor work *Map* (Plate 4.6). In *Map*, Hatoum employs a similar concept to *Doormat II*, that of making a floor too treacherous to walk upon. Through utilising this tactic, Hatoum is challenging the memory of how things really are (Said, 2000a, pp.11-12). Therefore, *Doormat II* and *Map* elucidate emotive migrant experiences, where; 'familiarity and strangeness are locked together in the oddest way, adjacent and irreconcilable at the same time' (Said, 2000a, p.12).



The symbolic form of floor coverings used by Hatoum relates to Varga Weisz's *Rug People* and also to the artist, Hossein Valamanesh's *Longing Belonging*. The three artists work with floor coverings, in a similar way, to address theoretical concepts of a migrant's encounter with treacherous and uncertain ground. Hatoum creates physically treacherous ground through the selection of materials while, Varga Weisz places her sculptural form perilously upon railway tracks.

## Hossein Valamanesh

In *Longing Belonging*, Valamanesh uses carpet/mat symbolism to reference his former Iranian home. Valamanesh migrated to Australia by choice and to perceive the meaning of his work, it is relevant to recognise that he had the 'option of staying or returning' (2011, p17). The choice to stay has informed and imbued much of Valamanesh's work with a sense of two cultures, and through this link the artist seeks to share and explain experiences that have been personal, that is; his story of migration '[weaving] together cultural knowledge, law and understanding' (Knights, 2011, p.80). This diverges from Locke and Sedira's arts practices where they draw upon their own emotive experiences to primarily make art about the perilous migrancy experiences of others.

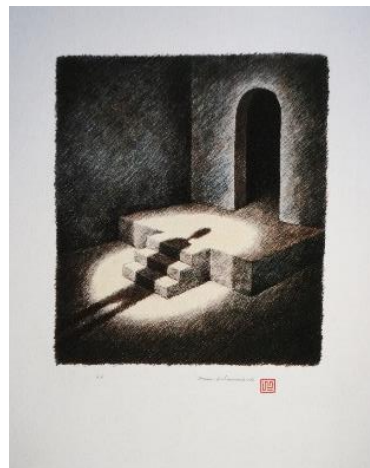


Plate 4.7 Hossein Valamanesh, 1998, *Recent Arrival*. Lithograph, 76.4cm x 56.8cm.

Image from: Knights, M. 2011, 'Longing Belonging', in Knights, M. and North, I. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.81. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.

Despite Valamanesh's migration being chosen, there remain factors of uncertainty in establishing life in a new land. Valamanesh provides a reflective narrative in *Recent Arrival* (Plate 4.7) that considers the disorienting arrival in a new country through the depiction of a silhouetted figure, poised with uncertainty at a threshold (Knights, 2011, p.81). In *Recent Arrival*, the building before which the figure is poised signifies a theatrical set (Thomas, 2001, p.16) and conveys some ambiguity about the location – it might be a house in Valamanesh's Iranian homeland or a veranda in his new home (ibid.). Stillness, anticipation and tension pervade this interior space – the viewer waits for the figure to be revealed.

A migrant's transformation or 'to become' differs to 'being', which implies a form of stillness, without change (Carter, 1996, p.8). According to the theorist Paul Carter, Valamanesh's works depict the process of a migrant's transformations and 'art of becoming' rather than of 'being' (ibid.). Being a migrant who did not arrive intending to leave again, Valamanesh searched for the transformation that would enable him a way 'to become' or a 'way to stay'. A 'way to stay' transpired through the continuity provided by the 'harsh dry landscape, [and] sparse vegetation' of arid Australia which Valamanesh identifies as similar to some areas in Iran (Knights, 2011, p.79). In addition to the landscapes, Valamanesh discovered that the soils of the two countries contain some similar visual properties, such as their colour (Thomas, 2001, p.12).

The artist's experience and identity are 'declared' in the form of a self-portrait in Valamanesh's use of a fingerprint in *Earthwork* (Plate 4.8), (Knights, 2011, p.17, p.85). Despite the assertive nature of embedding a fingerprint in the Australian landscape in this sculptural form, the fragile work of art is ephemeral and easily obliterated by the weather. The degradation of the materials used in the work of art, that is the obliteration of the soil sculpture, denotes the artist's transforming to become part of the landscape.



Plate 4.8 Hossein Valamanesh, 2002, *Earthwork*. Earth, 7cm x 1500cm x 900cm.

Image from: North, I, 2011, 'Profiling Hossein: a Conversation with the artist', in Knights, M. and North, I. *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.17. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.

In the ephemeral *Earthwork*, the whorls of the artist's fingerprint are formed by the scraping away of the vivid green grass to reveal the red Australian earth beneath the surface. In *Earthwork*, a visual tension and impression of disconnection are created between the two natural materials – the vivid green grass and the red of the soil underneath. Despite this implied disconnection, the use of soils also suggest that, despite many differences, there are 'threads of continuity' and common ground that exist between Iran and Australia (Thomas, 2001, p.10). This indicates the forming of common ground between people from different places and perspectives, not only continuity formed between the soils of countries. In this way, Valamanesh provides the audience with a unique perspective of migratory experience (Beardsley, 1995, p.550).

Suggestive of exploration and discovery, *Earthwork* creates bewilderment and confusion, containing 'blind paths' where knowledge is needed to successfully find the right way (Cooper, 1978, pp.92-93). Disconnection and disorientation within the maze reflect the feelings a migrant may experience and is reinforced by the sculpture's physical form outlining a 'myriad of directions one may yet take' (Knights, 2011, p.90). The metaphor of a maze evokes the idea of discovery of a new place with initial uncertainty then transformation over time into experience and understanding.



Plate 4.9 Hossein Valamanesh, 1997, *Longing Belonging*. Colour photograph, Persian carpet, black velvet, 215cm x 305cm. Image from: Knights, M. 2011, 'Longing Belonging', in Knights, M. and North, I. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.78. Image copyright Hossein Valamanesh.

Transformation is a theme also addressed by Valamanesh in *Longing Belonging* (Plate 4.9), which portrays a Persian carpet alight on red earth in the Australian bush setting (Knights, 2011, p.77). For Valamanesh, the Persian carpet is symbolic of his Iranian homeland (Knights, 2011, p.76), and in a similar way to Hatoum and Varga Weisz's use of a carpet/mat to signify disconnection from home, the artist places the carpet to be out of place and out of context. Placed against the untamed and harsh Australian bush, the carpet becomes disconnected from its origin, dislocated from its home setting, and with its centre section burning is transformed through being set alight.

The burnt centre of the carpet in *Longing Belonging* is symbolic of a home's hearth and place of belonging (Knights, 2011, p.76) and, through placing fire on a carpet in the Australian bush, Valamanesh expresses the discomfort and violence of bushfire which might bring about transformation of ideas about one's home (ibid.). Valamanesh's symbolic reference to fire in this work conveys the transformative effects of a move from homeland: the departure from homeland might commence with a destruction of all that is known, however, discoveries and new understandings might also result in a migrant's evolving condition of transformation and growth.

Symbolic of Valamanesh's homeland in Iran, the Persian carpet is a remnant of his past. In this way, Valamanesh's work highlights theoretical aspects of ideas about nostalgia, which are discussed in Chapter Two. Items that have transitioned from homeland, such as carpets,

are permeated with emotion and ideas (Turkle, 2007, p.6) which might fill the ‘temporal emptiness’ of a new homeland (Hughes 2004, p.22). For some, those memories might be described as nostalgic. However, Paul Carter asserts that Valamanesh seeks to banish the nostalgia and regret associated with migration (2001, p.28).

## Conclusion

In the works of art discussed in this chapter, the key themes addressed have included those of leaving home; the allure of a new home; memory; nostalgia; transience; simultaneously being at home and being homeless; and belonging and not belonging. The creative arts practice of these contemporary artists demonstrate the various ways of embodying their works of art with symbolic meaning. These works of art indicate the ways in which ideas and experience involving migration impels the artists’ investigations, and that multiple forms and materials are used to express and communicate the disquiet they feel.

Within the theme of migrancy, there is a wide gamut of perspectives and experiences, however, the works of the contemporary artists examined in this chapter resonate with and are pertinent to my experience. In Chapter Six I discuss my creative art processes and works, which visually convey the journey I took away from and back to my homeland.

## Chapter 5: Methodology

In this chapter I explain the performative role of practice-led research in the creation of the works of art exhibited in *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*. Practice-led research provides a reflexive process that involves the production and analysis of my work in two forms of communication. One form is an insider perspective where my intuition, creativity and lived migration experience constitute part of the research journey presented in the form of works of art. The second, describes both the ideas engaged with and the processes employed, so as to realise and present my findings in exegetic form. Practice-led research coalesces a literature review, exhibition visits, studio experimentation and exegetic writing within a flexible reflexive process. This has created a dialogue where theories and ideas inform the creative work and the creative work suggests new avenues for investigation and fresh approaches to viewing the theories relevant to the project.

### Practice-led Research - the Journey

Practice-led research is a qualitative research method developed from German Philosopher Edmund Husserl's twentieth-century phenomenological study of interpretive understanding (Eichelberger cited in Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006, p.196). Known as the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, this forms the theoretical framework for the research, guiding 'the way knowledge is studied and interpreted' (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006, p.194). The interpretivist/constructivist paradigm allows for the impact of the researcher's own life encounters to influence research with the aim of further understanding human experience (ibid., p.196). As theorist Estelle Barrett wrote: 'The researcher [locates] him/herself in the field of theory and practice' (2010a, p.140) and seeks to extend the field through creative work and the analysis of the process of studio practice, works of art and exegetical writing. Therefore, the process of creating works of art, informed by theoretical and contextual information, provides the grounds for establishing new insights into, and understandings of, human experience that may not be revealed by other research methods (Barrett, 2010b, p.162, Bottomley, 1992, p.19).

Scholarly investigation seeks to address a research question. A feature of practice-led research is that it can commence with a personal concern. However, as theorist Jenn Webb writes; the research question must be broader than personal curiosity and of interest to others in the community of practice (Webb, 2015, p.45). The broad personal concern I commenced investigating became defined as the writing, reading, reflecting and making coalesced and informed each other. During practice-led research, the research question can also become refined, reframed and developed (Borgdorff, 2011, p.56). This occurs in my research where the initial question poses: *Can an experience of migration be conveyed in the form of visual art?* In addition, the following supplementary questions were formulated:

- What feelings did I experience as a result of migration?
- What are the aesthetic drivers of visual art that examines the issue of migration?
- In what ways are my visual works of art located within contemporary art context?
- What strategies can be employed in contemporary works of art to effectively communicate experiences of emotion?

Over time, the making, thinking and reflexive process enabled the ‘transformative act’ of research to clarify my focus (Sullivan, 2006, p.22). Hence, the reframed research question is: *How can an emotional experience of migrancy and yearning for home be communicated in the form of visual art?* Supplementary questions are refined to include:

- What are the emotional experiences associated with migration between countries?
- What are the relevant theories of art in relation to the emotional content in art, and how do they relate to the exhibition ‘*Migrancy and Yearning for Home*’?
- How does the sensory nature of art allude to emotional content?
- How can art contribute to self-knowledge and understanding?
- In what ways have contemporary artists addressed the issue of migration?

## Situating Concepts – the Literature Review

The literature review situates this research in a contemporary context within the fields of migration, art theory and contemporary art. The review of literature enables the identification of information from migrants, and the investigation into the genesis of my ideas regarding migrancy. Information was gathered from journal articles, books, newspapers, films, radio

programs and television documentaries. Personal letters written to my family and visual diaries contain a rich source of data. Additional research repositories include museums and displays in a large range of places including the Immigration Museum, Melbourne, Victoria; Queensland Museum, Brisbane; Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney, New South Wales and Wollongong City Gallery, New South Wales.

A review of art theories enables the identification of pertinent ideas that explain the function and value of the emotional content of art. The review of theories provides information on the extent to which the emotional content of art relates to this project, and the ways in which self-knowledge and understanding might be enlarged from an art experience. For this part of the literature review, journal articles and books are the source of information. These texts expedite the synthesis ‘from the perspective of this research’ and demonstrate the relationship between this research and the field (Barrett, 2010c, p.187).

The review of contemporary artists’ work enables me to contextualise my practice in the field, which includes the examination of work from the internet, books and catalogues along with visits to the following exhibitions: *Generations*, Wollongong City Gallery, New South Wales; *Dis\_Placed*, Immigration Museum, Melbourne, Victoria; *Mona Hatoum*, TATE Modern, London; *Louise Bourgeois*, TATE Modern, London; *Victorian Sentimentality*, TATE Britain, London; *The Street*, Whitechapel Gallery, London; *Dark Water, Burning World*, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; *Made in China Australia*; KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, Queensland. These exhibition visits facilitate the evaluation of the work of other artists ‘[mapping] the way they inter-relate; [examining] how earlier work has influenced development of current work’ (Barrett, 2010a, p.139). Furthermore, this assists me to identify ‘and [assess] methodological, conceptual and other links in works produced in the current and previous projects’ and to situate my work within this context (ibid.).

## Studio Practice, Exhibition and Peer Review

Studio practice enabled me to create work and test ideas through the three staging shows. Studio activities include developing intuitive ideas, experimentation, decision making, evaluation, reading, information gathering, analysis, synthesis and chance discoveries. Ideas



were developed through a variety of methods including sketching, collaging, assemblage, textiles and digital photographic images. While works in progress were continually evaluated through reflective thought.

I sought peer review during bi-monthly meetings with PhD candidate colleagues. In addition, critiques of my work from practising artists, who hold PhD award qualification, offered guiding insight. Both these methods proved valuable in gaining feedback which was then applied to further studio practice and the subsequent development and refinement of works.

A further feedback loop was created through the three-staging shows and final exhibition. Of the nine works of art exhibited in the final show, six works were exhibited during staging shows. The staging shows were employed as methods of presenting works of art for critique from peers, as well as a means of gaining additional knowledge of installation and display possibilities for the final exhibition. Reflections from these feedback loops are discussed further in Chapter Six.

## Exegesis Analysis and Reflection

The exegesis provides a complementary form of communication to describe the deeply considered decisions in making my works of art and to explain the approaches to resolving the research questions. Deliberation and critical analysis of the works of art facilitated the assessment of the works' capacity to communicate desired concepts. And, reflection on works of art, literature and exegesis writing has allowed for the possibility of opening up new meanings through insights, knowledge and questions that have emerged as part of the process (Sullivan, 2006, p.31).

Exegetic writing, as with art making, requires a level of immersion and involvement to expose deep personal thought and feeling (Gibson, 2010, p.10). However, reflection requires the attainment of a critical distance in order to achieve a degree of objectivity of the outcome (ibid.). As a method of working, reflecting on creative ideas allowed me to develop my analytical skills and metacognition. Metacognition prompts further links to be drawn between literature review, exegesis writing, works of art and reflective processes so that outputs can be evaluated for their contribution to knowledge of art practice (Figure 5.1).

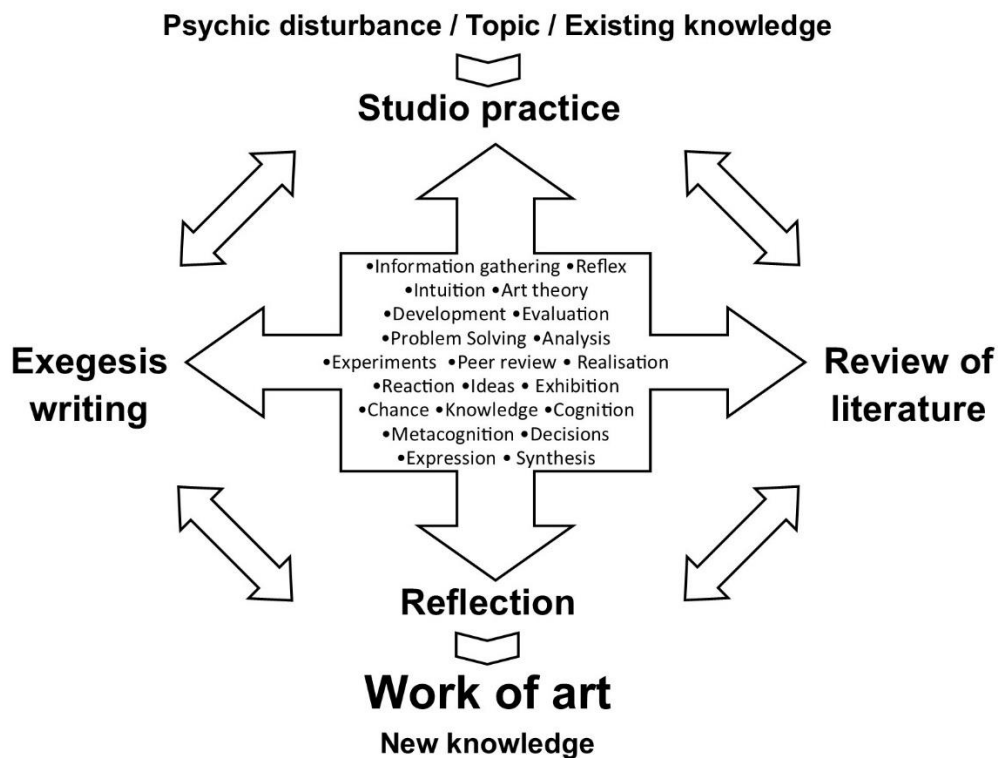


Figure 5.1 Diagram of practice-led research. Image: Heather Tanner.

## Reflexive practice

Links, discoveries and findings exposed through the literature and situating context chapters was critically reflected upon and then strategically applied back into art making methods, further literature research, analysis and exegetic writing. In this reflexive process of ‘causes-and-effects, actions-and-reactions’ (Gibson, 2010, p.10) ideas changed and developed over time.

In the creative arena, reflection facilitated restructure, enrichment, expansion or rejection of works at any stage during the creative making process (Mace and Ward, 2002, pp.184-185). Reflection included consideration of personal feelings and intuitions that came to the fore due to the nature of this research as being something of myself (Crispin, 2014, p.139). In addition, my understanding of personal emotions and longing were further revealed through this reflexive process and, in turn, this new knowledge generated the motivation for other works of art.

## The Process

The research commenced in 2012 with literature review and studio experimentation before the subsequent inclusion of exegesis writing (Table I).

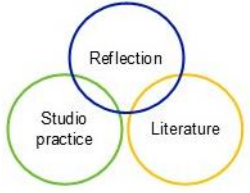




	<p>The first triennium of my research involved creating sketchbook drawings, conducting studio experiments and making maquettes. The literature review commenced and plans for early exhibitions were formulated.</p>
	<p>As the work progressed links between ideas in diverse fields came together and works of art became imbued with ideas from the literature, while literature was found to address intuitive ideas that were generated in the studio.</p>
	<p>Then, with the inclusion of the exegesis writing activities, the method of investigation underwent further development. Following the second staging show, I understood that it was time to return to my former home in England.</p>
	<p>As time progressed the four activities of studio practice, reflection, literature review and exegesis writing fused through areas of overlapping investigation and analysis. Following return to England, and the third staging show in 2015, this approach continued until towards the end of the project.</p>
	<p>Once the works of art had been exhibited in the final show in October 2016, the focus turned to an intense period of exegesis writing.</p>

Table I Table outlining practice-led research processes and timeline. Images: Heather Tanner.

## Conclusion

Practice-led research expedites the reflective process necessary for the development and refinement of creative work, and generates fresh understandings of self and art making processes. The research process has provided two forms of communication: the works of art are one form of delving into the conundrums and complexities of displacement and moving from one's birth place, and the second form of communication is the exegesis, which details information about the process of creating the works of art together with features and insights that might be of value to others in the field.

## Chapter 6:

# Migrancy and Yearning for Home

In this chapter, I describe how my migratory experience elicited an emotional upset or ‘psychic disturbance’, which ignited this research. With particular reference to R. G. Collingwood’s theory, I explain the studio processes undertaken in the disentanglement of the ‘psychic disturbance’ into identifiable emotion, and the resolutions, in visual form, of the expression of this emotion. I discuss the methods by which the research question was pursued, and the resultant responses in the form of new understandings and knowledge manifest in the works of art. I describe the approaches taken in the analysis of and reflection on my works of art, which visually realised the disturbance as perceivable emotion.

New knowledge revealed emotional concerns of memory, loss, disconnection, isolation, nostalgia, longing, transformation and change. These concerns were all previously unrecognised aspects of my migration. In addition to this transformational understanding and self-knowledge, the realisation of the emotional basis of my ‘psychic disturbance’ led to the works of art presented in the exhibition, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*.

## Migrancy

The impacts of personal migration experiences have informed my arts practice since a move from England to Hong Kong in 1994. In Hong Kong, attempts to make sense of a visually different physical location were disclosed in my sketchbooks (Plate 6.1). Following the return to England in 1995, I moved to Australia in 1997 where I experienced further visual shocks from a landscape which gradually, over time, became familiar. However, my ability to reconcile the visual variances between England and Australia belies a personal undercurrent of restlessness and inability to completely settle. Awareness of this sense of unease, in a new land, formed the impetus and basis for the commencement, in 2012, of the PhD research. This research began in Cairns and has continued in England since my return in 2015.



*Plate 6.1 Heather Tanner, 1995, Hong Kong Sketchbook. Photograph: artist.*

Literature reveals that the creative process can commence with a sense of unease or ‘psychic disturbance’, and indicates that an artist-researcher becomes able to identify the emotion that initiated the disquiet during the process of making art (Collingwood, 1938, p.109). I found, through creative arts practice, a deeper understanding of the emotional experiences of migration, such as senses of loss, disconnection and isolation, in addition to experiencing nostalgia, transformation and change. Furthermore, this insightful and intense knowledge transformed personal understanding, which provided the reason, motivation and strength to make changes to my situation. The knowledge-producing aspect of art making supports R. G. Collingwood’s observation that the instigating drive of an artist’s work is not an identifiable emotion but, instead, a psychic disturbance and, that through the process of making art, the artist comes to know the identity of the emotion at the heart of the disturbance.

Collingwood’s profound insight proved to be pivotal in illuminating a process that led to the recognition of the underlying emotion at the core of my unease. Although the test of Collingwood’s theory was peripheral to the focus and intent of the research, the following explains my studio practice decision-making processes and describes the ways in which my deeper self-knowledge and understanding about emotion surrounding my migration has been disclosed through works of art.

## Symbolism and Metaphor

I employed intuitive and symbolic responses in my sketchbook as an initial starting point in a strategy to answer the research question. Symbols were employed for their capacity to visually communicate and expose thoughts ‘which reveal aspects of reality’ (Cooper, 1978,

p.7). For example, messages in bottles were intended to symbolically impart a sense of migratory isolation, and exposed electrical wires were employed to share a sense of disconnection, while hearts were used to convey emotional distress.

Initially my use of symbols was somewhat literal. For example, I depicted my feelings of disconnection symbolically through the form of electrical wires dangling from a plug. Engaging symbols in an undeveloped form provided straightforward metaphoric communication of concepts, however, I was seeking a more elusive and evocative form. Symbolic ideas formed a starting point for further exploration of thoughts and feelings. Through studio processes of testing and rejection, symbolic ideas were investigated, tested in prototypes and then refined. Once refined, the symbolic basis of works suggested unanticipated meaning and metaphor, revealing less obvious thoughts and emotion through the evocative form and, hence, conveyed levels of complexity and nuance.

## Memory and a Sense of Loss

### Absent Family

Photographs are symbolic forms widely used as an aid to remember places and people, such as employed by Mona Hatoum in *Measures of Distance*. For my work, *Absent Family*, family photographs were a starting point. A process of experimentation with the photographs was carried out with the intent of communicating a feeling of sadness at being parted from family. While the experiments and prototypes were discarded because they lacked potency in intent, I found that working with family photographs in the studio provided a sense of comfort to me, the images acted as a form of co-presence of those absent (Baldassar, 2008, p.252). When I ceased working with the photographs, the spell of my family's simulated co-presence was broken and I experienced a profound sense of loss. I applied this temporal realisation to further work.

### Tears

At this time, I was enduring a heightened sense of loss at being so far from my family. The upset triggered a cathartic outpouring of messages to loved ones, as discussed in relation to

the theory of catharsis in Chapter Three. In a desire to express the intensity of feelings and my state of mind around the separation from my family and friends, and the strong longing to be with them, I sought to convey my emotional sentiments in a representative form.

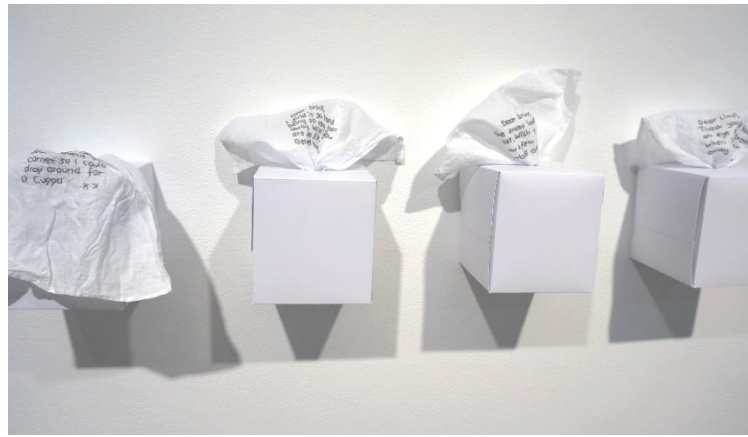


Plate 6.2 Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Cotton, cotton thread. Each handkerchief measures 13cm x 13cm. Photograph: artist.

Symbolically, handkerchiefs relate to the act of crying, and possess a delicate and fragile form that reflects one's emotions at such a time. In *Tears*, fine quality handkerchief linen was cut into square pieces and hemmed by hand, and brief messages to loved ones were embroidered onto the linen with a sombre grey thread. The slow, meditative act of stitching provided time to reflect, bringing memories and a sense of loss of family to mind.

I held concern that *Tears* (Plate 6.2) might be perceived as overly sentimental, such as Abraham Solomon's symbolically employed handkerchief to indicate sorrow in *Second Class - The Parting: 'Thus part we rich in sorrow parting poor'*, previously discussed in Chapter Three. This concern led to the investigation of art theory regarding sentimentality and the points of difference between sentimental and sincerely expressive works of art. This is discussed in Chapter Four, however, I maintain that the work, *Tears*, differs from art that is based on emotional manipulation or false sentiment (Dutton, 2009, p.241) as it is not contrived with the intent of conveying insincere emotion, rather, it is authentically expressive of personal thoughts.

*Tears* was exhibited in a staging exhibition at the LUX Gallery, James Cook University, in 2013, where viewers reported being moved by the sadness expressed in the work. For



*Migrancy and Yearning for Home* in 2016, I extended and refined the work by washing the handkerchiefs and allowing them to dry with crinkles, to imply their use to wipe tears away.

The time spent contemplatively stitching the handkerchiefs allowed me to focus on my feelings of separation and loss, drawing into focus Collingwood's claim that art commences with a 'psychic disturbance'. Through the process of creating the works, *Absent Family* and *Tears*, sadness around, and unease at, separation and a sense of loss crystallised. In addition, reflection on works of art brought to the fore a sense of enduring isolation and disconnection, clarifying understandings and knowledge about my migration. This new knowledge led to a shift in my understanding of personal unease and was the start of transformational thinking about a return move home.

## Disconnection and Isolation

The messages embroidered in *Tears* relate to the sentiments engraved on historic 'Leaden Heart' convict love tokens. A 'Leaden Heart' was often given by convicts to their loved ones upon departure from England to the penal colonies in Australia. The contemporary name for the convict love tokens has been coined from the common understanding of a sad heart being weighed down with sorrow.

The concept of a heavy and sorrowful heart links with the historic philosophical writings of René Descartes' in which he describes the nerves going to the heart causing internal sensations, which 'constitutes all the emotions or passions' (Anscombe and Geach, 1954, p.230). This concept conjured up images in my mind of hearts with tubes, strings and fibres in the area of the aorta, their grimness evoking a strong resonance with the depth of my personal concerns. The term 'Leaden Heart' combined with the idea of a heart trailing strings, initiated and stimulated ideas and inventiveness for *Heart Strings*.

## Heart Strings

I sought to express my turmoil and conundrums conceptually through an installation consisting of ties/strings, photographs of absent family and a symbolic heart. Although unsure of my emotions underpinning this work, my intention was the creation of a large work in which I might represent the magnitude of my unease at disconnection. Experimentation

and trials in the studio led to a corner of the room being strung with ‘heart strings’, upon which a single ‘heavy heart’ was suspended. From the strings hung ephemera, such as photographs and boarding passes, which symbolically communicated the distance from family and ties that are strained over distance (Plate 6.3).

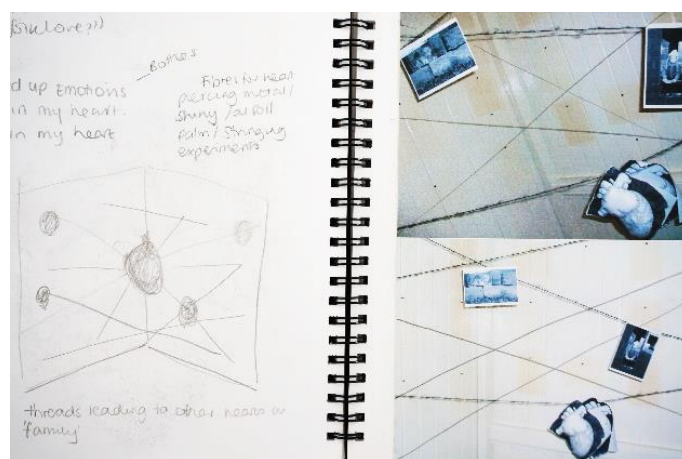


Plate 6.3 Heather Tanner, 2012, *Sketchbook*. Photograph: artist.

*Heart Strings* became a variable installation, exhibited in staging exhibitions, in 2012, at LUX Gallery, James Cook University and, in 2013, at Cell Art Space, Lake Street, Cairns. Reflection on the scale, size and visual impact of *Heart Strings* led to the realisation that further refinements were required to satisfy my research objectives. To more potently communicate the magnitude of emotions I was experiencing, I constructed the heart in a large scale. Upon reflection, while this gave the heart strength and a sense of robustness, what I was seeking was a form that could convey delicacy and fragility of emotion. Despite this, working and reflection upon *Heart Strings* exposed a previously unknown depth of personal concern over separation and distance from family. This revelation re-enforced thoughts that had started to occur as a result of previous work. This realisation clarified existing feelings, and also further increased my developing sense of unease at remaining in Australia.

## Emotions

The work of art, *Emotions* (Plate 6.4), started as an exploration of heart forms intended for the work *Heart Strings*. Continuing studio experiments on the metaphor of a leaden heart, the

idea of a metal heart resonated, and I believed that it could meet my aim of communicating my heavy-hearted feelings.

*Emotions* evolved to become a series of small scale individual hearts, each made from flat metal, which was shaped and covered with drawn heart images. I attached string, fibres and wires to the heart forms, suggestive of veins. The colours employed were dull and textures aroused raw and uncomfortable qualities that related to my aim of communicating discomfort.



Plate 6.4 Heather Tanner, 2012, *Emotions*, installed in 2012, Lux Gallery, James Cook University.  
Digital image, tissue paper, metal, wire, plant fibre, string, acrylic paint, acrylic binder. Each piece measures approximately 10cm x 30cm. Photograph: artist.

The symbolic use of severed wires in *Emotions* suggests a sense of disconnection. When displayed together, the hearts worked as a group and also as individual pieces, each one seemingly isolated from the other by the starkness of the gallery wall.

Conducting this work was significant because the symbolic form of a distressed heart allowed me to ‘express what one cannot describe’ (Ridley, 1997, p.270). Reflection on the forms’ qualities provoked thought on the depth of painful emotion endured and the reality of the enormous distance between myself and my loved ones and the emotional implications of this on my everyday life.

## Nostalgia and Longing

### Nostalgia I (Doilies)

The literature review and research took me to Sydney's Hyde Park Barracks in 2012, where I investigated early migration history. There, I bought a postcard depicting an illustration by the lithographer Alfred Ducôte, entitled *E-Migration or Flight of Fair Game* (Plate 6.5). The illustration was commissioned in 1832 for the British Government, advertising to attract single British women willing to migrate to Australia.



Plate 6.5 Alfred Ducôte, 1832, *E-migration or Flight of Fair Game*.

Image: National Library of Australia. obj-135585009.

The butterfly imagery employed by Ducôte, suggests transformation. The concept of butterflies connected intensely to my thoughts about migratory transformation. Upon viewing this illustration, I imagined myself as one of the butterflies making a transformative flight between England and Australia. I started trials incorporating butterfly and aeroplane symbolism along with images of myself within the active spaces of my sketchbooks. The discovery of an old doily decorated with the shape of butterflies linked with my thoughts about the imagery of the postcard and the concept of transformation. The discovery also suggested a new direction with digital studio practice.

Domestic textiles, such as doilies, are inextricably associated with home life (Isaacs, 1987, p.8). Stimulating memories of home, the doily reminded me of my grandmothers in England

and the craftwork they made. Reflecting on memories, thoughts of the past and homeland led to a realisation that the disconnection that I felt due to distance aroused feelings of nostalgia.

In a nostalgic frame of mind, and seeking to convey thoughts about my migratory movement, the butterfly doily became a focus for deliberation. Photographing, printing and then playing with the image in sketchbooks led to unresolved and unsatisfactory ideas because the doily was motionless. A butterfly flits about with movement and there remained a sense of incongruity with an impassive image on the sketchbook page.

I reflected on the sense of incompatibility between the static sketchbook ideas and my desire to communicate the movement I had experienced. A moment of revelation occurred when I viewed the digital files next to each other on my laptop screen and realised that I could ‘appropriate the thing photographed’ (Sontag, 1977, p.4) and play in a digital manner with the images. I found that the digital format held the capacity to provide the sense of movement that I was seeking and that the printed images had been unable to deliver. Experiments led to the building of a PowerPoint™ slide show that involved the doily image traversing two screens; rotating, multiplying, fading, appearing and disappearing.

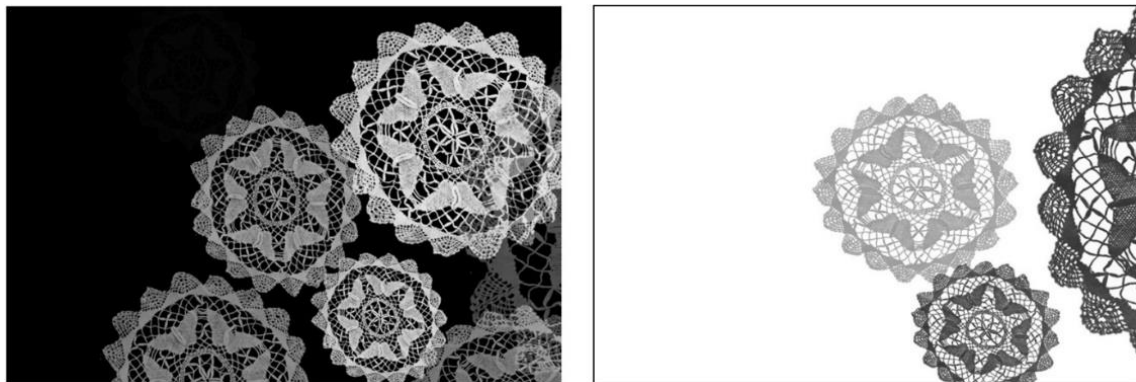


Plate 6.6 Heather Tanner, 2013, *Nostalgia I*. MP4 format digital installation over 2 screens, duration 60 seconds.

Still image: artist.

In *Nostalgia I* (Plate 6.6), the doily images appear as white out of a black background on the left screen transforming to become black on a white background on the right screen. The transformation implies a sense of dichotomously living between two countries and of a sense that identity is divided between the two, not quite belonging or feeling ‘whole’ in either one.

My initial aim with *Nostalgia I* was to communicate the deep upset felt due to disconnection and separation through the movement of the butterfly doily. However, upon reflection, I found that similarly to Ducôte's illustrative work, the movement of the butterfly image in the digital form also makes reference to a sense of transformation and regeneration that comes with migration and leaving homeland. Furthermore, the very material itself, from which the work is created, a doily, suggests nostalgia. Nostalgia being the 'wistful longing for a happier or better time in the past' (Waite, 2012, p.489). The identification of emotion through this work not only reinforces Collingwood's claim but also further reveals my growing desire to return home.

*Nostalgia I* was displayed over two screens in LUX Gallery in 2013. The positive feedback from colleagues about this work deemed that it successfully communicated concepts of transformation, regeneration and nostalgia and, thus, was included in the final exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*.

## Nostalgia II (Teacups)

The photographs of the doily elicited strong feelings of nostalgia for being in England, bringing to mind memories of cups of tea with home baked cakes shared with family. My thoughts and dreams increasingly became of home. I awoke from a nostalgic dream with an idea of a room of warm, soft, comforting light with the delicate digital doily work rotating over the walls and a soft, warm, glow illuminating teacups and saucers (Plate 6.7). According to the writer Susan Sontag, 'when we are nostalgic, we take pictures' (1977, p.15). With the installation concept in mind, I commenced taking further 'pictures' with the intent of exploiting rose-tinted themes.



Plate 6.7 Heather Tanner, 2013, *Sketchbook*. Photograph: artist.

I exploited the discovery of nostalgic longing expressed in *Nostalgia I* through strategic aims utilised during the development of *Nostalgia II*. Again, I used the camera as means of developing ideas. I found the camera offered an unexpected freedom in comparison to the time constraints of other media, for example, waiting for paint and glue to dry. With the camera, I experimented with angles, light and areas of focus. Studio research commenced with taking straightforward photographs of earthenware teacups (Plate 6.8). However, trials of glass and bone china teacups offered appealing qualities of translucency and light. I found that when lit, the teacups became bright beacons; seeming to emit light in a place of darkness and suggestive of a safe passage forward in times of isolation and despair. The bone china and glass is delicate suggesting fragility, and this related to the idea of the fragility of a migrant's emotions. I realised that these qualities, and the images I experimented with, aligned with and reflected my personal feelings of fragile emotions, migratory isolation and of desire for a place of refuge, so I continued to expand this idea.

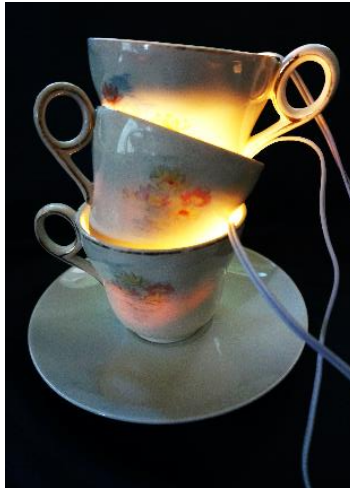


Plate 6.8 Heather Tanner, 2013, Studio work in progress; experimentation for *Nostalgia II*, teacups, saucers and electric lights. Photograph: artist.

I noticed that there was an interplay among the cups in the photographs where they were connected by the electric cable running between the lights, which suited my intent of communicating disconnection/connection over distance. In photographs, some images were out of focus, which signified a change in perspective obtained from living in a different place. In addition, I had overturned some cups in experiments with the aim to discover how light behaved through the bottom of a bone china cup, in a representative depiction of emptiness (Cooper, 1978, p.48). This also implied the idea of the land down under/Australia.

*Nostalgia II* (Plate 6.9) was exhibited in LUX Gallery in 2014. The photographic images were in a constant loop of movement and transformation, fading in and out, isolation and closeness, tea cups relating to each other on two screens, side-by-side, and then changing, close by and then far away. These methods of installation and display were applied to *Nostalgia II* for *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* in 2016.





Plate 6.9 Heather Tanner, 2014, *Nostalgia II*. Digital installation over 2 screens, duration 80 seconds.  
Still image: artist.

Exploitation of research findings, such as theories of nostalgia applied to works *Nostalgia I* and *Nostalgia II*, proved to be pivotal points in this body of work and of personal understanding and self-knowledge. Given the nexus between art and impetus for research, the processes of reflection in this project led me to further consider, not only about the works of art, but also, previously unrecognised thoughts regarding my situation as a migrant.

The German philosopher, Heidegger, held that art can reveal the truth about human life (Wartenberg, 2005, p.155), and make manifest something that lies hidden (Moran, 2000, p.230). Imaginative and creative response to the subject led to the emergence and disclosure of my suppressed thoughts. Themes of longing, nostalgia, disconnection, isolation and loss emerged. Reflection on these works assisted in the clarification of the source of extreme personal unease, enabling self-knowledge and understanding. I experienced a profound sense of realisation and sadness regarding my migrant situation and this strengthened my desire to return to home to my family.

## Hope

I built on intuitive and symbolic early responses to the research question to further communicate a sense of isolation conveyed in *Emotions*, *Nostalgia I* and *Nostalgia II*. Experiments were conducted around the idea of a message in a bottle as a symbol of hope of salvation (Cooper, 1978, p.24) when thrown into the ocean from an isolated shore. I sought a

symbolic form for the bottle's 'message' and found a folded passport page in the shape of an aeroplane communicated my aim.

Many of the works discussed in this chapter commenced with concepts for room-size large-scale installations. My desire for larger scale works was with the intent to communicate the magnitude and gravitas of a decision to migrate. *Hope* commenced with a similar intention. After photographing multiple bottles to provide a range of possibilities for potential installation in a gallery space, I decided that large scale photographs would best express my intent.



Plate 6.10 Heather Tanner, 2016, *Hope*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Photograph: artist.

When the photographs were installed alongside each other for *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* (Plate 6.10) there was a pleasing sense of scale. The photographs formed a forest of bottles and inverted paper aeroplanes, which imparted a sense of disquiet. Unease was accentuated by the white background for the bottles which allowed the objects to appear to float, adding to the sense of isolation, disorientation and disconnection. I thought this effect contributed to the qualities that communicated my disorienting migrant experience. In addition, the paper planes appeared isolated in their bottles, which expressed a sense of

disconnection and estrangement from their surroundings, divulging further aspects at the basis of my psychic disturbance, as the isolation endured.

I had originally thought of the foundation ideas of *Hope* while I resided in Australia. The symbolic forms I employed in expressing my emotions relate to the act of hoping for rescue and longing for a return home. When I turned to developing the work once I had returned to England, I became aware that I was, in a sense, working retrospectively on this idea, thus the work spans a shift in thinking. The work symbolically disclosed a sense of isolation and longing reflective of my time in Australia, yet the work is also infused with a freshness of colour that had not been present in my work until the point that I had returned to England. The timeline of ideas for this work forms a link with my migration life and my return, indicating 'hope' of return and 'hopeful' feelings for a better life after return.

## Transformation and Change

### Grafted

*Grafted* is a work that also transcends living in Australia and my return to England. Botanic references are often found in migration literature. The migrant experience has been described as being a 'loss of roots' (Chambers, 1994, p.18), rootlessness (Janssen, 2013, p.51), uprootedness and transplantation (Hammond, 2004, p.187). Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Two, the curator Latika Gupta describes migrants as gaining hybridity (2013, p.90). The word 'hybrid' reinforced the idea of plant metaphor. Further inspirational research was the author André Aciman's idea that when a migration is a challenge it is because the graft did not take (1997, p.22). The grafted idea appealed as a plant's graft can visually appear as a wound. I became preoccupied with the objective of communicating the idea of how a migrant can become transformed in an attempt to 'fit in' and 'survive' in their new environment.

Studio experimentation commenced with binding pruned branches together and continued with photography. I found the effect of the bound pieces alluded to the idea of migrants absorbing different ideas and identities in their new home; each bound or grafted onto the original identity. The bound joints held a quality that appealed as they were stark, suggesting that migrancy can be a harsh experience. When photographs were placed alongside each

other, the individual pieces of branch formed to become new tree forms, supporting my objective to suggest transformations that occur through migration. My aim was to seek a sense of transience and fragility in the work to communicate ideas of transformation, hybridised identity and ‘grafts not taking’. However, first trials of *Grafted* were visually solid, holding qualities of permanence and did not suit my intent (Plate 6.11).



Plate 6.11 Heather Tanner, 2015, Studio work in progress; experimentation for *Grafted*.

Digital images, plants and wire. Photographs: artist

It was at this point, in 2015, that I return-migrated to England. I was longing to see an English spring with blossom and tree leaves in bud, realising that the fresh leaves are representative of growth, renewal, hope and revival (Cooper, 1978, p.96). This realisation prompted me to think of the unresolved *Grafted* work, with my own life experiences directly informing the inspiration, creative process and possible outcomes.

I started experimentation in early northern hemisphere spring when the garden yielded little in the way of plants suitable for further exploration of ideas. In my impatience, I harvested small and spindly branches with the tiniest green buds and an uprooted weed.

Experimentation led to the realisation that these little grafted shapes, with roots and buds, were very much like tiny trees easily photographed as a whole piece, rather than involving a process of collage.

I built on research findings from *Hope* and experimented with removing the background of the photographs with graphic software. Without the background I noticed that the tree shapes appear as if they are figures running or fleeing; the roots became 'legs'. The tiny tree 'things' I had photographed had been turned into 'living beings' (Sontag, 1977, p.98). I found that this symbolism strengthened the idea of migrants being uprooted and on the move. I recognised that the 'root' is a homophone of 'route' which is the 'way taken in getting from a starting point to a destination' (Waite, 2012, p.632).



Plate 6.12 Heather Tanner, 2016, *Grafted*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Digital photographs each 21cm x 30cm. Photograph: artist.

*Grafted* (Plate 6.12) is a fresher, brighter series of works of art without a sense of nostalgia and longing that pervades many earlier works of art. *Grafted* communicates ideas of transformation and new beginnings. *Grafted* demonstrates contrast with the other works that reflect a depth of longing for home as it celebrates a joy of realising a dream of return, transformation due to time spent away and aspires to hope for a fresh start.

## Return

The effects of the change in my location and decision to return migrate to England are demonstrated in works of art made since March 2015. Ideas explored during this timeframe all held their roots in early intuitive and representative sketches, however with return to

homeland in mind, the development of ideas gained a different objective. For example, intuitive sketches of packing boxes had been illustrating my concerns about migration to Australia. After a period of incubation, the packing box idea was developed with the significant change of location to England imminent.

Packing boxes in my studio, and the task of decision-making about all of my belongings, provided inspiration. During the packing process, some possessions ceased to be important and were easily left behind, others became precious beyond their material value due to their serving as a 'marker of a relationship and emotional connection' (Turtle, 2007, p.5). The packing process and reflection about belongings' provenance and the stories they were associated with generated thoughts of Chinese nested boxes; a narrative within a narrative. With the intent of experimenting with this idea, I constructed packing boxes scaled in different sizes so that they would fit within each other.



Plate 6.13 Heather Tanner, 2015, *Return*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Card, digital photographs, glue and sticky tape. 23 boxes, various dimensions. Photograph: artist.

Experimentation for suitable covers for the boxes commenced with images symbolic of movement and travel. However, these lacked the quality of communicating personal change being experienced through planning a return move to England. This realisation proceeded to research and experimentation with photographs. Through photographs, I documented the process of packing each of the boxes as I worked through my most treasured possessions. It is this series of photographs that are used in *Return* (Plate 6.13).



## Suitcases

Suitcases are widely associated with travel. In a similar way to boxes, suitcases are packed with treasured items at times of migration. Suitcases containing a migrants' belongings can be found in museums throughout Australia, such as the c1950s suitcase photographed in the Queensland Museum (Plate 6.14). A suitcase was symbolically employed by Louise Bourgeois in the work *The Runaway Girl*, which explored the topic of her own migration, previously discussed in Chapter Three. A suitcase I had as a child was highly prized and would be packed and unpacked even if going nowhere. Suitcases have also featured as significant objects in my adult migratory life.



Plate 6.14 Migrant's suitcase and contents c1950s, installed in 2013, *Collectomania* at the Queensland Museum. Photograph: Heather Tanner, 2013.

Suitcases featured in representative form early in my research sketchbook, yet to develop the ideas into a work of art seemed too obvious despite the suitcase being an iconic image of migration. Despite my concerns about suitcase ideas being too literal, I began experiments. I included hair to convey concepts of remembrance of absent loved ones as historically when separated by distance, loved ones gave a lock of hair as a keepsake. I also employed closed suitcases. Peer review held that both ideas spoke of the holocaust which was entirely unintended. Ideas were left to incubate, and the suitcase idea again emerged at the time I was developing the packing box series of work *Return*. So as to distance myself from inadvertent reference to the holocaust I experimented with open suitcases and other materials.

## Greener

I revisited my sketchbook in which I had played with ideas of home soil and turf, representing native land (Cooper, 1978, p.76). I bought a roll of synthetic realistic-green grass for experimentation and placed a piece into the suitcase. The realistic plastic green grass against a brown suitcase was lifeless and dull, so I painted the fake grass bright green and the suitcase black (Plate 6.15). At this time, I thought about the ‘grass is always greener’ proverb. The proverb combined with the visual image of the suitcase progressed to a realisation that the art I had made was not concerning home turf, it was about the embodiment of hopes and dreams that migration can bring about a transformation in life through the hope of greener pastures (Thomson, 2011, p.29). Furthermore, research provides information that when a migrant is in their new home, they might find that the change has not provided greener grass after all (Thomson, 2011, p.83), it might turn out to be false grass and not what was expected.



Plate 6.15 Heather Tanner, 2016, Digital maquette of *Greener*. Image: artist.

The use of the heightened bright green colour meant that the resulting work of art depicted an unreal and disconcerting quality. The false colour unsettles, and this communicates the concept that there is potential danger in the transformation that you desire; some things may appear too good to be true. Making the work was revealing as it enabled me to voice my transformation from a state of unease to one of happiness at return, and to realise that once I had viewed my migration to Australia as embarking toward greener pastures.



## New Beginnings

During preparation for *Greener*, a number of old suitcases had been sourced. The intention was to make more than one work. The suitcases sat on the floor in my studio while the idea of using them incubated, awaiting inspiration. The transformation of a child's beach ball through puncture and subsequent deflation brought about insight that the object was charged with a sense of failure. The deflated globe-printed beach ball was placed in the suitcase. This quality of transformation from a whole to deflation appealed. In a similar way to the fake vivid green turf used in *Greener*, there was an artificial feature reflective of things not always being what they seem. In addition, I felt that the emotional deflation a migrant may experience when things have gone awry was communicated through the limp nature of the beach ball and the visible valve in *New Beginnings* (Plate 6.16).



Plate 6.16 Heather Tanner, 2016, *New Beginnings*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts. Suitcase, plastic beach balls, plastic ball, paint. Photograph: artist.

The globe is symbolic of wholeness (Cooper, 1978, p.74) and the sphere is perfection and representative of all possibilities (Cooper, 1978, p.155). The tactic of employing deflated globes in this suitcase work alludes to the idea that although the globe/world does hold possibilities it has not all been perfection personally. However, I have included a small perfect globe alongside the deflated globes, signifying that there is always hope that change will be as anticipated.

In the transformative work *Nostalgia I (Doilies)*, I used more than one image, reminiscent of multiple worlds, many ways and opportunities. I decided to use similar strategy in *New*

*Beginnings*. The use of five plastic deflated globes and a single perfect globe is suggestive of multiple movements, transformations and migrations, and the many trials, challenges, deflated hopes and enduring dreams encountered on those journeys.

In these works, working with the tactile properties of materials such as the mohair in *Heart Strings* and wire in *Emotions*, evolved from a haptic way of working to become a method of developing ideas through the prism of a camera lens and with digital software. A lens provided a different perspective, both literally and conceptually. Ideas formed under the lens were taken back to the sketchbook where the subsequent work by hand allowed a longer time to consider and deliberate on outcomes of experiments and decisions on future direction. Material properties, important in decisions for haptic work, remained critical considerations in digital work. The material properties captured digitally to convey symbolic concepts, for example the physical feel of tiny plants photographed for *Grafted* as I was making them, were as important a consideration as how those material qualities were captured in the photographs. The tactile nature of the soil, roots, stems, leaves and wire leaves were all critical in conveying the concept.

## Exhibition

*Migrancy and Yearning for Home* was exhibited at KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, in 2016. The exhibition was planned while I was in England, through the use of a scale model (Plate 6.17). The scale model allowed for the interplay and relationships between the works to be explored. There were, however, limitations to this process. For example, lighting was difficult to envisage, as were plinth heights. Upon arrival in Cairns for the installation of the exhibition, the position of some work was revised to take advantage of lighting aspects, and visual relationships with other pieces.



Plate 6.17 Heather Tanner, 2016, model of the proposed exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*.

Photograph: artist.

As the work was being placed within the gallery space (Plate 6.18) I was able to correctly evaluate the scale and relationship between the works. The scale of *Hope* suggested a sense of being able to walk into and through the work; of disconcertion due to the scale and looming angle of the bottles; and disorientation at the meandering and uncertain pathway formed between them.

The scale of *Nostalgia I* and *Nostalgia II* had been impossible to envisage prior to installation due to the availability of suitable digital screens. During installation *Nostalgia I* and *Nostalgia II* were placed close to each other due to the size of the gallery. Their proximity to each other was not ideal however, their closeness reinforced the qualities of movement, transformation and transience that they share. The light shining within tea cups in *Nostalgia I* became echoed by the white doily rotating over a dark screen in *Nostalgia II* creating a beacon of moving light that rotated to the right and off the digital screen, visually leading the viewer onto another work.

The proximity of *Nostalgia I*, *Nostalgia II*, *Hope* and *Grafted* revealed that the works had a relationship through the floating and suspended qualities they share; tea cups floating on inky black, white doilies rotating in darkness, bottles and grafted plants suspended with no ground below. The suspended and rootless qualities were further emphasised by the fragility of *Grafted* with its tenuous bindings keeping the plants together. Fragility demonstrated in

*Grafted* was juxtaposed next to the rigid and solid strength of *Return*, emphasising the sometimes dichotomously opposed feelings in a migrant experience of fragility and strength.

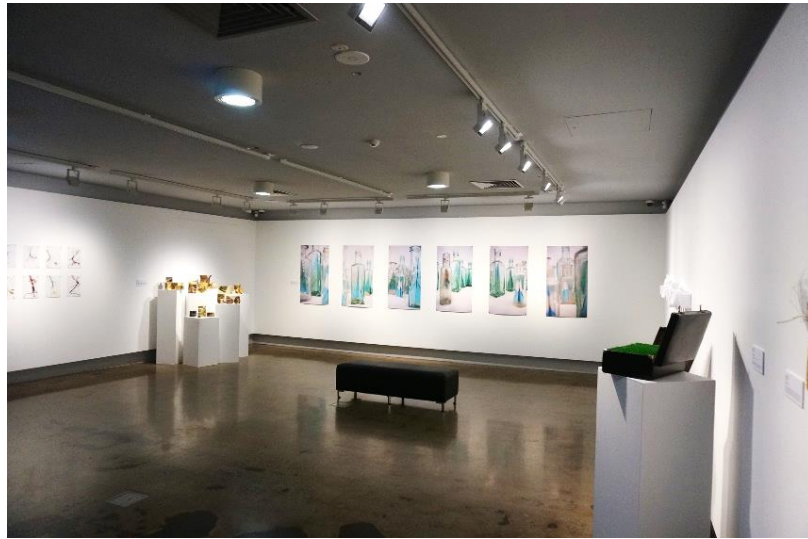


Plate 6.18 Heather Tanner, 2016, exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, installed at KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.

Fragility was also revealed in the delicate form of *Tears*. The assemblage of thirteen components of this work led to a sense of being overwhelmed and a bombardment of thoughts that echoes the sense of overwhelm a migrant may feel at longing for and missing home. The tenuousness of *Tears* has a relationship with the series *Emotions*, where fragility is also captured in the delicacy of some of the ‘veins’ attached to the five hearts. The wire of the ‘veins’ has a direct relationship with the roots of *Grafted* on display diagonally opposite. In addition, these forms have their genesis in the same intuitive and symbolic sketch and maintain their relationship in the gallery, echoing and communicating similar ideas of disconnection.

The fragile forms of *Emotions* were placed in close proximity to the solid forms of *Greener* and *New Beginnings*, again reflective of migration’s often dichotomous experience. The sombre colours of *Emotions* were further subdued when juxtaposed with the symbolically fresher colours in *New Beginnings*, *Greener* and *Grafted*, alluding to a bright new start which, in turn, forms an association with the colour and symbolic form of *Hope*.

## Concluding Remarks

The literature review, exhibition visits and studio investigations have culminated in the hitherto unidentified emotional content of my psychic disturbance endured through migration becoming identified.

Through sensitive use of evocative symbolic imagery, I have created an arena in which one's mind can consider various ways of being in the world. In this imaginative realm, reflection on art can illuminate aspects of human life that can otherwise lie hidden. The use of symbolism and metaphor has provided this series of work with the capacity to disclose my experience of migrancy as one of memory and sense of loss, disconnection and isolation, nostalgia and longing, and transformation and change.

The ability of the symbolic form of works of art to reveal psychological and emotional states indicates that creative arts practice is a means to generate self-knowledge and new understandings that are a benefit to the artist-researcher and potentially beneficial to a viewer of the work. The capacity of the form of visual art to reveal transformational understanding and life impacting self-knowledge is demonstrated in the works contained in *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion and Return

The works of art I have created as research have revealed and embodied my experience of migrancy. My creative work has changed from my initial attempts, and the nature of the change indicates useful information about arts practice. At the commencement of the research my knowledge of migrancy and how this topic could be investigated through art was limited. The initial artworks were a response to items such as photos of distant family; however, at the time I was not able to use these items in a manner which successfully evoked the depth of my feelings.

My research journey enabled me to learn about the world of migrancy from multiple perspectives including through the stories of other migrants and the creative work of migrant artists. Migrancy journeys between countries can be emotional and a transformative processes of temporal and physical changes. These changes are often discussed as initially exciting and might transform to become a sorrowful experience of loss, presenting challenges to a migrant through eliciting a sense of not belonging, transience, nostalgia and longing. Undoubtedly, this knowledge expanded my understanding of my study area and provided a rich vein of ideas which had the potential to be expressed in works of art. Subjects such as nostalgia and longing, unimaginable at the commencement of the research, became the subject of works of art.

The analysis of works of art of contemporary artists in the field shows that artists can harness their own migratory disturbances to creatively convey their experiences, in addition to applying their personal encounters with migration as a basis to imaginatively communicate the distress of others. A finding from this research is that knowledge of the field, in this case migrancy, can inform arts practice. This has been valuable learning for me. However, art requires more than knowledge of a field.

While knowledge of the field assisted me to fathom the grief I felt due to being so far away from my family, works of art transcend didactic representations of fact. To create works of art that could evoke and elucidate my experience of migrancy, I had to make work that spoke in a refined language that was at once sophisticated and simple, suggestive of the topic, and

yet and broad enough to suggest many stories of separation and distance. For example, the oscillating white on black and black on white doilies in *Nostalgia I*, seeks to suggest my experience of living between two worlds. Occasionally the doilies float into a whole full circle, but often their independent paths do not coalesce, as has been my experience. The aim to create poetic works that are evocative as a result of praxis, where knowledge has impacted practice and practice has suggested new avenues of enquiry, has been a further source of knowledge about creative arts practice.

Finally, and possibly the major finding of this research, is the manner in which an artist can gain understanding and self-knowledge through creating research-led works of art. The claim of theorist, R. G. Collingwood, that an artist's work commences with a 'psychic disturbance', and the artist only identifies the initiating emotion through the process of creating the work, has been tested in this research. I conclude that creating works of art through a practice-led process involving art theory, topic knowledge, undertaking contemporary work in the field, and studio practice can enable an artist to identify the causes of their longings or 'psychic disturbance' and contribute to self-knowledge and understanding. Previously unrecognised sorrow due to my migration status and a desire to return home were revealed through practice-led research. The process of practice-led research as a means of revealing deep emotions is a finding that has applications to other artists in the field as well as to people who may suffer from other emotional issues such as the loss of a loved one or post-traumatic stress.

The creative work exhibited in the exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home* provides the practical outcomes which addressed my research question and indicated how visual art can be a means by which to communicate and present insight into an experience of migrancy. These works resulted from my investigations of theories of art in the fields of emotion and understanding, in addition, to the review of the subject of migration and contemporary artists in the field. The knowledge I have gleaned from this research is the value of the arts to function both as a mirror to one's soul and also a light shining in the direction that I needed to go. I returned to England, with the appreciation and knowledge that making art offers possibilities and potential to explore, question and resolve conundrums and challenges as well as a way to celebrate the joys of life.

# Bibliography

Aciman, A. 1997, 'Shadow Cities' in Aciman, A. (ed.), 1999, *Letters of Transit*, The New Press, New York, pp.15-34.

Anscombe, E. and Geach, P. T. (eds.), 1954, *Descartes Philosophical Writings*, Nelson University Paperbacks, Sunbury-on-Thames.

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 30 March 2017, *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, Canberra, ACT, viewed 22 October 2017 <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3412.0>>

Bachelard, G. 1994, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. [Maria Jolas], Beacon Press, Boston.

Baldassar, L. 2001, *Visits Home: Migration experiences between Italy and Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Baldassar, L. 2008, 'Missing Kin and Longing to be Together: Emotions and the Construction of Co-presence in Transnational Relationship' in *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 29, no. 3, August 2008, pp.247-266.

Bambach, C. 2003, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks*, Cornell University Press, New York.

Barrett, E. 2010a, 'Foucault's 'What is an Author': Towards a Critical Discourse of Practice as Research' in Barrett, E. and Bolt, B. (eds.), *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I. B Taurus, London and New York, pp.135-146.

Barrett, E. 2010b, 'The Exegesis as Meme' in Barrett, E. and Bolt, B. (eds.), *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I. B Taurus, London and New York, pp.159-163.

Barrett, E. 2010c, 'Appendix: Developing and Writing Creative Arts Practice Research: A Guide' in Barrett, E. and Bolt, B. (eds.), *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I. B Taurus, London and New York, pp.185-205.

Beardsley, M. 1995, 'The Arts in the Life of Man' in Neill, A. and Ridley, A. (eds.), *The Philosophy of Art: Readings Ancient and Modern*, McGraw Hill, Boston, pp.538-551.



- Ben-Ze'ev, A. 2010, 'The Thing Called Emotion', in Goldie, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.41-62.
- Borgdorff, H. 2011, 'The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research' in Biggs, M and Karlsson, H. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Research in The Arts*, Routledge, Abingdon, pp.44-63.
- Bottomley, G. 1992, *From Another Place: Migration and the Politics of Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Carey-Thomas, L. 2012, 'The Moving Image' in Carey-Thomas, L (ed.), *Migrations: Journeys into British Art*, Tate Publishing, London, pp.98-100.
- Carter, P. 1996, *Hossein Valamanesh*, Art and Australia, Roseville East, NSW.
- Carter, P. 2001, 'Making arrangements: the Public Art of Hossein Valamanesh' in Valamanesh, H. and Thomas, A. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: A Survey*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, pp.27-46.
- Cavell, M. 2008, 'Self-Knowledge and Self-Understanding' in *American Imago*, vol. 65, no.3 Fall 2008, John Hopkins University Press, pp.357-378.
- Chambers, I. 1994, *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Collingwood, R. G. 1938, *The Principles of Art*, Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Constable, N. 2004, 'Changing Filipina Identities and Ambivalent Returns' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.104-124.
- Cooper, J. C. 1978, *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols*, Thames & Hudson, London.
- Coxon, A. 2010, *Louise Bourgeois*, Tate Publishing, London.
- Crispin, D. 2014, 'Scaling Parnassus in Running Shoes': From the Personal to the Transpersonal via the Medium of Exposition in Artistic Research' in Schwab, M. and Borgdorff, H. (eds.), 2014, *The Exposition of Artistic Research: Publishing Art in Academia*, Leiden University Press, Netherlands.

de Zegher, C. 2013, 'At Home Between Dream Shells, Stardust and Shell Jetty No. 3 PD', in de Zegher, C. (ed.), *Here Art Grows on Trees: Simryn Gill*, Australia Council for the Arts, Surry Hills, New South Wales, pp.35-94.

DeBellis, M. 2005, 'Music' in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.669-682.

Downey, A. 2014, *Art and Politics Now*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Ducôte, A. 1832, *E-migration or Flight of Fair Game*, National Library of Australia, obj-135585009.

Dutton, D. 2009, *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution*, Bloomsbury Press, New York.

Duyvendak, J. W. 2011, *The Politics of Home*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke and New York.

Gaut, B. 2003, 'Art and Knowledge' in Levinson, J. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.436-450.

Gibson, R. 2010, 'The Known World' in Brien, Burr and Webb (eds.), *TEXT Special issue, Symposium: Creative and Practice-Led Research—Current Status, Future Plans*, October 2010.

Glade-Wright, R. 2016, *Cognitive and Imaginative Significance*, Unpublished.

Glade-Wright, R. 2017, 'New insights effectively shared: originality and new knowledge in Creative Arts postgraduate degrees' *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol. 17, issue: 2, pp.89-98, accessed 24 October 2017 <<https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-04-2016-0023>>

Glenn, D., Bouvet, E., and Floriani, S. 2011, 'Migrants, Home, Belonging and Self-identities' in Glenn, D., Bouvet, E., and Floriani, S. (eds.), *Imagining Home: Migrants and the Search For a New Belonging*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, South Australia, pp.1-14.

Gmelch, G. 2004, 'West Indian Migrants and Their Rediscovery of Barbados' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.206-223.

- Goodman, N. 1976, *Languages of Art*, Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis and Cambridge.
- Graham, G. 2005, *Philosophy of the Arts: An Introduction to Aesthetics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon and New York.
- Greenberg, J. 1949, *Emigration Poster: Australia, Land of Tomorrow*. [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons, accessed 7 November 2017,  
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Australia\\_%E2%80%93\\_Land\\_of\\_Tomorrow\\_poster.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Australia_%E2%80%93_Land_of_Tomorrow_poster.jpg)>
- Ross, C. 2017, 'To Touch the Other: A Story of Corpo-electronic Surfaces' in Van Assche, C. and Wallis, C. (eds.), *Mona Hatoum*, Tate Publishing, London, p.147.
- Lange, D. 1936, *Migrant Mother*, [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons, accessed 7 November 2017, < <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Lange-MigrantMother02.jpg&oldid=262651914>>
- Gupta, L. 2013, 'Homelands: A 21st Century Story of Home, Away and All the Places Inbetween' in Gupta, L. (ed.), *Homelands*, The British Council, Delhi, pp.87-93.
- Hammerton, A. J. and Thomson, A. 2005, *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- Hammond, L. 2004, 'The Making of a Good Citizen in an Ethiopian Returnee Settlement', in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.1-15.
- Harper, M. 2005a, 'Introduction' in Harper, M. (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants 1600 – 2000*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp.1-15.
- Harper, M. 2005b, 'Motives of Return Migrants', in Harper, M. (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants 1600 – 2000*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp.53-54.
- Heath, M. 1996, 'Introduction' in *Aristotle: Poetics*, trans. [Heath, M], Penguin, London.
- Locke, H. 2017, *Hew Locke*, accessed 24 October 2017,  
<<http://www.hewlocke.net/passportculture.html>>

- Hoffman, E. 1998, 'The New Nomads' in Aciman, A. (ed.), 1999, *Letters of Transit*, The New Press, New York, pp.39-63.
- Hoffman, J. 2011, 'God Save the Queen' in James, S. and Bonnell, P. (eds.), *Stranger in Paradise: Hew Locke*, Black Dog Publishing, London, pp.8-9.
- Holmes, M. and Burrows, R. 2012, 'Ping-Pong Poms: Emotional Reflexivity in Contemporary Return Migration from Australia to the United Kingdom', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol.47, no.1, pp.105-123.
- Hughes, J. 2004, *The Idea of Home*, Giramondo Publishing Company, Artarmon.
- Isaacs, J. 1987, *The Gentle Arts: 200 Years of Australian Women's Domestic and Decorative Arts*. Landsdowne Publishing Pty Ltd, The Rocks.
- Janssen, L. 2013, *The Emotionally Resilient Expat*, Summertime Publishing, Great Britain.
- Jenkins, T. 1969, *We Came to Australia*, Constable and Company Ltd., London.
- John, E. 2005, 'Art and knowledge' in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.417-429.
- Jupp, J. 2004, *The English in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Jupp, J. 2007, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Kieran, M. 2005, 'Value of Art', in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.293-306.
- Knights, M. 2011, 'Longing Belonging' in Knights, M. and North, I. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, pp.76-93.
- Levy, A. 2004, 'Homecoming to the Diaspora: Nation and State in Visits of Israelis to Morocco' in Markowitz, F. and Stefansson, A. H. (eds.), *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, Lexington Books, Maryland, pp.92-108.
- Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. 2004, 'Introduction: An Ethnography of Return' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.1-15.

- Long, L. D. 2004, 'Viet Kieu on a Fast Track Back?' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.65-89.
- Mace, M. and Ward, T. 2002, 'Modelling the Creative Process: A Grounded Theory Analysis of Creativity in the Domain of Art Making', *Creativity Research Journal*, vol.14, no.2, pp.179-192.
- Mackenzie, N. and Knipe, S. 2006, 'Research Dilemmas: Paradigms, Methods and Methodology', *Issues in Educational Research*, vol.16, no.2, pp.193-205.
- Maddox Brown, F. 1852-55, *The Last of England*, [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 7 November 2017, <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AFord\\_Madox\\_Brown - The Last of England - Google Art Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AFord_Madox_Brown_-_The_Last_of_England_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)>
- Matravers, D. 1998, *Art and Emotion*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Matravers, D. 2005, 'Art, Expression and Emotion', in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.445-456.
- McSpadden, L. A. 2004, 'Contemplating Repatriation to Eritrea' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.34-48.
- Monument Australia, 16 June 2017, *Monument Australia*, Halifax, QLD. Accessed 22 October 2017, <<http://monumentaaustralia.org.au/display/100252-the-reuniting-family>>
- Moran, D. 2000, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Routledge, Abingdon and New York.
- Morgan, J. 2008, 'No Place like Home' in Storer R (ed.), *Simryn Gill*, Verlag der Buchhandlung, Cologne, pp.59-68.
- North, I. 2011, 'Profiling Hossein: a Conversation with the Artist' in Knights, M. and North, I. *Hossein Valamanesh: Out of Nothingness*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, p.17.
- Pappas, N. 2005, 'Aristotle' in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.15-28.

- Ridley, A. 1997, 'Not Ideal: Collingwood's Expression Theory', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 55, No. 3 Summer 1997, pp.263-272.
- Ridley, A. 2003, 'Expression in Art', in Levinson, J. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.211-227.
- Neill, A. 2003, 'Art and Emotion' in Levinson, J. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.421-435.
- Rushdie S. 2010, *Imaginary Homelands*, Vintage Books, London.
- Said, E. W. 2000a, 'The Art of Displacement: Mona Hatoum's Logic of Irreconcilables' in Saloni, M (ed.), 2011, *The Migrant's Time: Rethinking Art History and Diaspora*, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, pp.10-16.
- Said, E. W. 2000b, 'The Art of Displacement: Mona Hatoum's Logic of Irreconcilables', in Van Assche, C. and Wallis, C. (eds.), 2016, *Mona Hatoum*, Tate Publishing, London, p.93.
- Schlieker, A. 2011, 'A Million Miles from Home', in Schlieker A. (ed.) *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media Ltd, Folkestone, pp.10-37.
- Sedira, Z. 2010, *Artist Talk: Floating Coffins*, New Art Exchange, Nottingham, Produced by Artsadmin. Accessed 1 April 2017, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGi94RIMJ1w>>
- Sedira, Z. 2011, 'Artist's text' in Schlieker A. (ed.), *Folkestone Triennial: A Million Miles from Home*, Cultureshock Media Ltd, London, p.100.
- Solomon, A. 1854, *Second Class - the parting- 'Thus part we rich in sorrow parting poor'*, [Public Domain] via Wikimedia Commons. Accessed 7 November 2017, <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Abraham\\_Solomon\\_-\\_Second\\_Class\\_-\\_the\\_parting-\\_%27Thus\\_part\\_we\\_rich\\_in\\_sorrow\\_parting\\_poor%27\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg&oldid=174623443](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Abraham_Solomon_-_Second_Class_-_the_parting-_%27Thus_part_we_rich_in_sorrow_parting_poor%27_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg&oldid=174623443)>
- Sontag, S. 1977, *On Photography*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York.
- Stefansson, A. H. 2004, 'Refugee Returns to Sarajevo and Their Challenge to Contemporary Narratives of Mobility' in Long L. D. and Oxfeld E. (eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees*,

- Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, pp.170-186.
- Storer, R. 2008, 'Simryn Gill: Gathering' in Storer, R. (ed.), *Simryn Gill*, Verlag der Buchhandlung, Cologne, pp.41-58.
- Storti, C. 2001, *The Art of Coming Home*, Intercultural Press Inc., Maine.
- Sullivan, G. 2006, 'Research Acts in Art Practice', *Studies in Art Education*, vol.48, no.1, Arts-Based Research in Art Education (Fall 2006), pp.19-35.
- Thomas, S. 2001, 'A Survey' in Valamanesh, H. and Thomas, A. (eds.), *Hossein Valamanesh: A Survey*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide pp.10-26.
- Thomson, A. 2005, 'My Wayward Heart': Homesickness, Longing and the Return of British Post-War Immigrants from Australia' in Harper, M. (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants 1600-2000*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp.105-130.
- Thomson, A. 2011, *Moving Stories*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.
- Tolstoy, L. 1995, *What is Art?*, Trans. [Pevear, R. and Volokhonsky, L.], Penguin, London.
- Tsuda, T. 2004, 'When Home is not the Homeland: The Case of Japanese Brazilian Ethnic Return Migration' in Markowitz, F. and Stefansson, A. H. (eds.), *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, Lexington Books, Maryland, pp.92-108.
- Turkle, S. 2007, 'Introduction: The Things That Matter' in Turkle, S. (ed.), *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, United States of America, pp.3-10.
- Valamanesh, H. 2011, 'Artist's Statement' in Monteleone, J. (ed.), *Generations* (Exhibition Catalogue), Wollongong City Gallery, p.17.
- Vingender, I., Mészáros, J. and Kis, J. 2009, 'Migration Potential of Hungarian Healthcare Professionals – Dynamics of Attraction and Repulsion' in *European Journal of Mental Health* vol.4, no.2, pp.195–219.
- Waite, M. (ed.), 2012, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Wallis, C. 2016, 'Materials and Making' in Van Assche, C. and Wallis, C. (eds.), *Mona Hatoum*, Tate Publishing, London.
- Walsh, K. 2001, *The Changing Face of Australia*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW.
- Wartenberg, T. E. 2005, 'Heidegger' in Gaut, B. and McIver Lopes, D. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, Abingdon, pp.147-158.
- Webb, J. 2015, *Researching Creative Writing*, Frontinus Ltd, Newmarket.
- Wollheim, R. 1987, *Painting as an Art*, Thames & Hudson, London
- Wyman, M. 2005, 'Emigrants Returning: The Evolution of a Tradition' in Harper, M. (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants 1600 – 2000*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp.16-31.



# Appendix 1: Works of Art Exhibited in *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*

Images of works of art exhibited in *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, Queensland, 22 October – 19 November 2016.



Heather Tanner, 2016, Exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns.  
Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2016, Exhibition *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns.  
Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2016, *Hope*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns.  
 Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2016, *Grafted*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



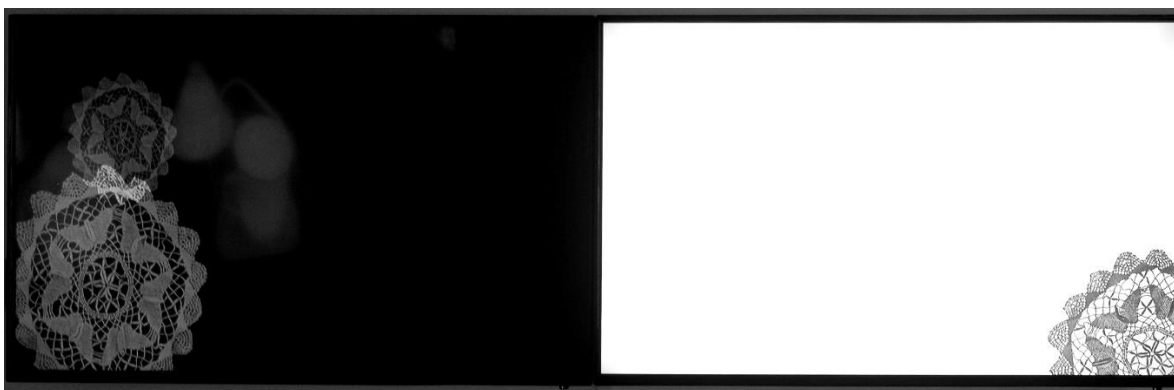
Heather Tanner, 2016, *Greener*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2016, *New Beginnings*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2013, *Nostalgia II (Teacups)*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Nostalgia I (Doilies)*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.





Heather Tanner, 2015, *Return*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Emotions*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears*, installed in 2016, *Migrancy and Yearning for Home*,  
KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Photograph: artist.



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Dad'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.  
Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'tough time'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'So far away'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Jess'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'alone'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist





Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Leigh'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Linzi'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Dawn'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.  
Photograph: artist

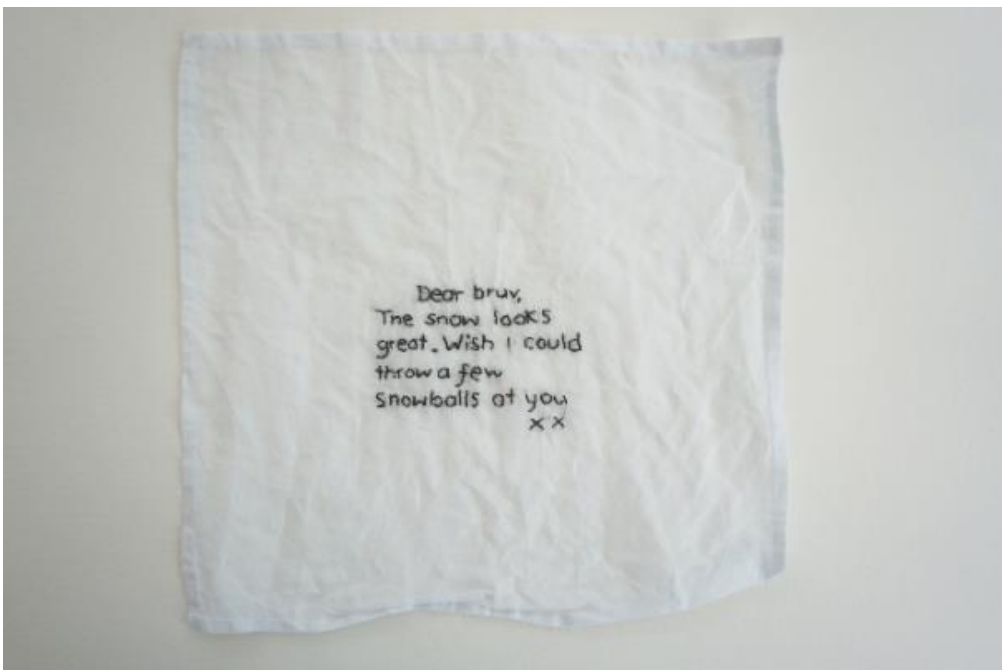


Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Mum'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.  
Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'lost'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Bruv'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear George'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist



Heather Tanner, 2012, *Tears 'Dear Liz'*. Cotton, cotton thread, hand stitch, 23cm x 23cm.

Photograph: artist

## Appendix 2: Copyright Permissions

**This administrative form  
has been removed**

This administrative form  
has been removed

This administrative form  
has been removed

This administrative form  
has been removed



This administrative form  
has been removed

This administrative form  
has been removed