Venus Rising, Furies Raging: Bodies Redressed in Contemporary Visual Art

Exegesis submitted by

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Abstract

The research centres on the power of the female body in activist feminist art as a medium for women's experience. The survey of visual representations of women's bodies in historical art and contemporary feminist practice, together with investigation of the enduring debates within feminism about the signification of bodies, led to a conviction that imaging of the body remains a central issue for creative practice. More specifically, the research problematises the residual 'essentialism' attributed to women through representations of their bodies whereby (stated simply and in the context of feminist theory and practice), women are assumed to share unique, unchanging and, hence, 'essential' attributes. Furthermore, this spectre of essentialism, and the debate about this concept during the second wave of feminism, presents, I argue, ongoing implications for the contemporary politics of representation in an activist practice and for the methodology of creative practice research.

The resulting extended analysis of feminist theory and art practice has led to the adoption of parafeminism as articulated by Amelia Jones (2006, 2008, 2009) and extended by Laura Castagnini (2013, 2015a, 2015b) to enlist parodic humour to invigorate representations of the body amid the shifting appropriations of feminism and femininity in contemporary culture. Parafeminism, in its dual orientation of avowal and critique of past feminist art, enables scrutiny of some lingering ambiguities in aspects of second wave feminist art. In the exegesis, this is traced to the 1970s, when feminists contested the historical signification of 'nature' in patriarchal imaging of women's bodies and the resulting critique (within feminism) of 'essentialism'. Artists adopted a range of approaches to the body to address or circumvent this critique. Issues stemming from the debates and practices remain, I argue, unresolved for contemporary artists and are re-addressed in the parafeminist works created for exhibition. 'Woman as nature' and the 'nature of woman' are therefore posed as axes of a lingering contradiction that is experimentally redressed in the works in which (female) bodies are represented in a range of media, forms and spaces, and using diverse

methods, notably the second-wave techniques of collage and femmage. My research on the debates about essentialism debates propelled me to adopt a *strategic* form of essentialism as an element of parafeminist parody, whereby the spectacle and politics of the woman/nature nexus are critically embraced, rather than evaded, as a necessary tactic to convey the subjective experiences of women, while recognising that no universal experience exists.

In *Venus Rising, Furies Raging*: *Bodies Redressed*, figures from classical mythology (Venus and the Furies) are counterpointed with contemporary popular culture figures and images of women, and the evocative power of meaning in materials is explored in femmage-based installations. The works celebrate, pay homage to and playfully parody second-wave feminist art and the surrounding debates about its perceived essentialism, while affirming the female body as a motif and site of resistance in contemporary activist practice. Selected works by contemporary artists are examined and situated as parafeminist precedents for their comparable use of motifs, methods and materials. The parafeminist remit is expanded through examination of Castagnini's claims for the potency of parody of feminist art, derived from Linda Hutcheon's (2000, 2002) notion of postmodern parody as 'critical distance', and Griselda Pollock's (2007) notion of time and the archive in the 'virtual feminist museum'. Examination of the contextualising literature and visual practice contributes to the formulation of a set of guiding principles for the practice, summarised as the aims to: connect with and celebrate the achievements of earlier feminist practices, while engaging creatively with the history of the debate about essentialism; contest the connection between the body and nature (or what is 'natural') in visual representation; recollect, restore and revision images of women's bodies; apply humorous and parodic critique of appropriated imagery; embody meaning in materials and evoke sensual and aesthetic pleasure in looking for women looking at art about women. Through the application of these principles, the political potential and material effects of images of the female body are enacted in the works created. An Interconnective model of Creative Practice Research (CPR) is presented in the exegesis as a framework for the expansion of contemporary feminist practice. The

Interconnective model develops and extends CPR, which combines engagement in theoretical debate with informed application of contemporary and historical artistic practices. The project therefore interconnectively extends activist art practice through a process of engagement with, and critique of, parafeminism.

The research contributes substantial documentation of prevalent strategies in feminist art over a lengthy period to identify issues concerning representations of the body, and in particular the problem of essentialism in relation to imaging of bodies. This documentation, in the form of a Data Repository, is appended to the exegesis (Appendix 1). My critical appraisal of the debates relating to essentialism provide new knowledge about the history of these discourses and how they influenced the course of contemporary feminist art practices. This knowledge, and my analysis of the concept of the virtual feminist archive, comprise a significant critique of the theory of parafeminism and the claims of an impasse in feminist art made by Jones (2006, p. 14; 2008 p. 9) (Chapters One and Two). Informed by this critique of parafeminist theory, I reflect on the work of a group of artists – Pipilotti Rist, Kate Davis, Deborah Kelly and Sally Smart – who present specific precedents to my adoption of parafeminist parody in the creative practice (Chapter Three). I contribute new analytic perspectives on the works of Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart, which illuminate how their representations of bodies are reinvigorated by the use of diverse materials and methods, inspired by earlier activist feminist practices. Utilising such diverse media, particularly collage and femmage, I apply a strategically essentialist approach to portraying the body to intervene constructively in contemporary cultural discourses. This approach eludes the impasse of 'bad girl' feminist art and offers a potentially pleasurable experience for a range of audiences (Chapters Two and Three).

The decision to work with the classical figures of Venus and the Furies, and my investigation of their representations in historical (patriarchal), popular cultural and contemporary feminist art expands knowledge of these mythical bodies as motifs and bearers of meaning. Iterations of Venus and the Furies in a parafeminist framework widen the range of their meaning and relevance for contemporary feminist practice (Chapters Three, Four and Five). As parafeminist practice critically attends to historical and contemporary feminist practices, it is facilitated by the

Interconnective methodology that I have devised for this project. Interconnective creative practice research represents an innovation upon Connective methodology, especially in its elevation of the role of a set of guiding principles for formulating a cohesive research practice. While Jones's theory of parafeminism is critically appraised, its dual aims of critique and celebration of earlier feminist art are upheld in the creative practice, which adopts a limited, strategic, parodic and, hence, critically-allusive 'essentialism' to affirm the centrality of the body as a motif of women's subjectivities and experiences.

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> *[T]he body is always a part, if not the whole, of one's situation. […] the female body should be the instrumentality of women's independence and freedom rather than their prison. (Duncan & Pachmanová 2010 p. 127)*

The power of the female body in activist feminist art is central to this research project. It investigates the potential of parafeminism as articulated by Amelia Jones (2006; 2008; 2009) and extended by Laura Castagnini (2013; 2015a; 2015b) to enlist parody and humour to invigorate representations of the body amid the shifting appropriations of feminism and femininity in contemporary culture. In its dual aim of celebration and critique of past feminist art, parafeminism enables scrutiny of some residual ambiguities in aspects of second wave feminist art, particularly the historical signification of 'nature' in patriarchal imaging of women's bodies, and the resulting critique of 'essentialism'. An Interconnective model of Creative Practice Research (CPR), which combines engagement in theoretical debate with informed application of contemporary and historical artistic practices, is presented as a framework for the expansion of contemporary feminist practice. Thus the political potential and material effects of images of the female body are enacted in the body of works created for exhibition. Interconnectively, the works expand activist art practice through engaged critique of parafeminism.

A Framework of Activist, Feminist Art

'Activist art' is work that addresses cultural, political or social concerns in order to produce change (Tani 2015). Feminist art seeks greater recognition in the art world for women artists and challenges the thinking behind their exclusion from the centres of culture (Marsh 2006 p. 98). Interactions and tensions between feminist politics and theoretical debates converged with the material and aesthetic aspects of making artworks (Reckitt 2012 p. 11). Feminist activist art therefore confronts cultural formations that support gendered power structures through the realm of

aesthetics. Feminist art is understood to have emerged with second wave feminism, from the mid-1960s to late 1980s, although it has never been a universal movement (Reilly 2007 p. 17). It continues today in various forms and in multiple locations. The purpose of this research project is not simply to define contemporary feminist art or 'second wave' art, and the 'wave' terminology is contested, as the implied periodisation of feminism does not accurately reflect the transformations and continuities of the movement (Aikau, Erikson & Pierce 2007; Cott 1989; Freeman 1996; Nicholson 2010), either in visual art or feminism more generally. But its terms are relevant to the research at hand, if only insofar as 'second wave' feminism retains currency as a distinct period of feminist activism and history.

Feminist artists of the 1960s and 1970s were often politically radical and direct in their articulation of the embodied experiences of women. They took demonstrable pleasure in imagery and materials (Reckitt 2012 p. 11) as protest against 'patriarchal' and 'phallocentric' conventions in the Western art-historical canon, where representations of women's bodies were seen as objectified and sexualised, and hence invested with the power to denigrate and control women. Although the women's movement[1] was aimed to overcome sexism, misogyny and patriarchy, these goals and the strategies for attaining them varied according to national, cultural and other differences. The movement advocated for women's rights, sexual and reproductive autonomy and women's social, political and economic empowerment, with an emphasis, in the early stages, on attainment of gender equality through equal pay for equal work, equal power in social institutions and professional recognition.

In seeking to attain equality, feminists in the 1970s tended to minimise differences and emphasise similarities between men and women. From the 1980s, in response to the perceived devaluation of qualities associated with femininity, 'difference' feminism arose to reclaim and value those qualities and emphasise

[1] Though the term 'women's movement' is generally associated with grassroots activism in the second wave era, it is used somewhat interchangeably with other terms in the context of discussions about activism and artists, such as the 'women's liberation movement', for example, which had distinct, radical politics (Nicholson 2010). In the exegesis, artists' contributions are considered within the broader range of politics associated with 'feminism' (which encompasses a much longer history of intellectual and activist practices), as my critique of parafeminism does not closely examine individual political stances and affiliations.

differences between men and women. This led to criticisms of consolidating stereotypes, and giving insufficient attention to differences *between* 'women' – differences of class, culture, race and sexuality, in particular – and the diversity of women's experiences. Equality for women remained a primary goal, but 'difference feminists' argued that women should not need to be the same as men in order to play an equal role in society (Grosz 1994a pp. 86-93; Marsh 2006). Women's rights activists and feminist groups more generally waged campaigns on numerous political fronts, and with varying approaches, to achieving social and institutional change.

In the visual arts, feminists pursued philosophies, ideas and practices that countered the entrenched patterns for determining artistic genius, beauty, and attitudes toward the body (Tani 2015), though these were not their only concerns. The body, however, remained a vexed topic for debate and a contentious motif for imaging. Furthermore, apparently 'feminist' portrayals of the body pre-date the period called the 'second wave' of feminism, and, as noted, the periods and definitions of the 'waves' of feminism are debated and contested. The potency of the body, however, is that its protestation in art is intelligible to wider audiences – at least those of Euro-American cultural origins – as well as to educated consumers of fine art. After a half-century of feminist activism in art, a substantial amount of work has been created, exhibited, critiqued and celebrated, to the extent that several counter-critical formations have formed and retreated.

However, contemporary visual art by women is not always already 'feminist', and queer and transgender artists and theorists continue to contest the terms of sexed identity (Butler 1999; Hines 2014; Serano 2016; Stone 1996). Further, the project of contemporary feminist art is now diversified beyond the critique of objectification of female bodies, and some contemporary artists work creatively with imagery that might once have been considered problematic or apolitical. Understanding these changes requires perspective on the wider social change in the status of women that has occurred in western patriarchy since the second wave of feminism. It demands understanding of the histories of art practices that emerged in the corresponding period, and recognition of how art, like any material practice, is subject to forces that are at once artistic, social and political. While the scope of such an investigation is beyond this research, a question arises as to how (or if) the body

might figure in the definitions of feminist art, given the abiding attention to the female body in contemporary art that speaks to feminist ideas. Moreover, and irrespective of the success or impact of feminist artistic production since the mid-1960s in influencing the direction of contemporary practice – its philosophical basis, and its motifs, materials, methods and modes of consumption – the ideology of sexual difference and its inscription of binary constructions of gender persist in fine art and popular media imaging conventions.

This research project is therefore formulated around some of the challenges that face contemporary feminist artists who continue to work politically with images of the female body. The central research question concerns how a feminist visual art practice might expand representations of women in ways that affirm the centrality of the body for conveying women's experiences. In brief, Chapters One, Two and Three situate the project within theoretical, philosophical and contemporary visual arts contexts and include a survey of the literature and precedents for the practice in the visual arts field. Chapter Four explains the 'Interconnective' methodology and the guiding principles for the practice. The practice – that is, the body of works for exhibition – is described in Chapter Five, along with the conditions and critical reflections arising from the exhibition. The body of work emerges concurrently and in interaction with the investigations undertaken. In conclusion, Chapter Six reflects on the effectivity of the project, and outlines future directions. I argue that, through the process of Interconnective CPR, creative practice research can expand activist practice and the understanding of art as knowledge. The knowledge resides in the artworks created and the potential to 'produce affect through evocation and resonance' (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2014 p. 236).

Mapping the Body in Feminist Theory and Practice

The research interests arise from my experience as a working artist with a lengthy career, whose approaches are informed by feminist theoretical debates, and whose creative practice and methods are frequently renewed within the changing landscape of creative media and technologies of art production. As a feminist activist, and an artist skilled in techniques that derive from professional spheres and from beyond the art studio, I argue that my creative practice cannot be conceived independently of either the theoretical framework of ideas or the range of artforms

that are deployed in the exhibited work. In the diversifying area in which I practice, neither can the decisions concerning media be separated – either theoretically or politically – from the implications of the images. The works created in this project accordingly utilise a range of materials and methods and have genealogy in second wave (and earlier) feminist art practices – collage, assemblage and femmage, in particular – and are presented amidst works generated in digital media.

The body – the female body – figures constantly as a motif in my practice where it registers as a symbol of feminist art, beyond its function as an 'instrument' (of liberation or constraint), to use the term in the epigraph from Duncan and Pachmanová. In imagery, the body evokes a feminist narrative about femininity, subjectivity and embodied experience. The body that I work with in my practice is one that is understood through the lens of second-wave feminism as historically objectified and marked as 'other' to man and men's bodies in patriarchal art. It is the feminist view that, in Western art-historical tradition, the female body was presented for men's pleasure and not for the pleasure of women, who were inherently distanced from the power represented by canonical art. Feminist art in the second wave sought to liberate women by refiguring the body in art, and thus the aim of activist feminist practice is fundamentally a material one. For me, images of the body speak to the pervasive legacy of the phallocentric dualisms of the 'nature/culture' divide and the 'mind/body' split in which women and their bodies are signifiers *of* nature and on the negative side of the divide. Feminist philosophers, cultural critics and art historians have repeatedly identified the effect of this legacy whereby women's bodies were conceived as something wild, to be tamed and controlled, or tied to the ebbs and flows of biological, reproductive cycles – characteristics that came to be regarded as *'the nature* of women' in patriarchal tradition (Bordo 2004 p. 33).

The use of the body as an instrument in the social subordination of women is an abiding tenet of second-wave feminist inquiry, and stems partly from Simone de Beauvoir's (2011/1949 p. 283) philosophy and emblematic notion of woman as 'other' to man, and the profound understanding that woman is made, not born. Even Beauvoir's ideas, however, have drawn criticism as reifying sexual difference (Butler 1999; Heinämaa 1997), while activist art is replete with efforts to subvert phallocentric ideology and affirm female embodiment as a source of power. For

artists like myself, whose creative work is inspired and motivated by a desire to celebrate and pay tribute to second-wave feminist artistic practice, even as I recognise the validity of some of the criticism of their work and political tactics, theoretical debates about representing the female body present enduring challenges. Consequently I have found strong rapport with Amelia Jones's (2006, 2008, 2009) theory of parafeminism, which, similarly, embraces both a respect for and critical response to earlier feminist artists' work, while contending with the legacy of the dualistic paradigms of sexual difference. The relevance of parafeminism to the practice is outlined in the catalogue essay for the exhibition (McKenzie 2017). In adopting this framework, I also seek to critique and extend Jones's theory of parafeminism.

Parafeminism, its limitations and its potential for expansion in contemporary practice are discussed at length in Chapter One of the exegesis. Jones (2006) argues for critical re-evaluation of past feminist practices. The term 'parafeminism', which has gained currency in critical and creative discourses on feminist art practice since the 2000s, refers to an approach that seeks to extend but not supersede earlier feminisms (Jones 2006 p. 213), and reflects a discerned impulse to 'return to, and take wisdom from, the most successful political movement in the visual arts in the past 50 years' (Jones 2008 p. 2). The interest in (and the revival of) past visual strategies emanate from recognition of the deeply held convictions and aspirations for change of the earlier artists, and is motivated, Jones (2008 p. 2) claims, by the need for a renewed model of political intervention in the current context of global power structures. Jones traces the rise of imaging technologies in the hands of innovative artists, and their role in changing conceptions of subjectivity and 'the self'. I adopt aspects of Jones's formulation of parafeminism to guide the development of my practice, and these aspects are detailed in Chapter One. Jones, however, articulates the genesis of her theory through a lengthy and complex analysis of aesthetic philosophy, cultural theory and semiotics that are not all explored in the exegesis.

My use of parafeminist theory is combined with Laura Castagnini's (2013) notion of parafeminist parody, which she adapts from Linda Hutcheon's (2002) model of postmodern parody. Together these conceptual frameworks are pertinent to

the research because they value reintegrating some elements and concepts of past feminist artistic practice with current thinking. The research practice – the works created and exhibited – adopt this parodic, doubled process which 'signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference' (Hutcheon 2002 p. 89). Two opposing modes of vision are thus engaged in the current practice – both 'embodied' and 'distanced' (Castagnini 2015a p. 175). The parody is layered: the connections between women and nature represented by the iconic, classical deities in the patriarchal fine art tradition are parodied, and the presumed essentialism of the connection is appropriated, repeated and amplified to expose the absurdity of the association. A deeper form of 'double play' is also engaged in what Marsha Meskimmon (2003 pp. 3-4) describes as 'materiality and agency', where reviewing the media and tactics of past feminist artists from a current perspective is posited as a means to finding productive directions for future practice. The femmage installations expose this 'double play' by making more visible the materiality of a feminist practice.

Theory of parafeminism serves the aims of the research in supporting the creation of a body of work for exhibition that reconfigures historical and contemporary representations of women in ways that both celebrate and critique earlier feminist artist's materials, methods, motifs and theoretical underpinnings. More specifically it aims to disturb, through parody, lingering visual tropes that associate women and their bodies with nature. The research therefore also entails a survey of a range of methodological and conceptual approaches employed by feminist artists over the decades (see Appendix 1), some of which are analysed in the exegesis. The study thus evaluates parafeminist theory, parody and humour as strategies for exposing and subverting objectifying visual conventions in a creative practice that aims to represent women in a way that is conscious and appreciative of feminist history, and attuned to the play of those values in contemporary cultural conditions. The use of creative practice methodology in which theoretical and practice elements are interconnected is critical to the process. The model adopted, outlined further in this Introduction, enables the researcher's voice as a reflexive tool in the process, and a set of guiding principles link theoretical research with practice

interventions – processes that led me to reflect on the formative influence of feminist art history.

Second wave feminism was emerging amidst the surrounding discourses of other activist movements in Australia at the time of my formal art education in the late 1960s. The dominant theoretical basis for teaching derived (as I reflect on it now) from a Marxist and materialist standpoint. Formalist, modernist approaches still dominated in practical teaching strategies, though British and American Pop Art influences, including some collage methods and aesthetics, had begun to influence students in Melbourne art schools. My interest in feminism arose from a growing awareness of the gender-exclusionary decisions made by the authors and editors of prominent textbooks and by curators in public and commercial galleries. Reading and thinking about the omission of women artists from recorded history was a motivating factor in my own career, as it was for many other women artists of the time.

In this 'find the women phase' (Nelson 2003 p. 4) of feminist research in the 1970s, debates about women in culture and society took place in numerous disciplines (including, but not limited to literature, philosophy, archaeology, sociology and anthropology). In the visual arts, the work of Eleanor Tufts (1974), Anne Sutherland-Harris and Linda Nochlin (1976), Germaine Greer (1979) and, a little later, Wendy Slatkin (1985) contributed to the reconstruction of a history of women artists. Nochlin's (1971) landmark essay 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' advanced reasons for the continual exclusion of women artists and barriers to their achievement of success. Feminist publishers such as Virago and Feminist Press were established, and journals like *Ms*, *Spare Rib* and *Lip* were launched in the 1970s and the Women's Art Register was established in Melbourne in 1975. Each of these publications and organisations charted the goals of women's politics.

The work of artists influenced by the political feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s took the form of interventions aimed at bringing attention to critical issues specific to women and hence progressing social change. Women's cultural and political inequalities were understood as linked, with the slogan 'the personal is political' encapsulating the belief that individual lives were comprehensively subject

to the political forces of patriarchy. Means and media varied significantly in individual and collective practices, but validation and valorisation of women's embodied experiences, and harnessing of the politics of language were prominent among the various interventional strategies. The layers of meaning which attach to images of women, particularly naked women, were explicated by, notably, John Berger (1972 pp. 45-46) and Nochlin (1988/1972 p. 136-144). A range of theoretical analyses and interventions ensued over time and some tenets of these debates are revisited by Jones in formulating her ideas about parafeminism. While she argues for the value of feminist art practice, she identifies an 'impasse' that developed from around 1990, when debates in the artworld concerning feminism became 'increasingly attenuated' (Jones 2008 p. 7). The 'impasse forms a threshold in her thinking about parafeminism.

Chapter One – Parafeminism as Paradigm: Bodies, Feminist Art and Resistance therefore situates the project in relation to the role of the body in feminist artistic practice, and, more specifically, it examines Jones's key works in which her notion of parafeminism develops. Her approach, and that of Castagnini (2013, 2015a, 2015b), who extends Jones's theory by providing a greater role for the politics of parody and humour, are both discussed. The chapter traces some of the strands of feminist theory, art-historical discourse and art practice from the 1960s that she sees as leading up to a perceived 'impasse' (Jones 2008 p. 9) or a form of 'deliberately puerile "bad girl" feminism – implicitly white and "First World"' in artistic practice and feminist critique in the latter part of the twentieth century (Jones 2006 p. 214). Explaining the formulation of parafeminism, Jones (2006 p. 209) notes her reaction to the term 'postfeminism' where it is taken to mean that feminism is presumed to be superseded. She expands Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan's (2002) analysis of post-feminism where race, class and other alterities are given prominence in their conceptions of feminist subjectivities, to argue that post-feminism has been posited as a backlash against feminism, and 'part of a broader logic of relegating identity politics and considerations of all aspects of identity to the rubbish bin of past history' (Jones 2006 p. 209). Citing the work of Pipilotti Rist as formative for her ideas about parafeminism, Jones emphasises the 'feminism' of Rist's work, while noting that Rist herself, and other commentators, might position her projects as 'postfeminist' (p. 210). In characterising Rist's work as parafeminist, however, Jones seeks to alter

the meaning of feminism in relation to modes of representation and seeing. With its strong links to past feminist practices, Rist's work is described as 'para- (expansive of) rather than post- (beyond) feminism' (Jones 2006).

While Chapter One supports my adoption of a parafeminist approach to practice, and in spite of some lingering questions about the circumstances of the 'impasse', I also observe some limitations of parafeminism, particularly Jones's inattention to the feminist potential of materials and their handling, and to the way in which practices that draw on memory, time and the archives might register a new range of emotional connections between artists and viewers of art. Theorists who advocate examination of art historical archives as a basis for progressing feminist practice, such as Meskimmon (2003), Griselda Pollock (2007), Giovanna Zapperi (2013), are considered for their value in shaping a contemporary (parafeminist) practice.

Jones's ideas, and the potential appeal of the archives, however, raise questions about how to negotiate the residual tensions in second-wave debate about the body in a contemporary context, and what influences these tensions might have exerted on the so-called post-feminist art. **Chapter Two – Essentialism, Materiality and Meaning: The Body as Text** considers debates concerning essentialism in the second wave and some implications for parafeminist practice. Defined in the simplest terms, essentialism is the philosophical idea that things have an essence, and that essences are the necessary, immutable aspects of a concept or thing (Schor, N 1995 pp. 45-46). Within feminism (notably in the 1980s) this concept is applied to the biological differences between men and women. It is taken to mean that there are properties essential to women and which, consequently, all women share (Stone, A 2004); or that woman have essences or attributes that are in their nature and which remain consistent across times and cultures (Schor, N 1994 pp. 59-60). This assumption is countered by an understanding of gender as socially constructed and femininity as conditional, and is rejected by critics of essentialism on the basis that it reinforces patriarchal power. Such thinking is relevant to the formation of Jones's ideas about parafeminism in the sense that she questions the feminist adoption of binary thinking about gender, and advocates 'messing up binary structures of sexual difference' (2009 p. 213).

The chapter outlines how, notwithstanding the success of second wave feminist artists in pioneering new modes of expression and disrupting objectifying stereotypes, the debate that emerged concerning essentialism – or the treatment of women as a unitary and universal group – became a profound obstacle and source of contention that led to curtailment or marginalisation of some motifs and strategies. In particular, portrayal of the female body was contentious for the potential signification of women's place in the binary nature/culture opposition, and the potential to allude to women *as* nature, as well as the nature of women – or what I term the 'woman/nature nexus'. The combined influence of feminism and postmodernism propelled some artists to eliminate (unmediated) representations of the female body entirely from their work. In the words of Jones (2008 p. 4), the body 'began to go underground', rejected as a motif around which feminist visual practice could be centred. Alternative interventional strategies were articulated and debated, with enduring consequences for feminist artistic production. The debates are considered in the chapter, and alternative perspectives highlighting the innovative techniques and materials are offered on some of the contentious works. The discussion prepares the way for the chapters more directly concerned with the practice.

Chapter Three – Precedents of Practice: Rewriting Essentialism in Parafeminist Bodies of Work identifies a group of artists and artworks as specific precedents for the current practice. The selection of precedents is guided by Jones's theory of parafeminism discussed in Chapter One, and the critique of the debate about essentialism in Chapter Two, and forms a key element of methodology, which is discussed in Chapter Four. The precedent works by Pipilotti Rist, Kate Davis, Deborah Kelly and Sally Smart use the female body as motif in ways that might have been considered essentialist in the past but instead become strategies for creatively re-working past images of women. Rist's work is cited by Jones (2006) as formative for her development of parafeminism, and I argue that specific works by Davis, Kelly and Smart also fall within this paradigm. These artists draw upon historical archives, and use materials and/or traditions of second wave feminist practice – collage, assemblage, femmage or remix (all defined further below) – often in combination with new technologies. In diverse ways that I analyse in Chapter Three, they deal with connections between bodies and knowledge and the embodied

experiences of women that suggest strategies for my practice, in particular the adoption of mythic figures – Venus and the Furies – as objects of parafeminist parody, and the strategic coalescence of craft and fine art practices. The precedents inform the current practice in direct and indirect ways through comparable use of motifs, materials and methods. The discussion of their work also situates and contextualises parafeminist practice, and hence the current practice, in the contemporary visual art field.

Chapter Four – Methodology and Research Design: An Interconnective Model of Creative Practice Research describes the Interconnective model of creative practice research. The discussion of methodology is purposefully placed after the chapters on concepts, contexts and precedents and this placement bears on the overall model of interconnectivity. In the Interconnective model of CPR, theory informs practice and the practice simultaneously drives the theoretical investigations. The making of the creative works and the writing occur concurrently, and the strands of the research are linked and impelled by a set of clearly defined guiding principles for the practice. This model of Interconnective CPR is presented as innovation upon a 'hybrid connective' model (Hamilton 2014a, 2014b; Hamilton & Jaaniste 2010) and can expand an activist practice and the concept of art as knowledge. As explained in Chapter Four, it enables the personal voice of the researcher and brings forward the role of critical reflection in the creative process, in this case on my own past experience and practice as a feminist artist.

Discussions of the Interconnective methodology can be prefaced by broad distinctions from methodologies termed practice-based or practice-led. Linda Candy (2011 p. 36) defines 'practice-based research' as the undertaking of investigations whereby the research process is primarily based on the making of artworks,[2] while Hazel Smith and Roger Dean (2009 p. 7) describe this form of research as encompassing both the artwork as a form of research and 'the creation of the work as generating research insights which might then be documented, theorised and generalised'. 'Research-led practice', by contrast, is characterised as scholarly

[2] Candy (2011 pp. 36-37) makes a distinction between practice-based and practice-led research, where the latter is characterised by new understandings about practice and the evolution of new practices as the primary outcome of the research. The terms, however, are sometimes used interchangeably in the discourse on creative practice.

research that leads to creative work (which might include the adaptation or application of processes or inventions originally intended for other purposes) (Smith & Dean 2009 p. 7). In research-led practice there is a greater emphasis on the impact of theory on practice, though the degree of emphasis is likely to vary in different creative disciplines, and the two patterns of research are not seen as separate (p. 8). The Interconnective approach to CPR integrates aspects of both of these research paradigms.

The Interconnective model of CPR addresses the character of research that is neither strictly practice-based research nor research-led practice, but rather an approach in which the two processes occur contiguously. Furthermore, the approach is devised based on various accounts of the complex interactions between theory and practice in CPR. Interconnective CPR blends the research-question model described by Barbara Milech and Ann Schilo (2004, 2013), whereby the question posed (and re-posed throughout the research project) is central to both the creative practice and the exegesis, and the hybrid connective model advocated by Jillian Hamilton and Luke Jaaniste (2010, 2014) and Hamilton (2014a) which merges alternative research models. It therefore captures what Hamilton and Jaaniste (2014 p. 234) describe as 'evocative practice research' which is typically motivated by 'individual preoccupations, cultural concerns or an aspect of human experience (such as memory, social issues or values, perception or emotion)'. The documented outcomes of the research include reflections on the practice by the researcher. Since the context for this type of CPR usually emanates from the artist's existing practice (p. 236), personal experience and previous bodies of work, a first-person voice is adopted in sections of the exegesis dealing with the impetus for – and outcomes of – the practice. The formulation of a set of specific guiding principles for the practice is an innovation of the model, and these principles are briefly outlined below to suggest how they form interconnective channels of research and reflection that influence and shape the practice.

Chapter Five – Bodies Re-dressed, Research Performed: The Practice describes the genesis and creation of the installation works for the final exhibition – *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus, The Furies i-v, Dress-ups, Accoutrements* and *Rave*. Multiple layers of cultural connotations that attach to historical and recent

representations of women's bodies, including shifting constructions of beauty and naked female bodies *in* and *as* nature – fixed in nature, but inherently unstable, and centred in the artist and viewer's field of vision – are foregrounded and problematised in the works. Through playful reiteration, amplification and the distancing effect of irony and humour, the parafeminist parody is invoked with the aim of destabilising the patriarchal art canon from which the images are derived. The linearity of art-historical time is unsettled, and the historical association between women, their bodies and nature is exaggerated to emphasise and subvert the essentialist trope. The works are thus both celebratory and critical responses to earlier feminist art. Digital technologies are applied with collage and femmage to suggest how materiality and methods can combine to constructively refresh and expand the practice of representing women's bodies, an overall outcome of the Interconnective methodology.

Chapter Six – Bodies Revisioned, Bodies Restored – summarises the outcomes of the research project and indicates future directions. I outline how installation works developed through the processes of CPR renew and present ideas about the female body as a motif and figure of activism in contemporary visual art and how the Interconnective model of CPR facilitates this outcome. The 'restoration' of the body emerges from a process of parody where imaging traditions are revisioned and disrupted. The body is avowed as a valuable and enduring motif for (para)feminist art practice.

Guiding Principles: Shaping Practice

While parafeminism offers a *theoretical* solution to the central research question regarding the artistic expression of the body as a medium of women's experience, the realisation of this (theoretical) solution in the practice required formulation of a set of guiding principles that reflect the scope of aims and unify decisions regarding materials, motifs and methods. These guiding principles are discussed at greater length in Chapter Four, and are referred to throughout the exegesis. Given the structural relevance, a brief introduction to each principle follows.

To connect with and celebrate the achievements of earlier feminist practices, while engaging creatively with the history of essentialism: Feminist interrogation (since the

mid-1960s) of the role that imaging plays in consolidating historical limitations imposed on women through their bodies – the material effects of patriarchal art – yield a range of inventive strategies for disrupting stereotypes and patriarchal patterns. However, this led to critique of some artists and strategies, and those subject to the critique of essentialism are highlighted in this research. Parafeminism, as it is extended beyond Jones's precepts, supports the current practice by framing the works for exhibition as playfully reiterative of earlier feminisms, tilting the parodies towards humour and celebration, and disturbing the linearity of art-historical time. It envisages a visual creative practice centred on the body that playfully invokes, confronts and eludes the risks of essentialism associated with second wave art. Enduring materials and methods combine with contemporary feminist art practices – collage, montage, femmage and digital processes – in the exhibits, whereby quotation and reworked motifs engender renewed meanings and connections with feminism's past, and towards sustainability of its future.

To contest the connection between the body and nature (or what is 'natural') in visual representation: The historical basis for the symbiotic connection between women, their bodies and nature is implied in the nature/culture opposition and the mind/body split, where women (their bodies) and femininity are associated with nature, while men and masculinity are linked with the mind and culture. In this dualistic configuration 'nature' is raw and primitive, encompassing all that falls outside of reason and rationality. In patriarchal or canonical tradition, women have been inscribed, through their bodies and biological cycles, as prone to instability and fluidity. The reiteration of these tropes over at least two millennia in artworks has contributed to masculine power and is therefore a rich field for parodic treatment in re-imaginings of the past in a current feminist practice. It informs the choice of motifs in the practice and the environments in which they are depicted, and the methods and materials of making.

To recollect, restore and revision images of women's bodies: Exploration of the art-historical archive and reflection on what is collected, preserved and displayed as shared cultural memory is important for a practice that proceeds from a desire to retrieve and revise earlier versions of women's visual representations. The concept of an uninterrupted continuum of art historical, chronological time in narratives of

progress has led to amnesia and omission of women as makers of art. Layers of meaning that accrue to representations of femininity in artworks, over time, are also important to the reconfiguration of women and their bodies in the research practice. Material from the art historical archive is restructured as a mode of visual research and emerges in layers in the practice – in the 'retelling' of the classical myths of Venus and the Furies, and the fragments of historical paintings of women's bodies that grace the surfaces of the femmage works. There is restoration also in materials and methods associated with devalued 'women's work' and which evoke feminism's past.

To parody with humour, and using processes of quotation and appropriation of imagery: The potential for parodic critique of appropriated imagery to make underlying ideologies apparent, and consequently to undermine those ideologies, is explored. This is undertaken in relation to patriarchal constructions of femininity, through images of women's bodies and play with the woman/nature nexus in fine art and popular media. Earlier feminist juxtapositions of disparate and jarring elements sought to deconstruct representational conventions, but in a parafeminist framework, these approaches can be extended with parodic humour. Parody, according to Linda Hutcheon[3] (2000 p. 6), is a form of imitation that is 'characterised by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text'. In this research practice, revisioning and ironising past images of women's bodies is approached as a strategy for realigning the power that resides in images. Contradictions and uncertainties remain, but some of the processes at work in the construction of femininity in artworks are brought to the fore.

To embody meaning in materials: Cut-and paste media such as collage, photomontage and femmage that have strong genealogy in feminist art practices can reconfigure existing materials to make new meanings. The handling of materials and the reconstruction of images and ideas are interventional strategies for disassembling and reassembling fragments from the past to suggest alternative possibilities and material effects for the future. Most prominent is *collage*, which derives from the French word for 'gluing', and refers to artworks made by gluing materials to another surface. Since its inception in the early twentieth century, fragments of pasted

[3] Hutcheon's reinterpretation of parody is a critique of Fredric Jameson's (1991 p. 17) view of parody as having been overtaken by pastiche, or 'blank parody', devoid of irony or satiric humour.

material functioned to make ambiguous reference to representational conventions and to disrupt pictorial 'reality'. The radical potential to create new meaning from existing material was taken up by proto-feminists and feminist artists of the second wave and beyond, to the extent that (beyond the medium) a feminist 'collage aesthetic' (Lippard 1995 p. 136) is sometimes referred to.

The cognate practices of *montage* or *photomontage* are variations of collage that primarily use photographic material (photographs or printed reproductions), cut or torn and pasted in new juxtapositions. Advertising material has often been used to articulate political dissent, with image fragments collected and reassembled to subvert the original image content. Early users of the medium pioneered mass media appropriation. *Assemblage* (similar to collage and photomontage) is the reconfiguration of disparate elements to make new images and new meaning, but the term is usually applied (in the visual art context) to works made from re-purposed found or bought three-dimensional components.

Femmage (or feminist collage), a term coined by Miriam Schapiro and Melissa Meyer (1978), is collage that uses textile materials and techniques traditionally associated with women's domestic activities. In addition to textile traditions, however, decorative patterns typically associated with textiles, clothing and devalued utilitarian or craft practices are embraced by femmagists. The evocation of a specifically female art form was a response to patriarchal art history but from the 1970s drew the critique of 'essentialism'. A further variation of collage-related media, incorporating processes of sampling and recombining found music or moving images to create new products, is referred to as *remix*. Although the term came into use in the early twentieth century, Annette Markham (2013 p. 69) notes that the practice originated in popular music in the 1960s, and it has since expanded into other cultural forms and media. In the visual arts, remix methods were being applied in the 1970s. Access to digital technologies and the Internet greatly expanded possibilities for recombining existing moving images, and the process has been used extensively by feminist artists (including Rist and Kelly) with political and often humorous intent.

To evoke sensual and aesthetic pleasure for women looking at art about women: An important consideration in the making of works that re-image women's bodies is a concern about the pleasure that women, including members of the public and the

research community, might derive from engaging with such images. The deconstruction of dominant (patriarchal) imaging conventions by second wave feminist artists expanded the possibility of creating positive images for women. Potential remains for women to engage in looking at images of women, through an empowering and pleasurable gaze on images of protest. My parodies therefore lean towards the 'playful' and 'critically constructive' (rather than the 'belittling' and 'destructive') – all qualities potentially evoked by parody and irony in Hutcheon's (2000 p. 32) understanding. Furthermore, the beauty of the object of the gaze, its aesthetic and human value, remains an important consideration.

The guiding principles as outlined are applied in the creation of a body of work for exhibition, where parafeminsm provides a framework for critique of both patriarchal imaging conventions and feminist art practices. Re-visioned motifs and tactics from feminism's past challenge viewers to see art history differently. Humorous links are made in the work between 'nature' and women's bodies to parody essentialist connotations, and the body as a motif is recognised – as Duncan and Pachmanová (2010) suggest in the epigraph above – as a major part, 'if not the whole', of every person's situation. Women's bodies are posited in the work as motifs representing both resistance to patriarchy and empowerment of women, that reveal art's historical strictures and offer positive perceptual and emotional sources of engagement for women. In Chapter One which follows are the first steps towards this renewed perspective on women, nature and bodies and the possibilities of parafeminist practice.

Chapter One – Parafeminism as Paradigm:

Bodies, Feminist Art and Resistance

> *Women have been known as Nature herself, not […] those who overcome Nature and thus evolve humanly. (Raven 1973)*

The body as a figure of women's experience is addressed in this chapter with the aim to evaluate the potential of parafeminism as a source of theoretical critique and renewal of existing paradigms of resistance to patriarchal values. Jones's theory of parafeminism is analysed as a framework for a visual practice that seeks to reference historical (patriarchal) tropes in images, while valorising some past feminist artists' innovative responses to the dilemmas of representation. This analysis is based on four publications by Jones (2006, 2008, 2009, 2012b). Jones proposes the sensual body as a motif that can be made visible and effective in unsettling gender stereotypes while avoiding reinforcement of those normative tropes that she observes in 'bad girl' imaging which led to 'impasse'. Parafeminist theory – its value and limitations for the current practice – is appraised and extended by incorporating Griselda Pollock's (2007, 2009) theory of the 'virtual feminist museum' and through further address to the political complexities of representing female bodies in contemporary visual practice.

Jacqueline Milner, Catriona Moore and Georgina Cole (2015 p. 145) have drawn attention to the situated nature of feminist art practices and the continuities between past and present practices that are overlooked in the characterisation of 'parafeminism' as a 'new phase' of feminism. Parafeminism is not endorsed by Alexandra Kokoli (2016 pp. 61-62), who suggests that it conveys the idea that earlier feminisms failed to evolve. The impasses and limitations that Jones seeks to overcome, Kokoli suggests, emerge 'like the uncanny in psychoanalysis, at feminism's very core from the beginning […]; that feminism […] has always been beside itself; the "para-" has always already been implied.' Feminism, she insists, is drawn to the paradoxical and the ambivalent (p. 62).

These views aside, there is empowering potential in the notion of parafeminist parody put forward by Castagnini (2015a, 2015b), which is discussed hereafter. Furthermore, while Jones embraces continuity, calling for the incorporation of elements of previous thinking and practice in present artistic projects, some pivotal second wave feminist concepts, such as Julia Kristeva's (1981) 'women's time', and the enduring politics of the 'materiality' of feminism (Alaimo & Hekman 2008; Meskimmon 2003), are, if not overlooked, somehow undervalued. The ways in which activist artists might draw on the feminist archive, as proposed by Pollock (2007) in her 'virtual feminist museum', for example, are not encompassed by theory of parafeminism, and hold potential for renewing the ways in which women's bodies are viewed and represented in visual art. In acknowledging the parameters of parafeminist theory and practice, and in identifying some perceived limits in its scope, my aim is to extend its reach as a meaningful framework of feminist political engagement in contemporary culture.

Parafeminism According to Jones

Jones draws attention to a renewed interest in past feminist art practices. In addition to the examples she gives, this renewal of interest is evidenced in numerous exhibitions, symposia, special editions of journals and other publications and events over several years. A number of these events are documented in Appendices 2A (international) and 2B (within Australia). By way of indicating the breadth of the flowering of these interests within the centres of Western art, some of the major survey exhibitions include: *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*[4], *Wack!*[5], *Modern Women*[6], *Elles @ Centre Pompidou*[7] and *Contemporary Australia: Women*[8]. Jones (2008 p. 3) argues that such upsurge in interest in feminism acknowledges the importance of the work of the earlier activist artists and theorists and their roles in creating a more receptive contemporary climate for younger generations of women artists.

[4] 2007-08, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York and Davis Museum and Cultural Centre, Wellesley, Massachusetts.
[5] 2007-09, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia.
[6] 2010-11, Museum of Modern Art, New York.
[7] 2009-11, Centre Pompidou, Paris.
[8] 2012, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane.

Accordingly, Jones (2006 p. 213) presents parafeminism as a way of thinking:

> Through the term parafeminism – with the prefix 'para-' meaning both 'side by side' and 'beyond' – I want to indicate a conceptual model of critique and exploration that is simultaneously parallel to and building on (in the sense of rethinking and pushing the boundaries of, but not superseding) earlier feminisms.

Explicitly, in the quote above, Jones refers to the premise of parafeminism as a critical framework and potential basis for innovation. The particular historical insights she refers to are not always derived solely from artists, but from some of the more influential overarching expositions of feminist theory. In particular, she refers to Beauvoir's (2011/1949) concept of feminine 'immanence' as developed in *The Second Sex*, a philosophical theory of women's relegation to a state of becoming, while the male subject alone has the privilege of projecting himself from immanence into transcendence. Laura Mulvey's (1975) influential theory of the (cinematic) gaze, described in 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', is also reconsidered by Jones (2006, 2008, 2009). In Mulvey's conceptualisation of the cinematic gaze, psychoanalytical understanding of fetishism and voyeurism, within the context of Hollywood narrative cinema – which, for Mulvey, corresponds to the gaze in a society based on sexual difference – hold implications for desire and social subjectivity. These concepts are fundamentally linked to the body, its (social) visibility and its visual representation, and are pivotal in second wave feminist thinking. The concepts, which have been extensively debated during the past decades, remain important, but Jones (2008 p. 6) contends that deficiencies stem from underpinning assumptions of a binary logic of gender, and the 'oppositional'[9] stance of the feminism that adopts these approaches. Parafeminism, she argues (Jones 2006 p. 213), can build upon such valuable feminist paradigms, while 'leav[ing] behind some of the closures and limitations of dominant feminist models for thinking about visuality and identity'.

[9] The oppositional model that Jones (2008 pp. 4-5) refers to as dominating feminist theory and discourse from the 1960's pitted the 'self' against the 'other', based on the visibility of gender and a belief in the power and structures of fetishism. Jones (2006) also implies the notion of opposition between 'body' and 'image', which is inherent in representational regimes; she identifies a model for the disruption of such regimes in Rist's work.

While her premise might be conceptual or theoretical, the outcomes envisaged can be realised only through practice. A re-evaluation of visual strategies pioneered by second wave feminist artists can, under this model, provide useful methodologies for contemporary artists, but a tendency in second wave feminism to 'assume a normative gendered subject who is white, middle-class, heterosexual, and "First world"' is criticised (p. 213). Gender and sexual identification should be treated as 'ongoing, in process, and interrelated to racial, class and other identifications' (2009 p. 293). Within this intersectional approach, direct representations (or performances) of the body need not be avoided, as it was in the work of some postmodern feminist artists from the mid-1970s; Mary Kelly, Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger (discussed in Chapter Two), for example, eschewed such representations on the basis that fetishism would be reinforced by making the body visible (Jones 2008 p. 5).

Parafeminist theory rejects representations that simply reiterate or consolidate patriarchal values. Jones (2008 p. 7) calls attention to so-called 'post-feminist' work – where 'post-feminism' is taken to suggest something beyond, and negating of, earlier feminisms – which featured in several international exhibitions in the early 1990s that were variously titled 'Bad Girls'[10]. The contentious aspects are seen to persist well beyond the 1990s, and Jones (2008 p. 9) specifically cites the work of Anthea Behm (Plate 1, Left) and Liz Cohen (Plate 1, Right) as claiming to challenge gender stereotypes, but which represent, for her, an 'impasse' in feminist practice. It is separately observed that such 'bad girl' or post-feminist works emanate from the 'raunch' culture described by Ariel Levy (2005) that is seen as imitative of soft-core pornography. Proponents of the 'bad girl' work saw it as defiant and striking back at attitudes like slut-shaming; it was 'aimed at misogynists and conservatives' (Tom 2009 p. 7). Such gestures, perhaps, were also a conscious rejection by some young women artists of what they saw as restrictiveness in the feminisms that had preceded them. However, the self-sexualising 'bad girl' images of bodies in these works are seen by Jones (2008 p. 9) to resemble those once castigated as objectified or

[10] A number of such exhibitions with 'Bad Girls' in the titles include: 1993, *Bad Girls*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London and Contemporary Arts Centre, Glasgow; 1994, *Bad Girls* and *Bad Girls Part ii*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; 1994, *Bad Girls West*, Wight Art Centre, University of California, Los Angeles.

commodified and leading to a critical impasse which in turn propelled her theory of parafeminism.

While the commodified images or performances of bodies by 'bad girl' artists were salient, as Jones suggests, these were not the only representations of bodies in art, nor typical or representative of the transforming conceptualisations of bodies in the 1990s in the wider field of queer and feminist theory. Philosophers and theorists like Judith Butler (1999/1990), Donna Haraway (1991), Rosi Braidotti (1996) and Barbara Creed (1993) imagined hybrid, 'posthuman', monstrous or cybernetic bodies that signified paradigm shifts in feminist thought. In the work of Braidotti and Haraway in particular, emerging technologies held potential to empower women by diminishing gender and other boundaries. While Jones is cognisant of developments in feminist theory, she does not directly allude to the apparent contradictions between the art impasse that she highlights and those diverging theoretical formations. But these diverse interests suggest how, in a variety of ways, the body was at the centre of feminist theory and imaginaries in the early 1990s.

Plate 1. Left: Liz Cohen, *Bodywork Steering*, 2006, C-print, 127 x 153 cm;
Right: Anthea Behm, *The Chrissy Diaries*, Paramatta Eels Cheerleading Pre-squad, documentation of public performance, 2005.

Even so, considerable discussion of 'post-feminism' (or 'postfeminism') has occurred both within visual art and in wider fields of feminism since the 1990s (Brooks 1997; Genz & Brabon 2009; Hutcheon 2002; McRobbie 2009; Tasker & Negra 2007) and its meaning is somewhat ambiguous and contentious and will be discussed further. But it is important to highlight that Jones presents parafeminism as a corrective to what she perceives as the impasse represented by post-feminism in visual art. Artworks which fall within the parameters of parafeminism are described as 'expansive of – rather than post – [or] beyond feminism', and gender and other

subjectivities and identifications are better understood, Jones suggests (2006 pp. 213-214), as questions rather than as answers. The focus is on differences of power, and on the forms of power ascribed to feminine subjectivities. Parafeminism is therefore described as inclusive of 'all cultural work investigating sexuality and/or gender as aspects of identity formation' but is explicit in its desire to disarrange binary structures of sexual difference (p. 213). The passages in her work that support this definition are suggested in three publications in particular: *Self/Image: Technology, Representation and the Contemporary Subject* (2006) (hereafter *Self/Image*); a paper entitled '1970/2007: The Return of Feminist Art' (2008); and the essay 'Genital Panic: The Threat of Feminist Bodies and Parafeminism' written for the catalogue publication accompanying the Elles @ Centre Pompidou exhibition in Paris (2009). A further book-length publication, *Seeing Differently: A History of Theory and Identification and the Visual Arts* (2012b), can be seen as an expansion of the theory articulated in the earlier publications, with a focus on the meeting of queer and feminist identities.

Self/Image has a specific focus on the idea of the body as a sign of the self, which is explored through analysis of artists' self-representations in photography, film and video. It contests the presumed disembodiment of the screened/visualised subject and its viewer. As Tamara Trodd (2008) observes, it emerges among a number of works that contend with screened subjectivities, and Jones blurs the distinction between mass-market media and fine art in evaluating the issues. The first chapter, entitled 'The Body and/in Representation', situates (the body of) woman in Western tradition as an assumed commodity for male artists and viewers. This is traced to the Renaissance-era perspectival device known as the 'graticola' (grid or grill), which is described later in this chapter. The instrument (and subsequently the camera obscura and the camera) situates the subject – the artist and viewer – at the apex of a 'cone of vision'. It places the subject in an all-seeing and all-knowing position (Jones 2006 pp. 4-5), and this vantage-point cements subject/object relations as hierarchies of power. The subject's desire to see from a particular point of view, and the technological apparatus which enables this, are explored in *Self/Image* via historical and contemporary examples of artists' self-imaging projects that utilise lens and screen-based media. Arguments about embodiment, subject formation and

altered structures of looking are made through these projects, which sometimes also incorporate performance and installation.

The sixth and final chapter of *Self/Image* enunciates Jones's theory of parafeminism. While the focus in *Self/Image* is on screen-based media, the examples discussed, including the immersive works of Rist which are considered as 'paradigmatic' (Jones 2006 p. 11) of parafeminism, are drawn from the fine art context rather than the mass-market media (though arguments are also made for the blurring of boundaries between popular media and fine art). Rist's self-representation in her video installation work prompted Jones (2006 p. 217) to consider how gender, sexual difference and identity formation could be visually articulated in a contemporary context and, she explains, led to the formulation of her theory of parafeminism. Rist's work (discussed in my Chapter Three) is said to create 'a parafeminist subject', where visual puns abound and where images of bodies and nature mingle in ways that can be simultaneously erotic and absurd. An embodied mode of viewing, which confounds the positions of subject and object and involves all the bodily senses – a 'synaesthesia of vision' – is invoked. This embodied gaze fluidly links 'corporeality and intelligence', in ways that, it is claimed (Jones 2006 p. 212), work to refute the body/mind dualism of phallocentric logics[11]. Given that the critique of this dualism is a fundamental goal of second wave feminism, the parafeminist synaesthesia of vision extends and transforms it. It is one of the strategies whereby works of art created in a contemporary context can expand upon feminist tactics from the past to communicate with a twenty-first century audience. Perceived limitations of second wave feminism, and some strands of postmodernism, are overcome by extending visual frameworks beyond the 'normative gendered subject' of both movements in art. Confusion of meaning and playfulness are embraced, and the approach thus outlined is receptive to multiple forms of expression, while at the same time seeking to expose differences in relationships of power (Jones 2006 p. 213).

[11] What is now referred to as the mind/body dualism is traced to Réne Descartes (1596-1650), who hypothesised that the mind (reason, immaterial) and the body (emotion, material), while in interaction with each other, are distinct and separable substances or natures. The mind/body dualism, along with other oppositional pairs – such as 'subject and object', 'culture and nature' – have been central sources of feminist critique because the relationships of the pairs are hierarchical and gendered, with one side of the dualism (male) valorised at the expense of the other (female) (see, for instance, Bordo (1999), Grosz (1994b), (Plumwood 1993).

In the article '1970/2007: The Return of Feminist Art' (Jones 2008), she takes up the argument for a 'politics of positionality', a concept which is posited (p. 9) as a complement to parafeminism, and as a specific response to the impasse she describes in feminist art. Jones's concerns about practices of self-commodification are based on her perception that some strategies from earlier feminisms are adopted without the knowledge or understanding of the politics which prompted the earlier approaches, and she also acknowledges the changed social contexts in which contemporary feminism is practised. The impasse, however, need not persist, because the *politics* revolve around the body, a body that experiences the state of being 'variously positioned (identified) in today's global economies of information and imagery' (p. 9). 'Positionality' does not refer to a fixed space or ideology, but occurs and is experienced in a complex, fluid and changing network of social and subjective identifications that 'always take meaning in relation to each other' (p. 9).

Parafeminism is situated within the broader field of feminist visual arts in 'Genital Panic: The Threat of Feminist Bodies and Parafeminism' (Jones 2009), with reference to some touchstone feminist thinkers and works. These include Beauvoir's *The Second Se*x with its notions of woman's 'otherness' and 'immanence' and Judith Butler's (1993, 1999) theory of gender performativity[12], which is seen as paving the way forward from binary models of gender and subjectivity (Jones 2009 p. 291), or non-subjectivity. Feminist artists who, since the mid-1960s, have found ways to enact femininity as 'becoming'[13], and thus assert the female body as a source of agency, are advocated for (p. 291). Key examples, discussed for the significance to parafeminism, include Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* (performed five times in Japan and New York between 1964 and 1966) (Plate 2) and VALIE EXPORT's body-art works *TAPP und TASTKINO* (1968) and *Aktionhose: Genitalpanic* (1969) (Plate 3) (Jones 2009 pp. 291-293). In *Cut Piece*, Ono stages herself, allowing the audience to

[12] Butler's theory of performativity effectively rejects feminist theory of sexual difference, where sex/gender identification is based on biological and 'natural' differences between men and women. Butler contends that commonplace actions, behaviours and speech are gender-coded, and that repetition of these gestures consolidates a person's identity as 'feminine' or 'masculine'. Styles of dress and movement, for example, adopted in approximation of an ideal, produce normative conceptions of sexed and gendered bodies. These performances of gender appear to be natural, but the effect is the reinforcement of power of some groups over others.

[13] Jones refers to Beauvoir's articulation of women's 'immanence', and the 'transcendence' available only to men in patriarchy. Beauvoir and some of her contemporaries rejected Descartes' 'oppositional structures of subjectivity' that place the 'thinking subject versus the corporeal subject', and propose instead a 'becoming' (Jones 2009 p. 291).

participate by cutting her clothing, exposing not only her body but their complicity in her construction 'as both racialised and gendered *other*' (her emphasis, Jones 2009 p. 291). The distance between the gazer and the object of their gaze, from which the power to fetishise is derived, is removed. EXPORT's works from this time use some of the instruments of photography and cinema to address notions of spectatorship and voyeurism; the female body is enacted 'as a site of agency and potential violence' (Jones 2009 p. 294). EXPORT 'explicitly opens up the *becoming* of gender, calling upon men to enact openly the way in which they achieve an illusion of coherence by projecting otherness onto women' (p. 292); gender identification, which is closely linked to visual identification, is thus disrupted. While Jones does not so observe, these works by Ono and EXPORT now seem to predict Butler's theory of performativity, which emerged in the 1990s.

In contrast, Jones (2009 p. 292) critiques the work of feminist visual theorists such as Mulvey, Berger and Pollock, who (in the 1970s) expounded theories of the gaze through Freudian notions of fetishism. While influential, these theories are seen to maintain 'a binary model of gender identification' whereby 'the masculine subject of the "male gaze" projects the naked female body as fetish (in Beauvoir's terms as *other*) in order to palliate his anxiety over his potential castration' (Jones 2009 p. 292).[14] In this psychoanalytic understanding the male viewer is compelled to avert his gaze from forbidden places (his mother's absent phallus), and focus instead on peripheral parts and objects – for example, foot, shoe or underclothing.

In a sense, the (psychoanalytically-theorised) gaze is a source of the perceived impasse in postmodernist and feminist visual art practice. EXPORT's *Aktionhose: Genitalpanic* (from which Jones's essay takes its title) is cited again as

[14] In psychoanalysis, fetishism is understood as a desire connected with vision and fragments of bodies or items associated with bodies – a 'sort of libidinous compromise' – that develops from the male child's attempt to deny sexual difference (Davis, K 1997 p. 193). In this theory, the boy's discovery of his mother's lack of a penis is traumatic for him (while the girl's discovery of anatomical difference from the father leads only to envy). The boy's discovery of his mother's 'lack' impacts on both his understanding of gender, and on his processes of knowing more generally; these processes will be equivocal because his mother is 'incomplete'. He will not only experience anxiety about becoming incomplete himself, but about *looking*: 'to "look" at the mother is tempting, but dangerous for the boy; it is not just a dazzling experience, it might in fact "blind" him' (p. 193). In this formulation (and with reference to the drama of Oedipus), it is the father who can punish the boy for his transgressive looking. Henceforth, for the boy, the body no longer exists as a whole object, and his quest for completeness will be thwarted. Further, his desire to look into places is prohibited by 'the law of the father' and this induces him to concentrate his gaze on body parts, clothing or other related objects.

an early example of feminist work which 'dramatically unhing[es] the oppositional logic of Euro-American models of subjectivity' by provoking and exaggerating voyeurism (Jones 2009 pp. 291-292). From the 1960s through to the 1980s, Jones argues, binary assumptions about gender led feminist theorists and artists to critique and attempt to reverse the hierarchies of sexual difference. From the 1990s, and with the advent of performativity theory, a new understanding of sexuality and gender arose. Queer and intersectional identities emerged in the works of artists like Kruger, Victor Burgin and Cindy Sherman. This changed consciousness, Jones (2009 p. 293) contends, led to 'diffusing' of earlier feminist practices, and opened up more ways of 'enact[ing] and experienc[ing] ourselves as gendered/sexed subjects'. While visual pleasure and desire are not rejected as (para)feminist strategies in the twenty-first century (p. 294), the simple method of critique and reversal is no longer sufficient means with which to counter the enduring effects of patriarchy. Parafeminism is presented as a model for contemporary practice that can accommodate earlier strategies, as well as embrace awareness of diverse modes of gender identification (pp. 293-294).

Plate 2. Yoko Ono, *Cut Piece*, 1964, still from video recording of performance.

Plate 3. VALIE EXPORT, *Aktionhose: Genitalpanic*, 1968, photograph.

In *Seeing Differently* (2012b) Jones develops greater links between feminist and queer perspectives with examples drawn from photography, painting, sculpture and other forms of two- and three-dimensional installation. More significantly, she returns to the idea of parafeminism as an antidote to post-feminism, and extends the conceptualisation of parafeminism through attention to 'queer feminist durationality'[15]. Even so, some questions remain about the notion of 'impasse' on which parafeminism is premised in her earlier work, and with the implications for the spectacle and politics of woman and nature.

Women's Bodies and the Cone of Vision

The 'impasse' that Jones (2008 p. 9) describes in feminist artistic practice can be understood by considering the historical trajectory of a particular way of seeing the body. How *the body* – women's bodies – gained centrality in the development of Western art, and how the dominance of a male-centred perspective could be made visible, was of crucial significance to the rise of feminist visual theory (Castagnini 2015a p. 165), and a cornerstone of feminist critique from the 1960s. Western models of spectatorship, and the importance of the male gaze articulated in the theories of Berger and Mulvey, are traced by Jones (2006 pp. 2-5) to Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), the Italian Renaissance artist, architect and philosopher, and his *graticola* (Plate 4). A device for rendering perspective, the *graticola* placed the artist and viewer at the apex of 'the cone of vision' (Jones 2006 p. 3). The European Renaissance understanding of individuality was thus 'instrumentalized' in art, and Alberti's model generated 'a subject of vision and knowing who was centred in visual knowledge' (Jones 2008 p. 3).

In Albrecht Dürer's (1538) illustration of the instrument for rendering perspective (Plate 5), the production of gendered spaces is made clear; the female body is positioned on one side of the grid as object for viewing, with the male artist-observer on the other side. Richter (2016 p. 71) posits that, with the device, a 'voyeuristic pattern' and hierarchical gender order are established. The dualism, in

[15] Jones (2012b pp. 173-176) presents 'queer feminist durationality' as having the potential for reversing the gaze in a way that is 'more phenomenological than psychoanalytic', a reversal of binary differences which allows for continual (durational) ways of seeing, being and experiencing sensory input. 'Durationality' is therefore a paradigm that Jones develops to move beyond gender dualism and notions of 'identity'; she refers instead to 'identifications', which are experienced inter-relationally and have resonances in the moment. The concepts are presented as a framework for interpreting artworks, rather than a methodology for practice.

which women are associated with nature, and men with science, is encoded. The woman in Dürer's woodcut lies against a backdrop of landscape (nature), whilst the artist sits in an interior space before a clipped container plant, apparently gazing, via the instrument, directly on the woman's genitals. Richter (p. 71) observes that '[t]he demonstration of controlled and subdued female sexuality is obvious'[16].

The 'ocular epistemology' of the Renaissance model is linked by Jones (2006 pp. 4-5) to photographic forms, from the earliest examples of the mechanical medium in the nineteenth century to screen media of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It satisfies the viewer's desire to 'see and know from a particular point of view', and its scope extends through the rise of industrial technologies, to cinema and other means of mass reproduction of images (of women). These developments ontologised not only the subordination of women, but also the status (and assumed gender) of the singular artist as genius, creator of masterpieces. Recognition of, and response to this history is a significant bequest of feminism that constantly draws attention to the objectification of women in visual media, and the habitual attribution to men of the power to objectify women.

Many resulting practices within feminism, directed at combatting and countering objectifying processes, have at times drawn internal critique, and the debate about essentialism is an instance (see Chapter Two). Jones's (2008 p. 9) espoused 'politics of positionality' is an extension of feminist praxis which acknowledges the centrality of the body in the history of Western imaging and visual theory, and evades the pitfalls of the debate. It is empowered by the conditions of contemporary culture in comparison to the past. The body, she argues (p. 9), need not be 'either positively or negatively rendered and performed, or critically dismantled, or shielded from a fetishizing gaze'. Rather, it can be portrayed as it is experienced in a current political situation, in a complex and changing set of inter-related identifications. Rist's work and its 'politics of positionality' (in contrast, for instance, with that of the post-feminist 'bad girl' artists who located their bodies firmly as

[16] Further emphasising the disruption of the male, god-like position of seeing, knowing and making – which carried power – that came with the discovery of perspective, James Burke (1995 pp. 76-77) notes that '… the position of man in the cosmos altered […]'; the special relationship that existed between God, at the centre of the universe, and objects that had been thought to have unique 'essences', was suddenly eliminated, 'to be replaced by direct human control over objects existing in the same, measurable space' (pp. 76-77).

objects in the cone of vision), is cited as evidence of intervention in the very composition of the gaze (Jones 2006 pp. 207-238). Implications arise from these observations for the women/nature nexus.

The positioning of women's bodies in relation to the male artist/viewer/subject, from the time of the Renaissance, can be illustrated by Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus* (Plate 6). Hillary Robinson (2006 p. 440) refers to this work (or one like it, since there are hundreds of similar candidates in the European painting tradition) to explain the political significance of images of women. Her contention is that this significance can only be understood properly if the relationship between the terms 'image' and 'representation' is explored. The *image* depicts a smooth-skinned, naked woman, sensuously arranged, outstretched and with eyes closed, in a verdant landscape. What the image *represents*, however, is less definite – 'particular understandings of femininity, luxury, passivity and beauty', perhaps (Robinson, H 2006 p. 440). Questions arise, for instance, as to why the naked woman is situated in an open landscape. Arguably, a link between 'woman' and 'nature', through the body of woman as metaphor for – or literally *as* – nature is made. A second wave feminist perspective might well make this very link, and in doing so, contest the (male) ocular epistemology.

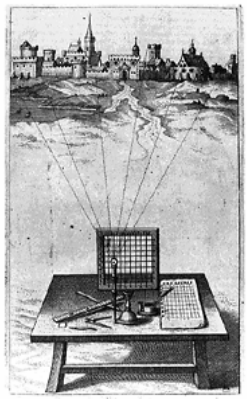

Plate 4. Diagram of Alberti's perspectival device, the *graticola* (grid), described in his treatise *Della Pictura*, 1435-36.

Plate 5. Albrecht Dürer, *The Draftsman of the Lying Woman*, 1538, woodcut.

Plate 6. Giorgione and Titian, *Sleeping Venus* (also known as the *Dresden Venus)*, 1510, oil on canvas, 108 x 175 cm.

This tendency in second wave feminism is greatly influenced by Mulvey's study of cinematic imagery, which draws on Freud's account of scopophilia. It became a prototype for analysis of objectification in all forms of imagery. Mulvey (1975 p. 11) observes that:

> In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure which is styled accordingly. […] women are simultaneously looked at and displayed […] so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness.

Effectively, Mulvey's analysis provides the modern (feminist) negative exposure of the artist's centred position represented by Alberti. Yet the '*ideological* force' (Jones 2006 p. 7, her emphasis) of highlighting Alberti's perspectival device is important for the stress it places on the formation of a subject outside of the picture-plane. In other words, by revisiting the cone of vision as an early and emblematic figure of the power of scopophilia, Jones brings attention to the agency of the artist and the viewer in the making of perspective.

The politics of the body in contemporary culture has been greatly affected by Michel Foucault's approaches, as Jones acknowledges, referring to the description by Michel Feher (1987 p. 161) whereby the body is understood as concurrently the 'actualiser of power relations and that which resists power'; and, furthermore, that the body is a site of perpetual struggle in encounters with 'new instruments of power'. However, this dialectic was acknowledged within second wave feminism well before the influential rise of Foucault's ideas. Feminist artists understood that images of the body are as much the means of objectification of women as they are

the source of resistance to objectification, and hence can be a basis for the reclamation of agency.

Nevertheless, for Jones (2008 p. 11), the transition from late-twentieth century modernity to the contemporary global economy is distinguished 'by *the degree to which we have internalized our own objectification*' (her emphasis). This internalisation of objectification as 'being seen' has different implications for different people, according to their distance from power. The body, whether active in performance or represented, or alluded to by its absence, is crucial to the work of feminist artists from the second wave onwards. Imagery that reiterates objectifying forces (such as raunchy bodies associated by Jones with the impasse in feminist art) merely reinstate 'the intertwined structures of all fetishisms' (p. 9). Parafeminism therefore claims the body as a focus for resistance to external modes of power, and as a channel of articulation of various experiences and identifications, and hence the relevance of parafeminism to the current project. Some queries persist, however, with the formulation of parafeminism as a solution to 'impasse'.

The Problem of Post-feminism

In spite of the profound impact of feminism on the visual art world, Jones (2008 p. 7) perceives that, by around 1990, debates about feminist art tended to be absorbed into wider debates about identity. Furthermore, the debates had 'degenerated into dismissive or flippant journalistic claims that feminism had run its course, as signalled by the common use of the term post-feminism' (p. 7). Jones uses the term 'post-feminism' here in the sense that it has been widely used in the popular media, carrying the implication that feminist interventions were no longer necessary, and that the aims of second wave feminists had been achieved. While Jones's definition is in line with a range of prominent critiques of post-feminist popular culture (for instance, Craven 2017; McRobbie 2009; Tasker & Negra 2007)[17], it is premised on artistic practices that straddle the fields of fine art and popular culture. It is also questionable as a source of impasse, when the work might be more simply described as 'post-feminist'. The example given is imagery that is influenced by apparently powerful performers (like Madonna) who 'produce angry, explicitly self-

[17] But it is at variance with, for instance, Ann Brooks's (1997 p. 1) view of post-feminism as a theoretical meeting ground between feminism and anti-foundationalist movements such as postmodernism, poststructuralism and postcolonialism.

sexualized narratives – often conflating abjection and power as equally at issue in the complexities of women's sexual identities and experiences' (Jones 2008 p. 7).

Parodic versions of femininity, including images from 'raunch culture' (Levy 2005), or, in the 1990s, 'bad girl' feminism (Lumby 1997), attempt to critique myths of female subjectivity by restating the tropes they purport to confront. Artists including Lisa Yuskavage, Vanessa Beecroft, Tracey Emin and Sarah Lucas have been exhibited under this banner, where appropriative strategies from earlier feminisms are adopted, but the work of such artists is uninformed (or insufficiently informed) about the politics that drove the earlier artists. There is a tendency to replicate the commodification of women in popular culture, and some of the artists are inclined to disassociate themselves from feminism altogether (Pollack 2000 p. 1). Jones (2008 p. 9) maintains that these works are 'resolutely normative […] and they remain binary'. However, formations of impasse might take a number of forms, not necessarily emulating 'raunch' culture, and cases in point that I perceive in Australia are among the works shown in *Feminism Never Happened* at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane in 2010. Irony was intended in the title of the exhibition (Leonard 2010), but the works by Australian and New Zealand artists selected for the exhibition tended towards abjection, exemplified in the works by Anastasia Klose (Plate 7), or iterations of conventional ideals of femininity, such as the works by Fiona Lowry (Plate 8). A curatorial presumption that feminist art could be all things and embrace all differences was observed by Millner, Moore & Cole (2015). The collection of works can also be seen as evidence of what Alexie Glass (2009 p. 135) described as young women's belief that they have 'earned the right to disavow feminism', with the front-line battles of first, second and third wave feminisms having been won.

In comparison, an exception is Jemima Wyman's *Lady in Red*[18] (Plates 9 and 10), a video projection work with intense and parodic focus on the body, which emerges as 'parafeminist'. This results from the way the artist, in depicting herself, is simultaneously positioned as subject and object. As a self-imaging work combining

[18] In *Lady in Red*, Wyman records herself dancing in a red dress with a swirling skirt, while singing along to the mournful title song from *The Woman in Red* (d. Gene Wilder, 1984). The billowing dress in Wyman's work and the film it references in turn re-enact Marilyn Monroe's scene with her skirt flaring over an air vent in *The Seven Year Itch* (d. Billy Wilder, 1955).

parody with nostalgia, it seemed to resonate with the projects of Rist – the Swiss artist cited by Jones (2006) as exemplary of parafeminism. In *Lady in Red*, the camera, held first above Wyman's head and then strapped to one of her legs, enables the viewer to focus entirely on the artist's body. Extreme perspective views are determined by the camera angles, from above and below. The viewer is thus positioned at 'the apex of the cone of vision', forced into the role of voyeur, and with awareness of their placement. Wyman's work can thus be seen as an example of the 'reverse fetishism' that Jones (2012b p. 183) refers to, where an embodied sexuality is enacted, which extends, but does not supersede, earlier feminist strategies.

Plate 7. Anastasia Klose, 2006, *Film For My Nanna*, still from film, 5:32 min.

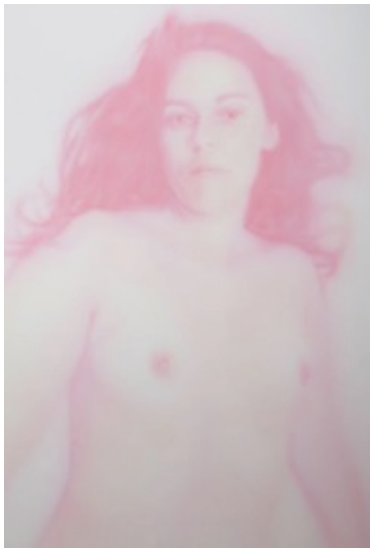

Plate 8. Fiona Lowry, *Do You Ever Think of Me*, 2012,
acrylic on canvas, 120 x 80 cm.

Plate 9. Jemima Wyman, *Lady in Red*, 2005, still from video projection.

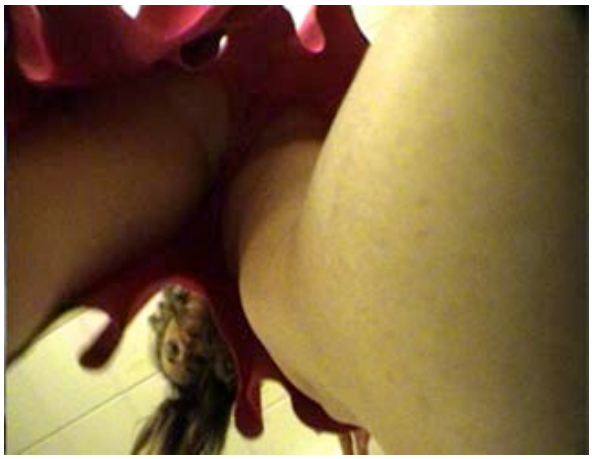

Plate 10. Jemima Wyman, *Lady in Red*, 2005, still from video projection.

Parodying with Intent: Expanding Parafeminism

Following Jones's theory of parafeminism, and embracing Hutcheon's (2002) widening of the meaning of parody, Castagnini (2015b p. 24) advocates parafeminist parody as a means of inverting the perceived impasse posed by the work of 1990s 'bad girls'. This inversion, she suggests, occurs concurrently with parodic homage to earlier feminisms, allowing contemporary feminist artists to extend the strategies of preceding 'waves' of feminism. For Castagnini (2015a p. 165), parody, especially humorous parody, functions as an aspect of parafeminist art whereby links between nature and sex are made, and such links facilitate 'move[ment] beyond essentialist reiterations of the "feminine" towards a more self-reflexive, even paradoxical, feminist politic.' Rist's *Pickelporno* (see Chapter Three) for instance, offers conflicting modes of representation, 'both embodied and distanced', with the potential to induce contradictory responses in audiences (p. 175). Parody confronts the viewer in this work, as it does in Wyman's *Lady in Red*. Parody is one of the

mechanisms here that at once fixes the female body as an object of the gaze, and elicits audience complicity with the creator; both are situated at the apex of the cone of vision. The parody is tactical, and works to disrupt objectifying conventions by emphasising or underlining them.

Parody has attracted lengthy debate as an aspect of postmodernism, notably Hutcheon's (2002) arguments regarding the parodic effects of ironic quotation and pastiche in a range of artforms. While Hutcheon emphasises that postmodernism and feminism should not be conflated (p. 163), the strategy of parody is common to both (pp. 146-148). Postmodern parody is not, typically, understood to induce humour, and is more characteristically identified as humourless[19]. For Hutcheon, however, parody – as a critical reiteration of past works or events – operates through a process of installing then undermining visual tropes by way of irony, exposing the evolution of the current representations from previous ones and with political implications (p. 89). The layered histories of the image and the authority of the artist can be unsettled in this process, but the implied critique – the parodic effect – will be in some way complicit with the earlier meaning (p. 147).

Complicity is a notion with a dubious history in feminism, aligned with feminised qualities of passivity and subordination[20]. Complicity is an inherent threat in all challenges to male power, and often loomed in second wave feminist critiques thereof. Therefore, as a political tactic in parodic art (especially parodies of femininity), complicity, irrespective of the potential or otherwise for humour, carries risk, and also speaks to the history of feminist subversiveness. Postmodern parody (not only feminist forms) subverts notions of originality and the value that accrues with the uniqueness of an artwork (Hutcheon 2002 p. 89). The simultaneous effects of complicity and critique are mobilised in parafeminist work, with humorous effects, offering a way forward from Jones's perception of an impasse.

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[19] Jameson (1991 pp. 17-18), for example, sees parody as replaced in postmodern culture by pastiche, or 'blank irony', not entirely 'incompatible with a certain humour', but devoid of passion and invention.

[20] Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex* (first published in French in 1949 and translated into English by H.M Parshley in 1953, and by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier in 2011), is credited by Vicki Bell (1999 p. 49) with having introduced the concept of women's complicity with the subordination imposed on them by men, a complicity that compelled them to act, or behave 'inauthentically,' in response to certain inducements or privileges in patriarchy. Later feminists, for instance Gatens (1996) and Grosz (1994b) highlight the risks of complicity in critique of masculinist paradigms.

However, to simply adopt humour as a parafeminist strategy is to overlook that the subversive role of humour, particularly satirical humour, in the legacy of feminist artwork stretching back through the 1970s, is recognized by art historians as a key aspect of feminist practice. Jo Anna Isaak's *Feminism and Contemporary Art: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter* (1996) was a landmark survey of these practices. The book and Isaak's curation of the exhibitions *The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter* and *Laughter Ten Years After*, in 1983 and 1995[21], contributed substantially to wider recognition of strategic feminist humour. Isaak (1996 p. 5) characterised laughter as 'a metaphor for transformation, for thinking about cultural change'. The change that she refers to is that which emanates from 'libidinal gratification', where laughter enables understanding of the connections between 'the social and the symbolic while freeing us to imagine these relationships differently' (p. 5). Isaak's (1996) interpretation of the 'carnivalesque' in feminist practice, however, can be seen as limiting. She draws upon Mikhail Bakhtin's (1984) study of Rabelais for the carnivalesque understanding of the role of laughter, as it emerges in ancient comic rites, closely aligned to 'misrule' and the potential for subversion of the powers of church and state (Isaak 2013 p. 28)[22]. While the potential for carnivalesque subversion as a tool for dissent by women artists remains, the critical effect of parody in Hutcheon's (2000 p. 32) terms, articulated in part as 'repetition with critical distance', is a politics of humour that is affirmatively exploited in contemporary (para)feminist practice.

The parodic potential of artwork exhibited under the 'bad girl', post-feminist premise, where works by some artists were touted as *beyond* feminism, because of the use of impolite humour, is not supported by Castagnini (2015b p. 30). One of the exhibition curators, Marcia Tanner (1994), claimed, for example, that unlike their predecessors of the 1970s and 1980s, the artists gathered under the 'bad girl' title were 'irreverent, anti-ideological, non-doctrinaire, non-didactic, unpolemical and thoroughly unladylike'. Her co-curator, Marcia Tucker (1994), described the

[21] *The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter*, 1983, Protetch McNeil Gallery, New York; and *Laughter Ten Years After*, 1995, Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York and Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.

[22] Bakhtin (1984 p. 11) argues that, in the space of the medieval and Renaissance carnival, people from various backgrounds, but acting as a group, sought release from established orthodoxies and order; their disorder 'marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions'.

'disruptive' and 'defiant' humour in the New Museum exhibition, associating it with the 'grotesque body' and the 'carnivalesque'. This kind of work is now seen more as a period of post-feminist *backlash* against the perceived essentialism of earlier feminist art and is described by Clara Rae (2013) as 'a turn into dark territory'. Katy Deepwell (1997 p. 155), also responding to the curator's claims about the London *Bad Girls* exhibition, pointed to the negation of the abundant wit and irony in earlier feminist artwork that had been stereotyped as 'didactic, essentialist and collectivist'.

'Bad girl' practices embody a 'neo-burlesque' form of humour, in Claire Nally's (2009) view[23], and this is seen as an alternative to carnivalesque humour. In 'neo-burlesque' works, provocative sexual display is enacted in exaggeratedly faux-glamorous and commodified female bodies, which at once reproduce and ostensibly critique art-historical forms and female desire. The burlesque enactment of gender stereotypes is portrayed by Nally (2009 p. 621) as 'self-aware' and 'playful abuse' of fetishism. She questions, however, how far the burlesque genre can go in an activist practice of feminist critique, when celebrities and pop stars (and their followers) have adopted the same forms as fashion. This is precisely the 'impasse' that Jones's (2008 p. 9) identifies as necessitating an alternative (parafeminist) approach, on which Castagnini (2013) builds as 'parafeminist parody'.

Critiques of raunch culture such as those by Castagnini (2015b pp. 24-30), following Jones, posit parafeminism as an 'inversion' of the 'bad girls' phase of art history, and contest the division between contemporary practitioners and earlier feminist artists. A new critical environment is signalled, Castagnini argues, whereby artists and curators are more inclined to support Jones's parafeminism as a framework for rethinking and expanding (rather than rejecting) earlier methodologies. Parafeminist parodic treatment of the female body has the potential to be unsettling and funny in ways that might cause audiences to see (bodies) differently, or to recognise the recycling of a familiar feminist message. The rich legacy of mischievous humour in artwork with feminist intent is amply demonstrated in the exhibition that Castagnini curated in 2013, *Backflip: Feminism and Humour in Contemporary Art*. Many of the featured works appropriate and quote the work of their predecessors. Some, however, lean towards the aspect of parodic humour that

[23] Catriona Moore (2013 p. 22) also observes a resurgence of the burlesque in women's artworks, but extends the time frame of this style of humour to include recent projects.

Hutcheon (2000 p. 6) identifies as the 'scornful and ridiculing' in their mimicry of the original second wave feminist projects. Patty Chang's *Melons (At a Loss)* (1998) (Plate 11, Left) and Melanie Bonajo's *Genital Panik: An Event for Equality* (2012) (Plate 11, Right) for example, re-enact iconic performance pieces by Ono and EXPORT (Plates 2 and 3), but without the radical intensity of the original works. Other artists in the same exhibition use parodic humour in a celebratory form of critique of past feminist projects; these include Hotham Street Ladies' with *You Beaut!* (2013) (Plate 12) (along with Tracey Moffatt, NAT & ALI and Pipilotti Rist). They exploit the subversive potential of parodic humour to upset preconceptions about both gender and feminism. In works by the artists selected for *Backflip*, the politics of humour are shown to have effect; the artists make apparent their complicity with audiences in the processes of generating and responding to incongruities between the original and its reiteration. These incongruities, or ambivalences, form the basis of what Margaret Rose (1993 p. 52) describes as 'the comic refunctioning of preformed […] artistic material'. Audiences recognise the context or conventions of the artistic material that is mimicked, and links with the original work are maintained (Barfield & Tew 2002 p. 101). Recognition of the particular nature of this form of humour in recent feminist art is Castagnini's extension of Jones's parafeminist theory, which I value for its capacity to induce positive emotions (pleasure in looking) while at the same time critiquing (by revealing something about) the 'preformed' original material.

Plate 11. Left: Patty Chang, *Melons (At a Loss)* (detail), 1998, still from single channel video, 3:44 min; Right: Melanie Bonajo, *Genital Panik: An Event For Equality*, (detail), 2012, still image from performance.

Plate 12. Hotham Street Ladies, *You Beaut!*, 2013,
sugar installation at Margaret Lawrence Gallery.

Re-visioning: The Archives and Women's Time

As the *Backflip* works demonstrate, parafeminism involves drawing on past theories and methodologies. It provides strategies for contemporary practice, repoliticising the body as a site of resistance to objectification and subordination of women. Parafeminist praxis can support political goals in a rapidly changing technical and political environment. Arguably, however, a weakness of Jones's theory is that it does not adequately address the critical processes whereby past methods and art-historical references might be incorporated into a contemporary practice. Similarly, how art historians and curators might generate new knowledge through their handling of materials drawn from the feminist and other archives is not developed. Works in exhibitions such as *Backflip*, and my own exhibition, draw on the archives in ways that question linear narratives of progress.

In an obvious sense, and in tone with second wave feminism more generally, Pollock (2007 p. 18) challenges the notion of chronological art-historical time, stating that '[w]e have increasingly come to recognise that there are other temporalities at play than those that pass as linear and progressive time'. In museum and gallery collecting and curatorial practices, the archive functions as the 'official memory bank' (p. 18); the past, defined in particular ways, shapes future paths. The art-historical archive not only institutionalises the objectification of women's bodies,

but excludes women as producers and as decision-makers regarding what has been collected, preserved and displayed. Feminist critique has exposed the fragmentary nature of the archive and shown that, through its exclusions, it is incapable of revealing a single veracity. Art history can be seen implicitly as a series of ruptures, Pollock (p. 18) argues, revealing difference as trauma rather than linear progress.[24]

In her notion of the virtual feminist museum, images are juxtaposed from multiple sources, eras, and cultural contexts, offering the possibility of new readings and 'opening out unexpected pathways' (p. 18). The virtual museum is not simply a fantasy space or – as 'virtual' might suggest – an online gallery of exhibits unlikely to ever be assembled in a single geographic location (though that, too, could be an outcome). Nor is the intention primarily to insert women artists' works into an already-written history. The term 'virtual' is used ironically, Pollock (2007 p. 9) explains; it is a museum that could not exist in actuality. In such an imagined museum, women who have been invisible in the past can become visible through the uncovering of genealogical connections (Zapperi 2013 p. 25).

Exhibitions that attempt to contest the time of the archive are referred to by Pollock (2007 p. 224), including *Inside the Visible: An Elliptical Traverse of 20th Century Art In, Of and From the Feminine*[25] (an actual rather than virtual exhibition). This exhibition, curated by Catherine de Zegher, is cited as a model for feminist visual art projects and studies. The accompanying text for the exhibition, an 'elliptical traverse' through art history of the previous century, is envisaged as an alternative, non-linear template for mapping the past. *Inside the Visible* questions chronological (linear) descriptions of history from which women have been so effectively excluded in the past (Zapperi 2013 p. 26). Rather than a focus on formalist, stylistic concerns, the curatorial approach illuminates critical points of cultural and historical importance where, according to Pollock (2009 p. 234), sexual difference was negotiated. The works, arranged around 'genealogical groupings' and recurring themes – 'fragmentation of the body, movement, weaving and

[24] By contrast, the linear time of historical narrative is characterised as a project, involving progress and destination, and it is also the time of language in Julia Kristeva's notion of 'women's time', which is discussed further below and in Chapter Two.

[25] 1996-97, shown at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Kanaal Art Foundation, Belgium, Whitechapel Gallery, London, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington and Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth.

sound/silence, said/unsaid, inscription and erasure' – were arranged to allow a 'feminist reading of the "women's time" of twentieth-century art […] rich in echoes, resonances, [and] unexpectedly shared concerns distanced by time and space' (p. 224).

The 'women's time' that Pollock invokes is Julia Kristeva's (1981 pp. 15-18) theorisation of women's concurrent experience of multiple temporalities – linear, historical, cyclical and monumental times. In recognition of sexual difference, female subjectivity is linked to the embodied experience of cyclical time (sexual difference, repetition) and monumental time (life and death, eternity). Pollock's reflections on art history, and Kristeva's insights into feminine temporalities are pertinent to a number of contemporary artists whose work is discussed in Chapter Three as precedents for my own practice, including Kate Davis, Deborah Kelly and Sally Smart. These artists combine parody, pastiche and appropriative strategies to intervene and rework motifs from art-historical archives, re-visioning and re-citing earlier feminist tactics and works. Thus, they reconfigure historical time and challenge paternalistic structures to provoke audiences to think differently about canonical art history and feminist art history.

Indeed, this is an effect of parafeminism, a framework for contemporary practice that engages in a double task: a critique of patriarchy that embeds a sympathetic critique of feminist art. Time is telescoped in the doubled task of parafeminism. The art critic Arlene Raven's observation, quoted at the outset of the chapter from *Womanspace* journal in the heartland of feminism in 1973, speaks to the intrinsic alliance assumed between women and nature in patriarchal ideology. This alliance is distanced yet poignantly present in the ongoing challenge to re-present women's bodies in contemporary contexts. Jones's formulation of parafeminism, as noted earlier, was in part motivated by her observation of feminist visual practices in the early 1990s in which the treatments of bodies appeared to reinforce rather than dislodge patriarchal stereotypes of women. These practices presented normative and objectifying visions of female sexuality that functioned to negate the achievements of earlier feminist artists. The so-called 'bad girls' reignited long-standing debates relating to representations of female bodies and subjectivity within feminist art. The debates emanated from feminist art discourse in the 1970s

and 1980s where often polarised views proceeded from either a concept of ‘essential’ femininity – tied to the physiology of female bodies and linked to received ideas about female bodies and nature – or the notion of a ‘constructed and contingent’ femininity (Jones 2008 p. 5). These positions – essentialism and anti-essentialism – have been forcefully argued in the visual arts, with lasting implications for contemporary practices, including parafeminist parody, and are examined in the following chapter.

Chapter Two – Essentialism, Materiality and Meaning: The Body as Text

Images cannot be spoken of as if they float free of formal embodiment. (Sally Potter in Robinson, H 2006 p. 451)

'The body is of course essentialism's great text.' (Ellen Rooney in Spivak, G & Rooney 1994 p. 152)

The words of Sally Potter, filmmaker, in the first epigraph (cited in an anthology of art theory from the turn of the twenty-first century), reflects the abiding tension between the body and its image in fine art and other cultural forms such as film. In one sense, Potter's observation is fundamental to any representation of the body; that it cannot evade – 'float free' of – lived experience, nor, by implication, the history of artistic images of the body. The second epigraph, by Rooney, on the other hand, voices the counter-truth that imaging bodies has often resulted in the critique of essentialism. This enduring conundrum within feminism has, as outlined in the previous chapter, provided part of the impetus for the development of parafeminist theory and its enactment in contemporary practice. The significance of debate about essentialism and responses to the debates in visual art practice are outlined in this chapter. The research reveals and problematises the issues posed by these theoretical debates for visual artists who continued to work with the body as subject or motif. It also reveals the potential for a strategic, parodic 'essentialism' as a parafeminist strategy of representation. The current practice is thus propelled towards a strategic engagement with, rather than evasion of, the politics of women's bodies as spectacle and as 'nature'.

Debates in feminism about essentialism were, purportedly, chiefly concerned about the veneration of female bodies as unique, and containing some notion of universal identity for women, a universality which could not be assumed and should not be symbolised through the body. Critiques of essentialism also noted the centrality of the white woman's body in a women's movement populated by many

women of colour. In the arguments that emerged in the field of feminist visual art from the late 1970s, the critique of essentialism held the inference that works depicting women's bodies were either not feminist, or feminist in such a way as to undermine the radicalism of the quest for women's difference.

This chapter investigates the concept of essentialism as it was debated from the mid-1970s, and how it emerges within the rationale for parafeminist approaches to the body. I define 'essentialism', first, in the broadest sense, and then in the terms in which it was appropriated in second wave feminism, tracing the critique to the terms of sexual difference as described by Beauvoir. I look at two of the better-known examples in the work of Judy Chicago and Ana Mendieta that were identified as essentialist, both of which are raised by Jones (2008 pp. 4-7). The intention is to suggest how the argument about essentialism emanated from critiques of portrayals of women's bodies, and amidst the investigations of women's (sexual) pleasure in second wave feminism. I highlight how the debate flowered in theoretical and critical practices about and beyond visual art, notably in feminist literary and cultural theory. Essentialism also became contentious in some of the more innovative approaches to feminist theory, such as the so-called 'French feminism' and the *écriture feminine*[26]. I argue that, if the project of sexual difference led to the enthusiastic representation of women's bodies and extolling of the pleasure of bodies, then the debate about essentialism represented questions about the politics of sexual difference, and about the feminist gaze on the body.

Essentialism: The Theoretical Debate

In a general sense, essentialism is understood as 'a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the "whatness" of a given entity' (Fuss 1989 p. xi). In the context of feminist theory and debate, essentialism refers to 'the attribution of a fixed essence to women […] assumed to be given and universal and […] usually […] identified with women's biology and "natural" characteristics' (Grosz 1994a p. 84). If women are assumed to have an essence, they cannot, without these innate attributes, be defined as women.

[26] Hélène Cixous introduced the concept of l'écriture feminine (feminine writing) in 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (1975). It is proposed as a mode of resistance to masculinist thinking and requires that women write from the perspective of their unique and specific psychosexual experience and desires.

Sometimes this essence is understood to lie outside nature or biology, and involve psychological qualities ('nurturance, empathy, supportiveness' for example) or is assumed to be apparent in social practices (such as 'intuitiveness, emotional responses') (Grosz 1994a p. 84). Within the context of feminist critique, essentialism, according to Naomi Schor (1995 p. 47) 'maps the feminine into femaleness'. The most obvious implication of essentialist art was the presumed link between femaleness, nature and the body, while maleness was associated with culture and the mind. The assumption behind these frameworks – that 'Women are somehow *more* biological, *more* corporeal, and *more* natural than men', or 'enmesh[ed] in corporeality' (Grosz 1994b p. 14) – appeared to make women's rationality unachievable. Women's oppression in social and economic roles could be justified on such biological terms, their bodies presumed to be weaker and more susceptible to change. These universalising beliefs precluded possibilities for women's advancement (Grosz 1994a p. 84).

The debate about essentialism descended from the theoretical commitment to materialist philosophy that is most notably traced in Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, and her often-quoted statement that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, woman' (2011/1949 p. 283). Distinguishing between sex (anatomical features) and gender (socially acquired characteristics and roles), Beauvoir argued that identity is not formed by a person's biological, reproductive attributes, but is the result of their social and cultural circumstances. There is no universal *essence* of 'woman' or 'man', and characteristics that might be described as 'feminine' or 'masculine' are social constructs, acquired by each individual, over time, in relation to their particular experiences of being in the world. The unequal positions of women and men in society are not therefore the result of any 'natural' order, or innate strengths or weaknesses, but are the result of expectations imposed from infancy. Young children of both biological sexes, Beauvoir observed (2011/1949 p. 283), experience being in their bodies in much the same way, but the 'intervention of others' propels them towards certain views of themselves and certain behaviours that signify sexed identity. Beauvoir argues that women contend with aspects of their embodiment according to the attitudes and preconceptions (which might have no scientific basis or 'truth') of the society in which they grow. 'Woman' is cast as the 'other' to 'man', who is seen as the norm. The notion of 'femininity' and female immanence, then,

stems not from any *essential* biological, psychological or intellectual difference between women and men, but is a construction, based purely on acculturation.

According to Alison Stone (2004 p. 85) the debates regarding essentialism emerged from the 'exclusive tendencies' in the most influential feminist theories of the 1970s and 1980s, which derived directly from the women's liberation political movement.[27] From the 1980s, the terms 'essentialist' and 'anti-essentialist' became widespread in assessments of theories concerning 'the nature of women (and men)', along with synonymous terms 'biologism', 'naturalism' and 'universalism', though there are subtle differences in meaning (Grosz 1994a pp. 84-85). Each term, however, implies 'fixity and limits definitionally imposed on women' (Grosz 1994a p. 82). Crucially, essentialism is generally defined in opposition to 'difference'. Anti-essentialists reject the notion that women can be conceptualised as a unified group with innate characteristics, and argue instead for recognition of the specific historical, geographical and social situations of women, and for a cultural basis for the construction of identity. As Diana Fuss (1989 p. xii), explains: 'The doctrine of essence is viewed as precisely that which seeks to deny or to annul the very radicality of difference. The opposition […] reminds us that a complex system of cultural, social, psychical, and historical differences, and not a set of pre-existent human essences, position and constitute the subject'.

Even so, theorists like Nancy Hartsock (1983), Catherine MacKinnon (1982) and Carol Gilligan (1982) pursued the idea that essential characteristics of femininity could be understood either as natural *or* socially constructed, in their efforts to identify patterns of social characteristics which might pertain to all women and form unifying bases from which women could work strategically for change. But this, too, was criticised as universalising of women's experiences and inherently essentialist (Stone, A 2007 p. 18). Other writers rejected *any* claims for universality of women's experience, social position or identity, asserting that such claims were definitionally false. Elizabeth Spelman (1988), in *Inessential Woman*, criticises such claims on the

[27] Deborah Withers (2010 p. 233), however, rejects this kind of account, insisting that the activities of the movement were less 'essentialist, naïve and critically unsophisticated' than critics like Stone suggest.

basis that they are oppressive and sometimes exclusionary; she identified a tendency within feminism to instantiate certain (privileged) women's experiences as the norm.

Debates about essentialism continued in the 1990s, and became increasingly divisive and unproductive, or so claims Mira Schor (1994a p. ix), and anti-essentialism became, according to Charlotte Witt (1995 p. 322) '(almost) an essential feature of feminist theorising'. The label of 'essentialism' was 'invested with 'the power to reduce to silence, to excommunicate, to consign to oblivion' (Schor, N 1995 p. 47)[28]. However, there were various strands to the debate, and significant differences *within* pro-essentialism positions, or rather, multiple essentialisms. Witt (1995 pp. 321-344), for example, describes four areas of feminist critiques, namely: *metaphysical* essentialism, or the belief that gender and sex are core attributes of the self; *biological* determinism; *linguistic* essentialism, or the belief that the word 'feminine' has a fixed meaning, and *methodological* feminism, or the practice of making false generalisations about women. Similarly, Naomi Schor (1995 pp. 46-49) identifies the several politics of heterosexual and homosexual, naïve and strategic essentialisms rather than a single 'immutable monolithic position'. Nor were these debates wholly unproductive for the women's movement, as Schor (1995 pp. 48-49) emphasises how they resulted in greater recognition of the exclusionary tendencies of the movement and more consciousness of differences – ethnic, racial, national, cultural, sexual, economic and generational – among women.

The various theoretical interventions within the debates linked to wider currents in feminist thought and politics. The concern about essentialism was framed within national tendencies, for instance, by Toril Moi in *Sexual/Textual Politics,* (1988) where 'French feminism'[29] is viewed as 'anti-essentialist', in contrast with 'essentialist' Anglo-American feminism. Julia Kristeva's work in particular is described by Moi (1988 p. 13) as resolute in its 'refusal of biologism and essentialism', a view premised on Moi's (p. 12) schematic interpretation of the stages

[28] Debate about essentialism was divisive not only within feminism, but arose in regards to race and colonialism in other fields.

[29] 'French feminism' remains a problematic term. Christine Delphy (1995 p. 192), for example, insists that the term was created and used by Anglo-American feminists, and imposed on feminists in France. It is generally understood to refer to the work of Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, in spite of Cixous and Kristeva being located outside the feminist debate in France. Rosi Braidotti (2011 p. 140) describes a 'difference inspired' polemic between so-called 'French feminists' and the Anglo-American 'gender' opposition – a polemic that fed into the debate on essentialism and contributed to what she describes as an 'intellectual stalemate'.

of feminist struggle as articulated by Kristeva in 'Women's Time'. This schema includes the first stage, in which women 'demand equal access to the symbolic order' (equality or a form of liberal feminism); a second in which women 'reject the male symbolic order in the name of difference' (or radical feminism in which femininity is extolled); and a third (the position attributed to Kristeva herself) in which women 'reject the dichotomy between masculine and feminine as metaphysical'. In this schema, the opposition of male/female is first reversed then displaced (Nooy de 1998 p. 264). Kristeva's (1981 pp. 33-34) challenge to notions of identity formation are characterised by Moi (1988 p. 14) as a *progression* of feminist thinking, moving from the relatively unsophisticated (essentialist) to the more complex and nuanced (anti-essentialist).

Teresa de Lauretis (1994 p. 3) draws on the philosopher John Locke's distinction between *real* essences – the essential, unchanging characteristics of a thing (as outlined above) – and *nominal* essences – 'a totality of qualities, properties, and attributes that […] feminists define, envisage, or enact for themselves […] and possibly also wish for other women'. Nominal essentialism is favourably seen as a project rather than a portrayal of reality, and an idealistic project which seeks to 'recover the past and claim the future' for women (Lauretis de 1994 p. 3). Fuss (1994 p. 99), also referring to Locke's notion of nominal essences, suggests it offers a convenient linguistic tool or a 'classificatory fiction' needed to describe specific entities. Mindful of the reductive and divisive tone of the debate, Lauretis (1994 p. 1) attempted to relocate focus onto essence as an aspect of feminist *theory*: 'feminist theory is all about an essential difference, an irreducible difference, though not a difference between woman and man, nor a difference inherent in "women's nature" (in woman as nature), but a difference in the feminist conception of woman, women, and the world'. She maintains there is a difference between a feminist and a non-feminist awareness of knowledge and experience of being in the world – 'an essential difference of feminism' (Lauretis de 1994 pp. 1-2). To interpolate, Lauretis seems to pose that feminist women are different to other women through their knowledge of feminism, but without attributing 'instinctual' (rather than learned) difference. Her stance is not that feminist positions should be beyond critique, but that positions must be acknowledged so that activism might potentially involve all women. As a political strategy this approach might be effective but the body is overlooked.

Breakthroughs in these debates began to emerge with the influence of queer theory in feminism. Butler (1999), Elizabeth Grosz (1994b) and Moira Gatens (1996), in particular, advanced philosophies of embodiment which insist that no general claims can be made about women, or about bodies, at all. The influence of Michel Foucault's ideas, and Grosz's (1994b) remodelling of corporeality, challenged the sex/gender distinction in radical ways. Butler (1999) stressed the relationships of power at work in identity formations; her theory of gender performativity and citationality promised a way of doing gender in which the body is effectively incidental to the practiced norms of gender. Bodies are 'acculturated, and therefore participate in the same diversity as the social field that they reflect' (Stone, A 2004 p. 145). Butler (1999 p. 12) asserts that the bodies we live in phenomenologically are culturally informed (and hence restricted): '[…] "the body" itself is a construction, as are the myriad "bodies" that constitute the domain of gendered subjects. Bodies cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender'. This perspective led to a new critique premised on the materiality of gender: no longer at risk of essentialism, it attracted the concern that gender had no connection to materiality at all.

Throughout these debates, the theoretical subject and the activist subject are unquestioningly aligned; political implications are assumed to coalesce in both theory and activism. Audiences for artworks, however, whatever their theoretical literacies, and irrespective of the specific activist goals of the artists, were invited to encounter the implications of representations of the body through their embodied experiences in patriarchy.

Essentialism and Visual Art Practice

In the 1990s, with the rise of identity politics, the influence of queer theory, and the accompanying rejection of essentialist assumptions about unifying characteristics common to all women, and the increasing role of culture in the theoretical conceptualisation of bodies, feminist artists found that motifs, modes of representation and even media were proscribed at a 'legislative frontier' (Owens 1994a p. 168). Such proscriptions also influenced attitudes towards the artists of the 1970s, whereby questions were raised about the usefulness of some of their

strategies. Modes of practice were jettisoned or devalued on the basis of the risk of essentialism.

The set of symbols that structure visual representations of the female body is deeply embedded in Western culture. Consequently it is difficult to dislodge the body from such conventions because, as Whitney Chadwick (1989 p. 23) observes, the 'feminist iconography of the body often tells us less about essential experiences of being female than about how patriarchy has mapped and controlled the female body and used it as an object of exchange between men'. Yet critiques not only denigrated some kinds of artistic practice, but weakened the agency of women artists who represented women's bodies directly in their works with political purpose (Broude & Garrard 2005 p. 9). An environment emerged in which any artistic expression which appeared to link women with biological destinies was seen to obstruct possibilities for liberation (Merchant 1990 p. 102).

This climate in which depictions of the female body became contentious for the expression of feminist concerns, largely driven by theoretical debates about essentialism, are at issue for Jones in the development of parafeminism. The oppositional models that she perceives on both sides of the debate 'ultimately devolved back to the concept of masculine power and a belief in the inexorability of structures of fetishism … [and] of objectification' (2008 p. 5). Amongst influential feminist theorists and artists who argued that direct representation of female bodies perpetuated fetishistic structures were Pollock and Kelly, who recommended that feminist tactics should involve shocking or distancing the viewer. These strategies were based on Bertholt Brecht's theories of distanciation – a 'politically motivated' refusal of realism (Chadwick 1990 p. 380), and 'an erosion of the dominant structures of cultural consumption which […] are classically fetishistic' (Pollock 2010 p. 95).

Such ideas became influential in feminist and postmodernist art practices in the 1980s, and are exemplified, for instance, in the works of Kelly, Kruger, Sherman and Sherrie Levine through the focus they bring to fetishism and the male gaze. Jones (2008 p. 6) maintains, however, that these artists (and the theorists who informed and fostered their practices) continued the second wave tendency to work within 'a binary logic of gender difference established by de Beauvoir around 1950'.

In contrast, she identifies some artists from the 1960s who (as noted in Chapter One) successfully disrupted the 'cultural codes of gender and sexuality' (Jones 2008 p. 7) by drawing attention to and emphasising the body. In addition to Ono and EXPORT, artists like Mendieta, Manon, Hannah Wilke, Lorraine O'Grady and Jo Spence variously articulated the experience of living in a female body, sometimes with reference to the experience of other alterities. They staged or performed their bodies to amplify or disrupt conventions of representing, and ways of seeing, sexuality and gender, and were convincing in exposing the lack of logic inherent in gendered imagery (Jones 2009 p. 294). From the late 1970s and the 1980s, criticism emerged of the work of artists like Mendieta (Plate 13) Chicago (Plate 14), Miriam Shapiro (Plate 15) and Nancy Spero (Plate 16). Their work formed part of a move in feminist art from the late 1970s towards a deconstruction of 'the pleasure that men in patriarchal culture take in representations of the female body' (Jones 2005 p. 418). While their works are among the most widely known examples, and have figured in some of the debates discussed, they are presented here as exemplary of the tensions and blind spots in the argument about essentialism. They represent, in fact, a range of approaches to representing the body, in terms of form, media and methods. But the essentialism/anti-essentialism debate, as it unfolded in the visual arts, shaped the development and circumscription of tactical approaches available to feminist artists whose project was to influence the conditions which limited women's agency.

Plate 13. Ana Mendieta, from *Silueta* series, 1973-1980,
C-type photographic prints.

Plate 14. Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party* (detail – Virginia Woolf place setting),1974-1979, mixed media including wood, ceramic, fabric, needlework, metal, paint. 1463 x 1463 cm.

Plate 15. Miriam Schapiro, *Anonymous Was a Woman*, 1976, acrylic and collage on paper, 76.2 x 55.9 cm.

Plate 16. Nancy Spero, *Notes in Time: Triple Canopy* (detail from 24 panels), 1979, handmade paper, collage, painted and printed components, H 50 cm.

As related by Mira Schor (1994a), the essentialist/anti-essentialist rift was particularly exposed during a debate held in 1987 at the New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York): *The Great Goddess Debate – Spirituality vs. Social Practice in Recent Feminist Art*. The debate encapsulated the polarisation that changed the parameters of feminist art in the 1980s, with some speakers decrying the concept of a 'mythical vision of essential femininity' and calling for a more materialist 'social and historical basis' for structuring the production and reading of images (Schor, M 1994a p. 254). This pivotal debate also coincided with a posthumous retrospective exhibition of the work of Mendieta in the same museum. The coincidence of the two events was significant because Mendieta placed her body (or traces of it) in natural environments in works such as her *Silueta* series, apparently purposefully aligning woman with nature. Duly, this attracted the criticism of essentialism (Best 2007 pp. 57-61).

Mendieta's body works were perceived to 'naturalise' women by representing her naked body in, and allied with, nature – covered with blood, feathers, flowers, grass or mud, blending with a tree trunk, or (silhouette) inscribed in the earth, surrounded or filled with water, pigment or fire. This was seen to convey fixed notions of 'woman', deeply connected with 'mother nature', based on biological sex and also perceived to allude to an imaginary, matriarchal or pre-patriarchal past (linked to the *Great Goddess* in the title of the afore-mentioned debate). This allusion was deemed in turn to carry the tacit understanding – acknowledged more broadly in feminism, not only in feminist art – that if patriarchy had an origin in time, it also faced an end; it was motivated by a desire for a more ideal future (Butler 1999 p. 48). Later reassessments of Mendieta's work (and some of her contemporaries) have questioned these critiques. Her repetition of performance of the woman/nature nexus *could* be re-read as an attempt at the 'destabilization, deconstruction or subversion of identity' (Best 2007 p. 64), or as a postmodern sensibility. This revisionist approach strategically locates her work between 'essence and inessence' (Blocker 1999 p. 49). Jones (2008) also reviews Mendieta's *Silueta* series in noting a blind spot in critiques of practice dealing with fetishism by pointing to the tendency to overlook racial and other differences *between* women: 'it was largely the white woman's body that was at issue'. She cites the *Silueta* series as an exception that convincingly reveals the meeting of fetishisms of race and sex by enacting the female body 'as a mark or a

wound on and in the earth' (Jones 2008 p. 7), apparently referring to Freud's view of woman's sex as a wound, or castration.

A similar debate emerged in the reception of Chicago's vast, collaborative work, *The Dinner Party* (first exhibited in 1979), which is discussed at length by Jones (2005). An aim of the work, to reclaim historical women from obscurity, was criticised for representing female lineage based on biological difference (from men) and implying that the category of 'woman' is universal. The work, with its thirty-nine large dinner plates shaped in stylised images of vulvas at place settings for particular women (Plate 14) – which Chicago and others referred to as 'central core' imagery – was seen to reduce women to reproductive organs; and, with the predominance of psychoanalytic interpretation in the 1980s, the depiction of separated anatomical parts was also regarded as fetishism (Parker, R & Pollock 1981 p. 130). Chicago and Schapiro (2010/1973 pp. 53-56) argued that the central core imagery was part of a strategy to reverse the devaluation of female anatomy in patriarchal culture[30]. Some detractors saw bias in Chicago's selection of individuals, suggesting that she did not make room for difference of sexual orientation or race (Robinson, H 2006 p. 536).

Responses to *The Dinner Party* serve to illustrate the dynamics of the essentialism/anti-essentialism and universalism/particularism debates in feminist theory. The debate was revisited from the mid-1990s by feminist historians, theorists and critics such as Mira Schor (1999), Naomi Schor (1995) and Jane Blocker (1999). Helena Reckitt (2012 p. 12) summarises their arguments and concludes that artists like Chicago, who were accused of essentialism, were more strategic and less simplistic than their detractors perceived. Viewed in retrospect, these artists were 'undertaking a necessary reclamation of female forms for political ends; it was a step in the process of creating a self-affirming art that was '*for* women rather than *about* them' (Jones 2003 p. 9). This is especially so if it is considered that sexist art did not desist in the period of these works. The focus on Mendieta and Chicago also speaks

[30] Chicago and Schapiro asked (2010/1973 pp. 53-56): 'What does it feel like to be a woman? To be formed around a central core and have that secret place which can be entered and which is also a passage from which life emerges?' (p. 53); to be a woman was to be cast in artworks by men as an object – 'an object of contempt', and the female vagina marks woman's 'otherness' and vulnerability (p. 56). The female artist (as subject), who uses central core imagery, reclaims it as a means to 'state the truth and beauty of her identity' (p. 56). Their discussion is also cited by Jones (2005 p. 417).

to a latent preoccupation with images of the sexed body in the critique of essentialism in recollections of the debate. In fact, the works display remarkable innovation in their use of media and materials, especially the textiles used in Schapiro's works.

Schapiro's extensive use of textiles and textile patterning traditions, although without overt or literal representations of the body, also attracted the critique of essentialism. Schapiro and other feminist artists who used pattern, decoration and textile traditions were 'redress[ing] the trivialisation of women's experience' (Schapiro 1977 p. 300). The use of 'femmage' materials and processes was a response to the denigration of so-called 'decorative arts' (Schapiro & Meyer 1978 p. 67). Her works, although abstract, sought to oppose what feminist artists regarded as the gendered and exclusionary practices of modernist geometric abstraction. In *Anatomy of a Kimono* (1976), for example, which extended over 15 metres in length, she used scale to imbue her medium with grandeur. Her appropriation of patterning traditions from non-Western cultures was seen by some critics as universalising (Chadwick 1990 p. 366), and her championing of historical women's art forms was, in itself, judged as essentialist and a reinforcement of gendered stereotypes (Broude & Garrard 1994 p. 25).

Viewed from another perspective, however, femmage artists challenge biological essentialism because they aim to emancipate a mode of artistic expression that had 'long been gendered as feminine by male Euroculture and hence devalued, policed and controlled in Western art' (Broude & Garrard 1994 p. 25). In this sense, the artists working with media outside of painting and sculpture were re-valuing 'low' or marginalised artforms, and interrogating the values of the culture that had marginalised them. The artist and critic Harmony Hammond (1977) observed that commentary on feminist art at the time often failed to identify the political potential of abstract work by feminist artists, referring to the illusory separation of art and politics which prevailed in formalist, modernist critiques.

Other artists, also with political intent, chose less conventional materials. Spero, for example, employed paper and collage with printed imagery and text in large-scale multi-panel works. From 1970, her overtly political works tackled issues including war and violence as well as directly feminist concerns, using the body as a

dominant motif. Spero engaged with language, its limitations and conventions, quoting from the French writer Antonin Artaud and drawing on the theoretical writings of Hélène Cixous and her notion of the *écriture féminine*, in which female (sexual) difference is elaborated through language and text. Spero's adaptation of Cixous's ideas is one of the more explicit references to 'French feminism' in second wave art. It is also, more obviously, work that directly and simultaneously engages in the politics of language and representation. Spero's collaged works consistently depict transformation of women from historical contexts of subordination into agile, empowered actors. Visual quotation, repetition and irony, as well as written text, are enlisted to articulate women's potentially shifting identities. While essentialist characteristics can be identified in her work, such as images of women's physical, historical and mythic power, she also investigates the circumscription of sex-roles. Spero is credited with at once exposing such roles and challenging the inherent contradictions (Dobie 1995 p. 224).

Anti-bodies: Mitigating Critiques, Defiant Practices

Viewed from the present, it is apparent that innovative artists like those described above can be understood to have used the (essential) category of 'woman' strategically, as a means to political ends, reflecting the concept of 'strategic essentialism' articulated by Gayatri Spivak (in interview with Grosz 1990/1984 pp. 151-184). Spivak argued that it might be necessary to speak of (or represent) women as a group, although a unified category of 'woman' did not exist, in order to advocate for equality and to overcome patriarchal strictures. This approach does not accept a universal view of women from widely differing racial or ethnic backgrounds as fact, but rather as a conceptual fact, in some situations, for the purpose of achieving desired outcomes. Jones (2003) makes the point that strategies employed by artists like Mendieta and Chicago, who tended to minimise differences between women, were needed to denote gender as informative of cultural practice. The 'masculinist notion of "universality" that guaranteed the privileging of male-invented forms and themes as neutrally aesthetic' could, in this way, be denied (p. 9). It is indeed difficult to see how else the political gains made by women artists from the 1970s onwards, by pushing back from their marginalised position in masculine culture, could have been achieved without proceeding in the first instance from a presumed category of 'woman'.

It must be noted that some feminist artists practicing in the 1970s made direct representations of women's (and men's) bodies that could be described as 'counter-essentialist'. Silvia Sleigh, for instance, painted bodies to make political points with irony, quoting from the art historical canon in a playful manner. Sleigh's painting of herself painting the artist Phillip Golub (Plate 17), posed in reference to the figure of Venus in Diego Velasquez's *Rokeby Venus* (c. 1650), and using a mirror to provide front and back views of the naked male figure, is an example. The artist's portrait of herself, reflected in the mirror, recalls Velasquez in his *Las Meninas* (1656). Beyond these connections, the depiction of the artist painting the model is reminiscent of Dürer's woodcut, *The Draftsman of the Lying Woman* (Plate 2). The more usual gender of the painter/subject and model/object is reversed. It is the male model who looks at himself being looked at (by the artist). The work effectively parodies gender in art history, but simultaneously celebrates the naked male model, who is not denied individuality in this representation.

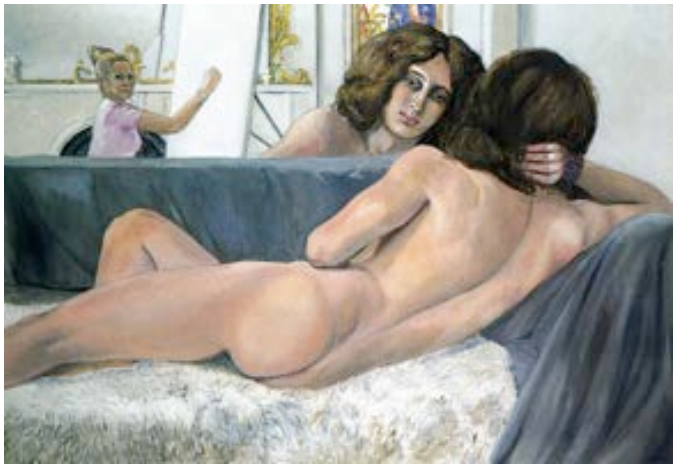

Plate 17. Sylvia Sleigh, *Phillip Golub Reclining*, 1971,
oil on canvas, 106.5 x 157.5 cm.

If the putatively essentialist art of Chicago or Schapiro represented a critique of patriarchal modes of viewing, it led some theorists, including Pollock (2008/1988) and Lisa Tickner (1987a) to advocate practices which avoided direct representation of the female body entirely, in order to resist what Mulvey (1975) had described as 'the determining male gaze'. Parker and Pollock (1981 p. 130) argued that images of women are too readily 'retrieved and co-opted by male culture [if] they do not rupture radically meanings and connotations of woman in art as body, as sexual, as

nature, as an object for male possession'. Removing the female body as imagery, therefore, was a means of resisting the production of visual pleasure (Pollock 2008/1988 pp. 212-268) and of evading the imposition of any essentialist readings of it.

Various artistic responses to the criticism of essentialism arose in this shifting theoretical environment. A number of artists did move away from direct representations of the body, preferring to use mediated imagery, often in combination with written text, to enunciate ideas *about* representation. The projects of Kelly, Holzer, EXPORT, Kruger and Sherman, for example, can be viewed as deconstructions of 'universal womanhood' (Frueh 1994 p. 190).[31] Some of the tactics employed by these artists are outlined below to suggest how the debate about essentialism continued to influence visual practice, albeit under the converging impact of postmodernism. The use of text, multiples and parody are highlighted because, while not the full range of responses, these strategies are relevant to my practice.

Concerned about the political implications of representing the body, Kelly eliminated its depiction in order to deny it as spectacle. She pursued alternative ways of articulating women's experiences and desires in multi-component works such as *Post-Partum Document* (1973-79) (Plate 18), where documentation of personal and theoretical references are integrated within a record of the relationship with her young son and his acquisition of language. In another perspective, Pollock (2008/1988) sees Kelly's project as informed by 'Brechtian uses of montage, text, objects in a sequence of sections which actively invent the spectator'. New conceptions of the mother and child, in the process of their socialisation as feminine and masculine subjects, are represented (Pollock 2008/1988 p. 231). The complex, political work can be read as championing the value of a familiar, domestic and emotional environment (Reckitt 2012 pp. 39-40), but at the same time (for the

[31] These artists (Kelly, Holzer et al) attracted discussion of their work as postmodernist as well as feminist, but their conceptual frameworks and working practices can nonetheless be seen to have arisen from the activist feminist art of the 1970s; their strategies and their aesthetic concerns are more closely linked to those of their feminist predecessors (and contemporaries) than those of the male contemporaries with whom they are often critically reviewed (Cottingham 1994 p. 278).

theoretically-informed viewer), it brings attention to the fetishism of representation (Tickner 1987b)[32].

Text as image became a principle visual element for some artists seeking to avoid direct representations of the body, as a counter to the risk of essentialism. Holzer, for example, spread her message beyond the gallery, using written text exclusively from the time of her *Truism*s series (Plate 19). This series distilled the contents of Western and Eastern literature and philosophy texts into simple, slogan-like statements listed in alphabetical order, cheaply printed on sheets of paper and pasted in public places[33]. Holzer's later works reproduce her statements and instructions in cast metal plaques, and then as a series of lightworks and projections, both in and on galleries and public places. In these works, counter-essentialism is pursued through parody of the language and conventions of contemporary mass media. Other artists through this period used bodies (often their own) indirectly, in conspicuously mediated form. EXPORT, Martha Rosler, Mary Beth Edelson and Betye Saar are artists who continued to depict bodies as instruments for articulating political ideas, countering essentialist readings of their work by employing deconstructive strategies to question the construction of identity and power, highlighting links between biological and social understandings of the body.

EXPORT's *Body Configurations in Architecture* series (Plate 20), performed and documented as black and white photographs between 1972 and 1982, are described by Pollock (2009 p. 322) as 'writing the body'. In these works, EXPORT wraps and contorts her body to fit the hard, built forms of an urban environment. The architectural forms signify the materiality of the economic, political, social, religious and other structures that constrain women's lives. *Body Configurations* throws sexual difference into focus as something functioning in women's lives in environments which are constructed 'according to the proportions, physical and imaginary, of men masquerading as the standard of humanity' (Pollock 2009 p.

[32] Owens (1994a p. 173) argues that Kelly also provides evidence of a *female* fetishism – 'the various substitutes the mother invests in order to disavow separation from the child' – that previously had been excluded from the theory of fetishism.
[33] Members of the public interacted with the works, commenting on the statements, making the project in one sense a participatory one.

323)[34]. EXPORT's actions with her body constitute a feminist intervention because they expose a vexed reality – an 'embodied contradiction in narratives of culture, gender and labour' (Vishmidt 2007 p. 449) – by performing it in public places.

Anti-representational and intertextual strategies emerge in works that engage with popular culture and media. Kruger's deconstruction of advertising language and appropriations of visual images and verbal language from popular media are the primary tactics in works such as *Untitled (We Won't Play Nature To Your Culture)* (Plate 21). Kruger seeks to interpret the signs of representation in a media- and message-saturated environment, focusing on the strategies employed in advertising to interpellate and normalise subjects. Her body of work can be read as critique of male-centred leanings in imaging traditions, 'expos[ing] masculine investments in representations of the female body' (Reckitt 2012 p. 11). Responding to the theoretical focus on the social construction of identity, using personal pronouns like *I*, *me*, *we*, and *your*, her works deny the viewer alignment with gender (Owens 1994a p. 184). In contrast, Sherman confronts and teases the viewer with the play between the *real* and the *representational* in photographs of her body. Sherman contrives 'masquerades of femininity' (Reckitt 2012 p. 40) in which her altered, plural, self-image is a motif. In the *Untitled (Film Still)* series (1977-1980) (Plate 22, Left) and *History Portraits* (1989-1990) (Plate 22, Right), she evokes scenes from other media. Settings in the *Film Stills* series suggest 1950s or 1960s cinematic culture, alluding to, but never revealing, a narrative (Owens 1994a p. 84). The images mimic character archetypes and recognisable styles or genres, though they do not exactly reconstruct any given source (Reckitt 2012 pp. 30-31). In this respect, Sherman's works predict Butler's (1991 p. 21) thesis that 'gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original'. Some detractors have suggested that Sherman has participated in her own objectification, and that (particularly in the *Film Stills* series), the characters created typically appear anxious, fearful or abject, and therefore perpetuate roles of victimhood for women. Other critics, however, perceive impersonation of archetypes as parody, her artifice exposing the construction of stereotypes by the mass media. In this view, Sherman is not holding a mirror up to what 'woman' is, 'naturally', but

[34] Pollock (2009) sees a reference in the series to Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man* (c. 1490), where the proportions of a naked man are represented as corresponding to pure geometry and the ideal model for architecture.

treating identity as the material for a theatrical production (Fassin 2009 p. 303), where stereotypes are questioned.

All of these artists, Kelly, Holzer, EXPORT, Kruger and Sherman, expose political structures through the use of multiples or series of images and appropriative strategies (where the original meaning of the appropriated works is altered in the process of reiteration) to build narratives and enunciate ideas about the social construction of identity. These artists sought to distance their work from the possibility of the 'essentialist' label, and were motivated to probe and reconceive issues concerning sexuality and representation as part of a political endeavour (Tickner 1987b p. 23). They have also attracted criticism for overly analytical approaches, but their projects can be seen as critiques of representation, 'about representation, mediated by culture' (Schor, M 1994a p. 255)[35]. They strive to make apparent how meanings of visual artworks are neither universal nor fixed, but are made and received in specific cultural and historical contexts. These artists also demonstrate the growing diversity of media, materials and modes of expression in activist art through the later second wave of feminism, and the widening literacies and expanding subjectivities that might be addressed.

Plate 18. Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document* (detail from six-part installation), 1973-79, Perspex unit, card, resin and slate, 20 x 25.5cm.

[35] Kelly, Holzer, Kruger and Sherman's works (in particular) are generally discussed as postmodernist, with Owens (1994b p. 166), for example, describing their quest to expose systems of power – systems that give authority to some kinds of representations, while supressing or invalidating others – and within the broader context of a 'crisis of cultural authority' in Western institutions.

Plate 19. Jenny Holzer, *Truisms*, 1978-87,
offset ink on paper, each sheet 91.5 x 61 cm.

Plate 20. VALIE EXPORT, *Zupassung*, from series titled *Body Configurations in Architecture*, 1972-1976, black and white photograph, 55 x 79cm.

Plate 21. Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (We Won't Play Nature To Your Culture)*, 1983, gelatin silver print, 185.4 x 124.5 cm framed.

Plate 22. Left: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still # 6*, 1977, gelatin silver print, 25.4 x 20.32 cm; Right: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #183A*, 1988, Chromogenic colour print, 109.22 x 69.85 cm framed.

Implications for Contemporary Practice

In the early 1990s, women artists were again depicting and enacting female bodies in their work. Mira Schor (1994b p. 55) detects, however, some persistent issues concerning essentialism. The body is described as being, at times, in 'a very essentialised victim position'. She cites Kiki Smith's *Tale* (1992) and Sue Williams's *Irresistible* (1992), as works that did not attract criticism for naturalising an abject status for women; nor were the works discussed in terms of the 'ideological battles' which had been the focus of feminist discourse of the preceding decade (Schor, M 1994b p. 55). Her concern stems from a perception that the favourable critical reception of these works was based, at least in part, on the appeal to a general audience of the portrayal of 'female as victim', rather than with the overall merit of the works. Schor (1994b pp. 52-55), in relation to younger women artists of the time, identifies a tendency to deny a feminist genealogy, when the female antecedents are obvious – a denial possibly motivated by a desire for distance from the feminist debates of previous decades. Such issues continue to surface in the critique of work by women artists and in their own self-contextualisation, and the risk of accusations of 'essentialism' remains present for artists who engage with direct representations of women's bodies in their visual practices.

Feminist aesthetics, alert to relationships of power and possibilities for agency, respond to and extend understanding of the social construction of identity, gender and sexuality. Debates about essentialism – and contingent understandings of

sexual difference – are implicitly and explicitly important for Jones, and parafeminism is proposed as a response to ongoing arguments about strategies for dealing with women's embodied subjectivity in activist art. As indicated in Chapter One, Jones argues that the impasse of 'raunch culture' and post-feminism negates the theory and practice of the feminist artists of the preceding decades; the work is regressive in the way it objectifies and commodifies women's bodies, while purporting to be sexually liberating. In Jones's conceptualisation of parafeminism, the body is not rejected as a meaningful motif of resistance. Reintegration of aspects of past practice (which might once have been described as 'essentialist') potentially *exaggerate* the binary opposition of female/nature/the body versus male/culture/the mind, and this is posed as a constructive strategy for disrupting the binary logic (Jones 2006 pp. 208-217). Castagnini identifies the potential for creative parody as a particularly valuable tactic for such disruption.

The artists whose works are cited in the following chapter as precedents for my own practice – Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart – appear to risk the imputations of essentialism, and, as I show, transform the risk in ways that represent parafeminist modes of practice[36]. Their imaging strategies foreground bodily experiences and revision female bodies in restorative ways that claim spaces for images of women, *by* women, and within alternative (non-linear) views of art history that articulate notions of 'women's time'. The works of these artists therefore can be read as critical recollections of the debates about essentialism. In distinctive ways, they adopt activist stances that empower and provide pleasure for women in looking at images of women. The spectre of essentialism is eluded and revisioned through their humorous and critical engagement with earlier systems of representation, as explained in the following chapter. Thus in Chapter Three I move towards the practice, and how notions of essentialism are strategically transformed through parafeminist parody in the works for final exhibition.

[36] Rist is identified by Jones as an exemplar of parafeminism; selected works by Davis, Kelly and Smart are identified by me as parafeminist.

Chapter Three – Precedents of Practice: Rewriting Essentialism in Parafeminist Bodies of Work

> *Our formidable challenge is […] how to rehumanize, repoliticize and decolonize our own bodies […]. (Gómez-Peña 2014 p. 208)*

The notion of essentialism continues to affect and inform contemporary art practices, as the previous chapter shows. Artists continue to negotiate the meanings of feminism and femininity in ways that directly draw on second wave art and thus engage in some way with the debate. The 2013 *Backflip: Feminism and Humour in Contemporary Art* exhibition [37] curated by Castagnini is a clear instance where the mode of engagement is parafeminist. A number of the works (such as those mentioned in Chapter One) exhibit 'repetition with difference' (Hutcheon 2000 p. 6) – repetition of imagery, gestures, materials and processes – of their feminist forerunners. In addressing the relationship between contemporary art practice and the heritage of feminist art, Castagnini (2013 p. 9) observes that 'we appear to be performing "backflips"'; looking back to second wave artists for direction and contrast, contemporary feminists 'are still giving "lip" to the patriarchy but carefully reconsidering the strategies of earlier feminisms'. She argues that some of the methodologies can be described as 'parafeminist parody', which entails purposeful citation or re-enactment of past feminist practices (Castagnini 2015b p. 23).

I argue that parafeminist parody is evident in the works of four artists chosen as precedents for the practice, Pipilotti Rist, Kate Davis, Deborah Kelly and Sally Smart. As the guiding principles of the practice (see 'Shaping Practice' in the Introduction) concern celebration and constructive parody as means to positively extending parafeminist practice, the role of the precedents is to model parafeminist

[37] 2013, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

practices, or aspects of them. Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart contend with theoretical and methodological issues similar to those addressed in the current practice. Rist is identified by Jones as exemplary of parafeminism, and is the only one of the four artists whose work was included in *Backflip*. Davis, Kelly and Smart are not identified by Castagnini as parafeminist. I will argue, however, that certain of their works constitute exemplary parafeminism. It emerges in the way the precedent artists utilise methods and media to articulate their individual concerns about female embodiment and femininity, and in these respects they inform and motivate the current practice towards a parodic engagement with the residual way in which essentialism might be attributed to images of the body. The focus therefore is directed to how strategic representations might expand the understanding of portrayals of women's bodies and embodied experiences.

Castagnini, in her formulation of parafeminist parody, is clearly following Jones's paradigm of parafeminism, but if parody signifies ambiguous attitudes to feminism for Jones (2006), Castagnini's definition of parody follows Hutcheon's (2000, 2002) to include works that ironically imitate or allude to earlier creations. Parody, according to Hutcheon (2000 p. 32), is potentially 'playful as well as belittling […] critically constructive as well as destructive', and the sentiment and politics of works in *Backflip* fall into both categories. *Backflip* forms a backdrop to the discussion in the present chapter of precedents for the current research practice. The selected works of Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart are listed in the Data Repository (Appendix 1) that records a range of feminist works that, in diverse ways, address body politics, or the body features as a motif in the works. The specific precedents are Rist's *Pickelporno*, 1992 (Plate 26), *Blutclip*, 1993 (Plate 27) and *Massachusetts Chandelier*, 2010 (Plate 28); Davis's *Curtain i-vii*, 2011 (Plates 29 and 30); Kelly's *Lying Women*, 2015 (Plate 31), *Beastliness*, 2011 (Plate 32), *The Magdalenes (Praise)*, 2012 (Plate 33) and *Intransigence of Venus #4*, 2014 (Plate 34) and Smart's *In Her Nature (Performativities)*, 2011 (Plate 35) and *Choreographing Collage*, 2012-2016 (Plate 36).

The analysis below highlights how I see these works as parafeminist for their references to past feminisms in the motifs, materials and visual strategies that were pioneered by earlier feminist artists, some of which were seen as essentialist. Second

wave artists' works and approaches are revived and parodied by the precedent artists, with their references to the (patriarchal) art-historical past, and humorous but serious engagement with the notion of essentialism. Indeed, like Catriona Moore's (2013 p. 24) observation of the works in the *Backflip* exhibition, they represent 'strategic essentialism', where distinctly 'feminine' aesthetic qualities are deployed to political ends; feminist sensibilities are 'turned inside out and replayed in decadent, camp and provocative form'[38]. I put this into further context in this chapter in describing, more specifically, how the strategic essentialism of the precedents emerges in the play with images of female bodies and various encounters with (parodies of) nature. Hence, they incisively critique, contest and unsettle the patriarchal nexus between 'woman' and 'nature' in these works.

The role of precedents in formulating the research project and the guiding principles of the research are outlined in more depth in the following chapter on methodology (Chapter Four). Though it might seem counter-intuitive to present the precedents before the methodology, the initial relevance of the precedents to the responses in the current practice is outlined here with two aims: to represent an interim conclusion of the research to hand (in the previous two chapters on parafeminism and essentialism), and to suggest how these works, in particular, inspired the creative vision in a way that, quite literally, *preceded* the research design and contributed to the guiding principles.

Media, Aesthetics and Tactics: Feminist Forerunners

Rist, Kelly, Davis and Smart are all engaged in feminist knowledge production through their innovative aesthetics, methods and materials. Most obviously, all four artists employ specific strategies in their representation of women's bodies that target the history of objectification and sexualisation of women. By various means, and with various degrees of emphasis, as I will suggest, the artists enlist parody and humour as tactics for confronting viewers with their (the viewer's) own complicity in the patriarchal politics of representation and the politics of feminism. Tactically, and conscious of the changing media environment in which

[38] Moore's wording of 'strategic essentialism' echoes Spivak's, cited in Chapter Two, although it is not clear whether Moore references Spivak in using this term. Furthermore, the precedent works are not simply political postures, or 'strategic essentialism' in Spivak's sense of pragmatic tactics of unifying women. Moore's description of 'strategic essentialism' refers to the practices of contemporary artists and the dialogue in their works with political art of the past.

their work is received, these artists work with diverse media, methods and aesthetics in their complex modes of address. Rist's video self-imaging works, *Pickelporno* and *Blutclip*, for instance, generate futuristic intersubjectivities, while her femmage in *Massachusetts Chandelier* is more nostalgic. These works, as with those of the other precedent artists, are not constrained to a single register or theme. But the relevance of all the cited works is a common concern with the relationship between women and nature and the diverse applications of 'strategic essentialism'. Hence they address the theoretical interests of this project, and a key guiding principle of the practice.

The relevance of the four artists' works to the other guiding principles, as will emerge in the following sections, is through their methods and materials, as much as their imagery. Variously, they disassemble and reassemble elements and handle materials in ways that connect with past feminisms, and therefore speak to the principle of revisioning and restoration of the past. Their use of appropriation and quotation, distinctly postmodern strategies, emerges in several ways: Davis, for instance, enunciates a reflection on the embodied history of feminist activism (in her restoration of the painting damaged by a suffragette), while Kelly quotes a chorus of voices. Both Kelly's and Davis's deliberate appropriations of figures of Venus spoke to my interest in working with this figure, yet all of the precedent works, arguably, reference the mythical figure through the idea of embodiment of female beauty. If this idea of beauty translates to pleasures available to women viewers of these works – another principle of my practice – then these are not singular. However, to the extent that their work represents a wide sample of the ideas and motivations in contemporary feminist art – from the uncanny erotica of Rist's videos to the restorative feminism of Davis's *Curtain*, the subversive grotesquerie of Kelly's *Magdalenes*, or the shadowy performativity of Smart's puppet-like figures – the precedents strikingly model an expansive range of intellectual and aesthetic pleasures available for women in contemporary feminist art.

However, most consistently, if diversely, the four artists offer precedents for my adoption of cut-and-paste techniques as a method of materially imbuing meaning in my work. The aesthetics of collage, photomontage, assemblage and remix are key elements of all of their practices. Among the various forms of cut-and-paste media is the use of found film and video footage, and Kelly animates her collage. Femmage –

in which meaning is potentially even more pointedly embodied in materials and methods of crafting – is highlighted in the practices of Smart, in particular, and in some of Rist's work. Their various uses of cut-and-paste media and femmage represent strong, almost unbroken, feminist traditions that extend throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

In highlighting the celebratory double-parody of their parafeminism, particular forerunners to the precedent works, I suggest, are Hannah Hoch, Hermine Freed, and Martha Rosler. Collage techniques were largely pioneered by Hannah Höch (1889-1978), who spliced together images of body parts and other elements from printed media. Höch's photomontage works from the 1920s, such as *Lov*e (or *la Petite Melancholie*), 1931 (Plate 23) addressed the social construction of gender and pre-empted the strategic use of parody and humour. From the 1970s, media images that commodify, sexualise and objectify women have been parodied in works like those of Hermine Freed. In her video titled *Art Herstory* (Freed 1974) (Plate 24), she inserts herself into (and out of) the roles of female models from historical paintings. Freed points the camera towards herself, and, at other times towards the viewer, delivering a commentary on the process she is engaged in and the visual and conceptual devices at work in the imaging of women. Freed's work pre-dates digital 'remix' practices by some considerable time. Remix accesses reproductions from multiple sources, including the Internet, but recent women's works in new media echo many of the same concerns that artists have addressed since the 1970s. *Herstory*, for example, with its intersubjective engagement, can be read as a direct antecedent to some of Rist's screen-based projects, where the artist places herself in the role of both object and subject, confusing the boundaries between the two positions and involving the viewer by confusing and destabilising meaning.

The photomontage works of Kelly – in particular the compilation of Venuses in *Lying Women* – also have strong affinities with second wave works like Rosler's *Hot House, or Harem* from the series *Body Beautiful, Beauty Knows No Pain*, 1966-72 (Plate 25). In Rosler's work, women culled from men's magazines are pasted into

a rhythmic assemblage of naked bodies – a pastiche of woman as spectacle[39]. All of these techniques constitute forms of parody with political effects, and they engage in destabilisation of the historical assumptions that link women with nature. It is in the double-parody that celebrates the feminist art that went before that the parafeminist effect most strongly emerges in the precedents.

Plate 23. Hanna Höch, *Love (or la Petite Mélancolie)*, 1931, photomontage, 21.8 x 21 cm.

Plate 24. Hermine Freed, *Art Herstory*, 1974, still from video, 22:00 min.

Plate 25. Martha Rosler, *Hot House, or Harem* from *Body Beautiful, Body Knows No Pain* series, 1966-72, collage on paper, 50.8 x 123.19 cm.

[39] The political impact of Rosler's work was revived when it incited controversy over its reproduction on the dust jacket of the catalogue for *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*. Collage, used in this way, could be seen to undermine the feminist message of the exhibition, and it failed to defetishise the naked models. Jovana Stokic (2013) claimed the critique of pornography and women's objectification inherent in Rosler's original work was diluted in its reproduction on a product to be marketed.

Pipilotti Rist: Fluid Female Bodies

The Swiss artist Rist embraces popular culture and utilises technology to critique and parody past feminist art practices. Rist's self-imaging installation projects are posited by Jones (2006 p. 210) as perfect instruments for the critique of identity in contemporary culture, where identities are 'deeply conditioned if not produced by and through technologies of representation'. Rist's works are appraised as both 'side by side' and 'beyond' earlier feminisms (p. 213) because her projects rework feminist concepts, values and tactics and apply a 'critical perspective on subjectivity as (still) embodied, gendered, and sexed' (p. 210).

Rist's video installation projects are credited by Jones (2006 p. 210) with changing ways of seeing and being seen, because the artist herself is both before the camera and behind it, the centred subject, returning the viewer's gaze. She is able to seize 'a kind of agency that eschews entirely Renaissance to modern conceptions of individual power (the subject placed either metaphorically or literally at the apex of the cone of vision, a positioning that secures for him [sic] the fantasy of bodily transcendence […])' (p. 210). Immersive environments in which the subject is placed engage all of the senses, to communicate 'a *multiple and relational female subjectivity'* where the body is enacted in a complex entanglement of vision, sound and other objects in space (p. 214). Boundaries between subject and object are dissolved because audiences (or participants) are implicated in the experience, rather than simply allowed to view the spectacle.

The identity that Rist creates in her installations and public projects is elaborate and multi-faceted. Humour, desire, anxiety and discordance are evoked, along with pleasurable and sensual experiences of corporeality. She employs the distancing effect of parody in works such as *Pickelporno* (Rist 1992) (Plate 26), in which conventions from pornography and essentialist tropes from visual culture are playfully parodied. Coupling bodies float around in space with a montage of found imagery of nature (birds, grass, waterfalls, fire, fruit, volcanic eruptions, sea). Rendered in the style of a music video-clip, the images are at once familiar and strange. The intention is to convey what the participants in this scenario might experience 'behind the eyelid' (Rist quoted in Castagnini 2015a p. 164). Phallocentric pornography is multiply parodied in the soundtrack (sounds of water

and moaning are prevalent), and through the pacing of the editing (sometimes languorous and sometimes climactic), and with layered visual puns. The male and female bodies are tied to nature, and the male body is also an object of desire. Both male and female genitals detach and float free from the bodies.

In *Pickelporno,* as in other works by Rist, jarring shock is a tactic. Rist insists (in interview with Ross 2000) 'the viewer is the camera', and the camera sometimes ends up tightly focused on or inside bodily orifices. This gaze connects Rist's work with the endoscopic photography of her contemporary, Mona Hartoum (*Corps Etranger*, 1994), and to the so-called 'body core' imagery of second wave artists like Chicago. In Rist's work a surveillance camera is used to provide macroscopic views and distorted perspectives. Rist's work is erotic, embracing sexuality and 'reaffirm[ing] female subjectivity precisely through these once disallowed representations' (Mondloch 2010 p. 235). The eroticism of *Pickelporno* extends the parameters of her medium, in form and content, delivering 'embodied erotic possibilities for viewers that counter […] conventional binary structures' (Jones 2012a pp. 258-273).

The viewer is implicated in the contradictory effects of parody and provocation and the pornographic trope of fetishism in this video (Castagnini 2015a pp. 169-70). This accords with Hutcheon's (2000 p. 32) conception of '[t]he pleasure of parody's irony [which] comes not from humour in particular but from the degree of engagement of the reader in the intertextual "bouncing" […] between complicity and distance'. The viewer's pleasure in *Pickelporno* is experienced as an effect of the oscillation between 'complicity with and distance from embodiment' (Castagnini 2015a p. 171), and Castagnini sees this as exemplary of shifts in the strategic use of humour by feminist artists in recent decades. The double process whereby representations (such as the images of bodies and environments in Rist's videos) are at once legitimised *and* subverted corresponds with Hutcheon's (2000 p. 89) contention that through the process of simultaneously instantiating and ironising images, parody 'signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and distance'. The entanglement of bodies and body parts with images of the natural world in works like *Pickelporno* parodies essentialism *and* pornography. This occurs not least through

play with pornographic conventions and repeated images of water in the climactic final stage of the video that connote 'the liquidity of vaginal lubrication' (Castagnini 2015b p. 175).

The potential for liquids and fluids to 'essentially' link the bodies of women with nature is also parodied in *Blutclip*, 1993 (Plate 27), where Rist directly confronts the viewer with what appears to be menstrual blood flowing over the subject's skin. The camera swoops around her floating, leaky body. The natural fluidity and mutability of female sexuality and bodies assumed in patriarchal ideas about women are exposed and exaggerated. At the beginning and near the end of this video, the naked body is strewn with sparkling gems, and at other times it spins around in space like a cosmic body, with (sampled) images of the earth and the surface of the moon. The body seems, at once, to be tied to the biological function (of menstruation), and a disembodied object, floating free. The music video format of *Blutclip* recalls and subverts the 'sensual environments' of 1980s music clips (Dumont 2009 p. 316), with intentionally impaired technique and focus on unruly female bodies and taboos.

Rist's depictions of fluid bodies in an aqueous world (in this and other works such as *Sip my Ocean*, 1996) are attuned to Luce Irigaray's (1985a, 1985b, 1991) emphasis on the connections between water, women's bodies and sexual pleasure. Associative links between 'violence and beauty' provoke rethinking of these connections (Phelan, Obrist & Bronfen 2001 p. 62). In a review of a recent Rist exhibition[40] Ben Davis (2016) suggests that womb-like environments are created to simulate a world where the distinction between self and environment is blurred and that nature imagery recurs because the artist's viewpoint is 'Edenic, before the Fall, before shame'. This reading is supported by Rist's expression of a utopian view of her work in an interview (with Massimiliano Gioni):

> […] in my work I imagine a lot of new possible ways of being: I imagine that life would be better if we didn't have two genders but perhaps twenty different ones so that they wouldn't be so important or cause so much pain. I imagine that women would have the same space as men. I imagine women as Vitruvian men. I imagine that they can be themselves and also represent humanity. And I think that my

[40] *Pipilotti Rist: Pixel Forest*, 2016-17, New Museum, New York.

> work is an attempt at making visible the way we feel and exist within ourselves [...]. (Gioni & Norton 2016 pp. 70-71)

Rist's critique of patriarchy is thus implicit in her imaginings of a feminised world, and bodily sensation is articulated with parodic wit in all of her works.

Massachusetts Chandelier[41] 2010 (Plate 28), explores bodily sensation in a femmage medium. The work consists of male and female underwear, neither glamorous nor erotic, hung in cascades from a suspended framework in a cathedral-like formation. It is illuminated from inside, and shifting, kaleidoscopic images of plants, sky and body parts are projected on the outside of the underpants. *Massachusetts Chandelier* connects with bodily functions in an irreverent and rambunctious way; underpants clothe the abdomen, which Rist describes as a part of the body which is 'very sacred, the site of our entrance into the world, the centre of sexual pleasure and the location of the exits of the body's garbage' (Rist quoted in Searle 2011). The viewer can walk under and peer into the 'intimate' garments, aware that they are engaging in a voyeuristic act. The use of fabric (clothing) in this work has direct antecedents in second wave femmage, a medium and way of working disparaged at times by critics for perceived essentialism. The medium functions in works like *Massachusetts Chandelier* to bring together 'high' and 'low' art forms in what the reviewer Schjeldahl (2010) describes as 'interchangeable engines of pleasure'. This response suggests how the potential essentialism of femmage is both provoked and subverted through parodic humour, and hence *Massachusetts Chandelier* represents a formidable precedent in parafeminist practice. Indeed Rist's works as a whole can be seen, in Kate Mondloch's (2010 p. 235) view, to signify a distinct and challenging shift in the interconnections between feminism, artforms and exhibition spaces.

[41] Rist chose the city name 'Massachusetts' in the title of the work for the rhythm of the sound of the word, and also for its association with a 'very old state, like this festive old bourgeois' (Rist quoted in Park 2010).

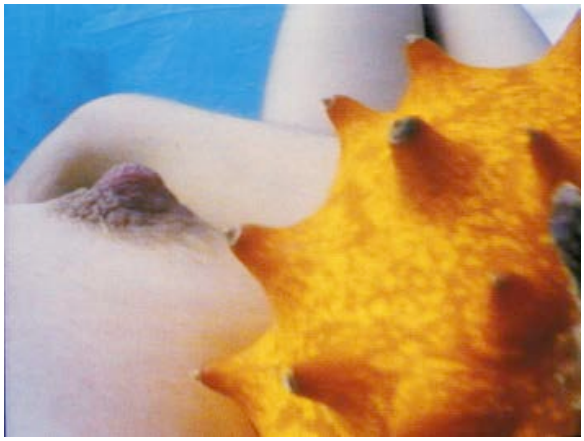

Plate 26. Pipilotti Rist, *Pickelporno* <Pimple Porno>, 1992, video still.

Plate 27. Pipilotti Rist, *Blutclip* <Blood Clip>, 1993, video still.

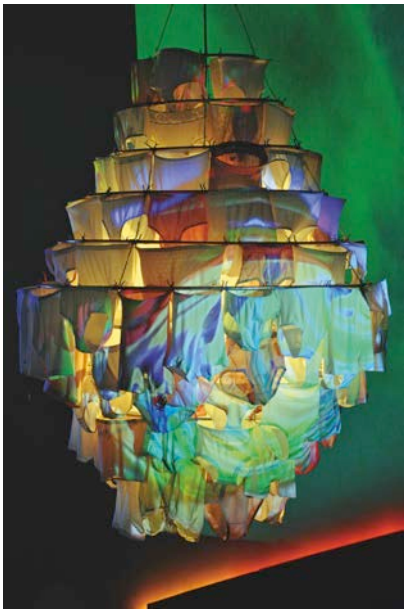

Plate 28. Pipilotti Rist, *Massachusetts Chandelier*, 2010, video installation: two projectors, chandelier made of metal rings and plasticised wire with previously worn and cleaned underpants, two media players and translucent light bulb. Installation view: *Pipilotti Rist: Eyeball Massage*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK, 2011, photo: Linda Nylind.

Kate Davis: Restorative Processes

Creatively reworking past images through collage and assemblage is the political strategy of New Zealand-born, Scotland-based Davis. She brings the past into contemporary consciousness in works like *Curtain i-vii*, 2011 (Plates 29 and 30). She references and reiterates historical acts of aggression, both *against* and *by* women of the suffrage movement in the United Kingdom. Davis replicates Velasquez's *Rokeby Venus* (also known as *Venus at Her Toilet*) (1647-51) where Venus is painted as a naked and beautiful woman, gazing at her mirrored reflection. The work recalls the long history of the deity's representation as a vehicle for abstract notions of idealised, objectified and passive feminine beauty. Velasquez's painting was slashed in 1914 by the suffragette Mary Richardson, a supporter of Emmeline Pankhurst (who had been imprisoned), and was duly renamed by Richardson as '*Mrs Pankhurst'* (Gell 1998 p. 64). Richardson is quoted as saying: 'I have tried to destroy the picture of the most beautiful woman in mythological history as a protest against the government for destroying Mrs Pankhurst, the most beautiful character in modern history' (Freedberg 1989 p. 502). The *Rokeby Venus* canvas was restored by staff at the National Gallery in London, but a photograph of the slashed painting survived.

In a series of seven digitally reproduced poster prints of Velasquez's *Venus*, Davis collaged photocopies of the painting as it existed briefly before being restored. Her reproduction of the painting, superimposed with the photographic record of the defaced painting on a museum poster of the restored work, is thus remediated. The work is replicated, framed and installed, salon-style, on a dark-red painted wall – more reminiscent of a museum from an earlier era than a contemporary exhibition space. Mary Richardson's defacement of the painting is replicated by Davis to create a new intervention in the historical record; a pasted, degraded, black and white photocopy disrupts the smooth-skinned illusion of reality in the original work. The 'restorative process that made her emphatically whole again for the viewer's delight' is undone, suggests Horne (2015 p. 47). Davis's work constitutes a feminist intervention into art history (and restoration history) – an act of recovery that

references the politically motivated act of Mary Richardson with her knife[42]. The installation work by Davis thus serves to reveal to new audiences what Horne (2015 p. 48) calls 'peripheral historical moments' of feminist disruption. Davis has made several additional works that also draw on art-historical and other archival material to reclaim or reinvent histories, often connecting the material form of the female body with political meaning. *Who is a Woman Now* (2008), *Disgrace ii* (2009), *Reversibility (Militant Methods)* (2011) and *Having Put Herself in the Picture* (2012) are further examples of Davis's projects of recollection and revisioning. *Curtain i-vii,* while reminiscent of an earlier museological context in its style of display and its use of archival material, is not, however, nostalgic for the past. Rather, in her reworking of the art-historical canon from a feminist perspective, Davis finds political potential in past moments. She responds to the ambiguities – both aesthetic and political – in art-historical works and, through parodic processes, makes them accessible for present audiences. In this sense, her tactics can be seen to give fresh impetus to feminism's past politics (Horne 2015 p. 47).

Davis's method of drawing on archival material can be 'a powerful form of reactivation' of the lives of women who have been obscured, exposing their relative invisibility by reinstating, valorising and fixing a place for them (Zapperi 2013 p. 45). In this sense, her works connect with Pollock's (2007) call for a 'virtual feminist museum' and for recognition that times and places of rupture or trauma might be potent sites for innovation by contemporary feminist artists. As noted in Chapter One, the potential to embrace works of this kind, where issues of recollection – what is retained, and what is excluded from recorded history or the archive – are addressed is an area that Jones overlooks in her model of parafeminism. The crucial issue for Pollock (2007) is how works might be displayed, and what new readings of history might emerge from new juxtapositions. Works such as Davis's *Curtain i-vii* that explicitly invoke past feminisms are particularly potent in this context.

[42] In a newspaper interview in the London Star in 1952 (quoted in Nead 1997 p. 37), Mary Richardson added to her reasons for attacking the Velasquez *Venus*: 'I didn't like the way men visitors to the gallery gaped at it all day.'

Plate 29. Kate Davis, *Curtain i-vii*, (detail), 2011,
digital fine art print, 64 x 84 cm framed.

Plate 30. Kate Davis, *Curtain i-vii* (installation view), 2011,
digital fine art prints, 7 parts each 64 x 84 x 4 cm.

Deborah Kelly: Bodies Cut-and-Pasted

Cut-and-paste processes are a major part of Australian artist Kelly's political practice of imaging women, gender and sexuality. She employs collage to compile both digital prints and animated videos, and her works in both media appropriate and reconfigure past imagery. The mythical figure of Venus is a recurring motif in her work. Mediated bodies, including images of naked women from the Western art-historical canon, predominate in works like *Lying Women*, 2015 (Plate 31), a stop-motion animation in which printed reproductions of Venuses and models in 'supine pudica' pose (see Chapter Five) are enumerated. In an ABC Radio National interview with Julie Ewington (2016), Kelly describes the collaged paper Venuses in

Lying Women as having been 'rescued', because they were cut from old art history text books, with all their variations of scale, colour and print quality apparent. In *Lying Women*, Kelly records hands moving around hundreds of cut-outs of the often-reproduced paintings. She utilises the disruptive potential of collage in a way that is both playful and serious, toying with the capacity of many of the appropriated images to incite outrage and offence in some audiences at the time of their creation. Kelly wondered whether her cut-and-paste women 'could have a revolution' (Kelly & Ewington 2016). This work forms part of a re-evaluation and simultaneous parody of second wave feminist artwork, directly referencing Rosler's *Hot House, or Harem* (1966-72), mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Beastliness, 2011 (Plate 32) synthesises photomontage with digital animation techniques. In this work Kelly fashions hybrid creatures from cut-outs of human and animal parts and plants. Bodies fragment and multiply, and, as in Rist's video pieces, parody and eroticism interact. The chimerical characters give the appearance of taking pleasure in their on-screen dancing and cavorting. A surreal or monstrous aesthetic emerges in this work where women's bodies are spliced together with creatures which 'already exist in the vernacular of the feminine' (Rackham 2012) – birds, foxes, bunnies, tigers and chicks – and with this method Kelly (2013) unveils and mocks the historical linking of woman with nature. In an exhibition statement, Kelly (2013) also refers to the work's humorous exploration of metaphors for reproductive technologies in an era in which 'miraculous conceptions are ordinary, death is deferred, biology is no longer destiny'. The bodies depicted are neither stable nor predictable, and while intimately linked with the natural world, they are expeditiously depicted as not *natural*.

Kelly's collage-based works on paper are also concerned with the imaging of bodies, and they aspire to expose and parody patriarchal fine art imaging conventions and popular media tropes. They include: *The Magdalenes (Praise)*, 2012 (Plate 33); and *Intransigence of Venus #4*, 2014 (Plate 34). *The Magdalenes (Praise)* festoons a digitally printed life-size female figure with plant and animal fragments that are capable of interpretation as tattoos, jewellery or outgrowths. This work was a precursor to a large collaborative series that involved volunteers collaging elements onto twenty life-sized photographic portraits of naked human bodies. In the process,

the volunteers could consider their own relationship to gender and imagery. For the series titled *Venus Variations* Kelly employs a simple collage technique, splicing together body parts and other images from printed media. *Intransigence of Venus #4*, forms part of that series. The collage couples an image from prehistory, the figurine known as the *Venus of Willendorf*[43], with the impossibly long, stockinged legs of a model; the legs are topped by the *Willendorf's* squat head and torso. These distortions, together with the fondling hands, make grotesque comedy out of the practices of sexualisation of women. Kelly's *Venus Variations* collages and works in various media construct new, parodic, identities, and the effects are 'ironic and playful', rather than 'scornful and ridiculing', in accord with Hutcheon's (2000 p. 32) description of postmodern parody.

Plate 31. Deborah Kelly, *Lying Women* (detail), 2015, still from animation, 3:05 min.

Plate 32. Deborah Kelly, *Beastliness*, 2011, still from animation 3:17 min.

[43] The so-called Venus figurines, such as the *Venus of Willendorf*, are described in Appendix 3.

Plate 33. Deborah Kelly, *Praise* from *The Magdalenes*, 2012, archival print on paper with collage, 206 x 112 cm.

Plate 34. Deborah Kelly, *Intransigence of Venus #4*, 2014, collage on cotton paper, 42 x 32 cm.

Sally Smart: Bodies Articulated and Material Woman

Smart, another Australian artist, combines irony and play in a theatrical mode in generating critical perspectives on women's embodied experiences from historical and contemporary perspectives. Her media can be described as femmage, in the form of cut, printed and folded fabrics, applied, often directly, to the walls of exhibition spaces. There is a performative aspect to the process of cutting, stitching and pinning of printed and painted cloth and photographic components that valorises processes that are traditionally associated with feminised labour or 'women's work'. Smart's methods entail creating moveable components (arms, legs, heads and dresses, for example) that can be reconstructed in new formations in new settings. The effect is strongly suggestive of puppet-play and relates to ideas concerning the malleability of identity. Hybridised figures are assembled with elements from the natural world (insects and branches are recurring motifs) in these installations.

The title of Smart's *In Her Nature (Performativities),* 2011 (Plate 35) alludes to both the essentialist assumption of inherent attributes of feminine character, in the ironic linking of 'her' to 'nature', and to Smart's interest in gender performativity. Floating tree trunks and insects, with women's body parts and clothing, create chimerical creatures and form a tableau. These (interchangeable) parts are stylised and fragmented. There is awareness in the assembled figures of the history of connection between woman and nature, along with a desire to invert and parody the connection. Historical references are made in fragments of photographically recorded costume designs by early modernist artists for the Ballets Russes and other dance theatres[44].

In *Choreographing Collage* (from *The Pedagogical Puppet* series), 2012-16 (Plate 36), dissected dance costumes are incorporated into performance and video. Traces of bodies, historical and contemporary, appear in this work where choreographed dance appears among other components of the installation. The construction and performance of feminine identity is again a critical element in this work. Through her choice of materials and processes, Smart strives to destabilise the hierarchies of media in which 'feminine' traditions of craft and decoration are

[44] Recurring motifs in Smart's installations include traces of architectural frames that allude to the stage designs by the sculptor Isamu Noguchi for Martha Graham dance works (Hammond, K 2011 p. 15).

subordinate to fine art forms. A subtle aesthetic sensibility is involved, but the mural-sized installations are far from delicate in scale.

Smart (2001) describes how her methodology entails first thinking about the body and its meanings in the world: 'inevitably the discourse begins with the body, a forensic activity, an external and internal examination of the body environment: clothes, house, furniture, landscape'. In the next phase, this thinking becomes:

> an anatomy lesson, where dissected parts are examined and reconstructions are made for explanations. Inevitably the conclusion is like a puzzle-picture: a maze of fugitive parts; landscape parts become human parts: but whether the lines, shapes and colours appear abstract or representational there is an assemblage of parts. However, the composition is unstable, a chimera: the picture is impaired. (Smart 2001)

In *Choreographing Collage* the element of text is incorporated as image in the form of blackboard notations, and connoting ideas in the process of unfolding. Three-dimensional, Dadaesque puppets speak directly of the articulation of bodies and their parts. Shadows also form part of the visual experience, hinting at the instability that Smart refers to (in the quote above), along with shadowy associations with the unconscious mind, dreams and other figments of the imagination (Hart 2002). Smart's method of constructing the hybrid figures for her tableaux, where both material and conceptual layering occurs, playfully engages with parody and recollection of both real and imagined histories.

Plate 35. Sally Smart, *In Her Nature (Performativities)* (detail), 2011, synthetic polymer paint, ink, oil pastel, linen, cotton velvet, collage, 350 x 720 cm.

Plate 36. Sally Smart, *Choreographing Collage (*from *The Pedagogical Puppet* series) (detail), 2012-16, synthetic polymer paint, ink, cotton velvet, collage, video, steel, cotton, string, rope, pins, cardboard, photographs, chalk, pastel, glue, 1150 x 332cm.

Towards the Current Practice

Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart's projects utilise images or imaging tactics that draw on 'preformed' artistic material (Rose 1993 p, 52), especially patriarchal constructs of women and their bodies. Past images are recalled, and past imaging conventions playfully parodied. Restoration of women's bodies, through the dismembering and re-membering of newly juxtaposed parts occurs in the work of all four artists, though in diverse ways, as shown in this chapter. Re-workings of Venus, the mythic figure, appear directly in the works of Davis and Kelly, suggesting how classical figures might be reinvigorated in a contemporary, feminist practice and playing a part in my selection of Venus and the Furies as motifs in the research practice.

Although Rist's installation works are predominantly based in the medium of video, and my practice utilises video projection in a relatively minor way, her works are informative for the cut-and-paste aesthetic, albeit in another medium. Rist mixes sensual bodies with (stereotypical) elements from the natural world, highlighting and playfully parodying the historical associations between women and nature that abound in fine art and popular culture. In this sense, her works are a model for parafeminism. Conceptually, her works accord with my interest in how parafeminism can be adapted and extended in contemporary practice, drawing on archival material

that evokes recollections of the past, but at the same time uses parody to highlight the legacy of essentialist tendencies in earlier feminist oeuvres. Rist's *Massachusetts Chandelier* especially informs the choice of femmage media, which evokes second wave feminist use of textile fabric in combination with video projection.

Kelly's adoption of the motif of Venus is richly intertextual and intersects with the guiding principles for my practice, particularly in relation to pleasure for women in the act of looking, and with the politics of the 'natural' body. The 'intransigence' of Kelly's mutant Venus employs parody playfully, and as constructive critique. Davis's *Curtain i-vii* also resonates strongly with the practice in influencing the selection of Venus as a motif. Representations of Venus, by both Davis and Kelly, utilise the mythological deity of love and beauty as a motif for exploring ideas about femininity in imaging, and how past iterations can be used in a contemporary context to invert historical constructions. They thus accord with my project, suggesting how the parodic re-visioning of Venus and other classical figures might offer strategies for making the ideological tropes in visual culture apparent in the project at hand.

Multiples and repetition are deployed by Davis, Kelly and Smart as tactics for emphasising the mediated nature of their work. They engage variously with repetition of the art-historical past. Each of the artists uses collage-related media, and their choice of materials and processes can be understood as striving to destabilise the hierarchical distinctions that attach to media associated with the past and feminist reinterpretations of craft and decoration. In this respect in particular, their work references second wave feminist practices outlined in the preceding chapters. The artists cited as precedents make images of sexed and sensual women's bodies, and parody the idea of 'nature'. In this respect, and in their utilisation of materials and processes once criticised as essentialist, they adopt strategic and parodic essentialism. In so doing, Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart rise to the 'formidable challenge' presented at the start of the chapter, of 'rehumaniz[ing], repoliticiz[ing] and decoloniz[ing] our own bodies' (Gómez-Peña 2014 p. 208). The artists are parafeminist peers and as such they provide a professional context for the research practice, and hence a crucial element of methodology, discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four – Methodology and Research Design:

An Interconnective Model of

Creative Practice Research

> *Knowledge is an activity; it is a* practice *and not a contemplative reflection.* It does things. *(Grosz 1995 p. 37)*

Creative Practice Research (CPR) as a methodology involves a complex interaction between theory and practice. It is characterised by Barbara Bolt (2006 p. 4) as a form of 'double articulation', whereby 'theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory'. Estelle Barrett (2014 pp. 1-6) describes this interaction as a movement between the 'materials of making and thought' in which a focus on a central research question leads to the emergence of new knowledge in the making of the works for exhibition. The process of developing new works involves formulation of ideas and plans for new work, grounded in observation and the collection of information, and the development of those ideas in and through the handling of materials or media. Attention to these processes, Barrett (2014 p. 3) argues, can expand 'visual, verbal and other forms of language, thereby allowing new objects of thought to emerge through cycles of making and reflection'. In Bolt's (2006) model, the emerging works are critiqued at stages during the development, and are subjected to external critique through public exhibition. The successes and limitations are considered, analysed and carried forward in the creation of new works and the exposition of some of the same works in new or expanded installations.

In the formulations by Bolt (2006) and Barrett and Bolt (2010, 2014), visual argument can be seen to occur in practice, where 'understandings of the way in which knowledge emerges and functions' can be disclosed through the methodologies of artistic research (Barrett 2014 p. 1). A precept for both Bolt and

Barrett is Paul Carter's (2004) notion of 'material thinking', where the artist's intelligence comes together with processes of production, stressing the centrality of the handling of materials in the activity of conceptualising and making new works of art. Carter (2004 pp. 180-182) emphasises the need for the 'craft base' of the various disciplines of visual practice (including hybrid forms) to be recognized and valued in creative research as a unique form of discourse, or 'material signs'. Taking up this idea, Bolt (2006 p. 12) suggests that through the artist's reflection on the work they have crafted, the distinct form of knowledge that emerges from the research process can upset prevailing paradigms within the field of practice and hence potentially 'reconfigure theoretical positions'. The exegesis goes beyond describing and contextualising the artist/researcher's practice, and its role is to 'reveal' the artworks.

In this chapter, I will explain the Interconnective model of CPR that is devised in this project, and its development from the 'research question' model (Milech & Schilo 2004, 2013), and the 'hybrid connective' model (Hamilton 2014a, 2014b; Hamilton & Jaaniste 2009a, 2010, 2014). These models pose similar components of the CPR process, and Hamilton and Jaaniste offer a particular fusion of the stages of research and practice that benefits the approach in this project. Their theory (2014 p. 234) also models a role for the artist/researcher's voice in the process of critical reflection on past practice, the impulses behind that work, and, with hindsight, its limitations. The particular innovation of my Interconnective model is the adaptation of Hamilton and Jaaniste's (2009b p. 6) idea of 'guiding principles' as a formal element of the model. The model is detailed hereafter, along with the guiding principles for the current practice. First, I describe the framework of the critical reflection on past practice with which I commenced the research towards the current practice.

Critical Reflection on Past Practice: Media and Methods, Materials and Motifs

My interest in the body as a motif of feminist art, and the motivation to activist practice, originated (as noted in the Introduction) in my early training and the sense of frustration with restrictions imposed on women artists. As my career developed in a period of feminist research and retrieval of women missing from art-historical archives – the 'find the woman' phase of feminism – small, personal incidents as well as broader cultural and political movements influenced the

evolution of ideas and directions for an activist feminist practice. These personal and political forces converged in shaping my early practice when, as a young visual art student at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, I prepared for the assessment of a unit of art history. Students were advised that all the works to be identified in a slide-test would be selected from the popular reference book, *Janson's History of Art: The Western Tradition*[45]. There were hundreds of plates in the book, and passing the test involved memorising all of them. It became apparent that, in the entire history of art (as documented by Janson to 1969), there was not a single female artist considered worthy of inclusion, either mentioned by name or illustrated[46]. This was at a time (the early 1970s) when considerable feminist investigation in a number of fields, leading to the rediscovery of women creators largely missing from historical records, was underway. The revelatory publications – cited in the Introduction – on women artists by Tufts (1974), Sutherland-Harris and Nochlin (1976) and Greer (1979) were yet to appear, nor had Nochlin then published 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' (1971) in *Art News*[47]. The near-total exclusion of women artists in art history text books has been commented on extensively, notably by Parker and Pollock (1981), and Janson's book was not the only one identified[48].

The personal realisation of the profound injustice of this exclusion of women artists from the art historical canon, at a time when women graduates already outnumbered men as a percentage of the visual art student cohort in Australia, had a lasting impact on my practice. In the climate of discovery in the 1970s, and following my initial training, women were asserting greater social and political strength, and the Women's Art Register was established in Melbourne in 1975, though I was not involved with this important organisation beyond joining and submitting a set of slides of early work. Artworks by women, now recognized as feminist in intent, and private collections of work by long-neglected Australian

[45] First published in 1962, Janson's book has been credited with creating a patriarchal and linear model for textbooks, where innovation is seen to descend from one great (male) artist to another, and where a 'who's in' and 'who's out' celebrity culture for artists is fostered (Peers 2006).
[46] After Janson's death in 1982, new editors added a small number of female artists in subsequent editions, but some of those artists disappeared again with new editors and new editions; the hold of a few women artists who made it into the textbook remained tenuous, and this continues to today. In the most recent (8th) edition (Davis, P et al. 2016), Louise Bourgeois, for example, is not included.
[47] Although first published in 1971, this essay did not appear in *Art News* until 1973, when it received a much wider readership.
[48] *The Story of Art* (Gombrich 1967), another popular art history textbook of the time, also totally excluded women artists.

women artists, were beginning to be exhibited. In 1975, the feminist writer Lucy Lippard conducted a lecture tour in Australia, and, in 1976, a collective began publishing *LIP: A Journal of Women in the Visual Arts*, which continued until 1984. While these influences and other experiences were shaping my thinking, a way of making artworks with the potential to affect change in how women are perceived was slow to emerge.

My initial efforts were more intuitive than theoretically informed and, today, I can reflect that these were stirrings of my interest in art as a medium of activism. A book by Marianne Wex, *Let's Take Back our Space: 'Female' and 'Male' Body Language as a Result of Patriarchal Structures* (1979), was a catalyst for translating my ideas and attitudes into visual practice, and a series of feminist, activist works began. Wex had photographed hundreds of men and women of various ages, going about routine activities in Europe (crossing the street, waiting for a bus, sitting on a train), and these images were accompanied by her observations about gendered 'body language' – a term that had more currency then than now. Wex juxtaposed her candid photographs with advertising images collected from the popular press, in which models posed in often-exaggerated versions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' body language. Wex (1979) observed that the female models were frequently posed in erotically charged, 'proffering' positions. *Let's Take Back Our Space* also featured a range of figurative works from various art-historical eras and geographies that illustrated bodies as cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity.

Inspired by Wex, I began a series of lithographs (Plate 37) focusing on 'body language'. I collaged imagery that situated typifying representations of women and girls in altered contexts. Enlarged and somewhat degraded photocopied images from popular media were transferred to lithographic stones, sometimes repeated, and drawn into. The key figures were juxtaposed with historical images or artworks, and all the figures were visually constrained in a grid-like format, intended as a metaphor for social, political, economic, religious and other structures. This series achieved various levels of success in communicating ideas to audiences, and, from a current perspective, it was rather too subtle or obscure in its message to have the desired effect on viewers' perceptions. Another series of prints from the mid-1980s entitled *The Women We Wanted to Look Like* (Plate 38), which consisted of black and white

linocuts, was also developed from photocopied media images. The gathered images were enlarged or reduced and their details flattened by the simple reprographic process, then collaged, re-photocopied and transferred onto the linoleum. Hand-carving and subsequent printing delivered the stark positive/negative imagery of black and white relief prints. These works reimaged models, actors and other celebrities who, at points in time, epitomised standards of beauty aspired to by young women. The linocuts attempted to critique the representation of women in popular media by challenging imposed ideals of physical beauty and physical appearance (a popular practice in feminism at the time). The message was more directly communicated than in the previous series, and both groups of prints constituted the beginnings of a deep and ongoing concern with exposing ways in which patriarchal values are figured as embodied by women. Several other series of collage-based works on paper continued to articulate these concerns, with digital print media joining traditional printmaking techniques.

Much later, as a Master of Creative Arts candidate, two series of works continued and expanded these interests. Both involved modular components and seriality, fragmentation of female figures, gridded forms of presentation and the use of digital printing processes and mixed media, including collage and femmage. The first series (Plate 39) consists of small works, commenced as cut and torn paper collages of women sourced from magazines from past decades. The collages were manipulated in a digital environment then printed on canvas. Parody and humour are at work in these images, with the aim to expose the absurdities of objectification and commodification of women represented in popular media. The prints were created as separate units, but intended for hanging in groups for audiences to make visual connections. As old magazines were the source material, the distance of time and the effects of memory enabled the viewer to more readily identify the normative tropes at work. The reimaged women, often ‘pin-up girls’ or models from advertisements, are situated in (collaged) built environments or juxtaposed with elements from ‘nature’ (ripe fruit and other vegetation, fragments of sea and sky or painted, idealised landscapes). The strategy applied in these works is that described by Buszek (2006 p. 7) as ‘bait and switch’ – where the appropriation of icons and stereotypes which relate to conventions of representing women as sexual objects becomes a means to subverting them. The types of appropriated imagery used

‘assert[s] the pleasure and power feminist women may find in them’ (Buszek 2006 p. 7). Art historian Kate Linker (1996 p. 17) uses the phrase ‘seduce then intercept’ to describe a similar process. Linker refers to Barbara Kruger’s quotation of tropes from advertising media (rather than the eroticised imagery of the pin-up girl), but the tactic is analogous; the viewer is enticed into involvement with the imagery through their familiarity with the figure and its aesthetic pleasure, then, made aware of their complicity with the demeaning limits of the stereotype, is induced to move towards critique.

The second series of works from this project (Plate 40) consisted of approximately life-sized representations of historical women (and in one case – a so-called Venus figurine – prehistorical), with each figure comprised of ten 30 x 30 cm mixed media canvases. The figures were women who were once largely ‘lost’ from historical records – deliberately obscured, erased, substantially re-written, conflated with other historical characters or forgotten – and resurrected by feminist researchers. Ten different media were used to develop each of the ten panels making up a single figure, a device – along with the fragmented, gridded presentation – intended to emphasise the ways in which the images of the recovered women are assembled from found, fragmentary information. Various printmaking processes, paint, encaustic wax and a range of femmage materials (including textiles, buttons and beads) were among the media employed. The aesthetic challenge of making coherent imagery from works with multiple media and materials, as well as multiple parts, was significant but manageable. However, my plan to create a ‘hall of honour’ for the rediscovered women was discontinued.

Working on this project, and concurrently surveying the literature concerning the imaging of women in art, I became mindful of Pollock’s (2008/1988 p. 12) warning that attempts to reverse the omission of women from the art historical canon, while necessary, could become a ‘negative enterprise with limited objectives, namely correction and improvement’. Pollock (2008/1988 pp. 1-24) questions whether adding women to art history is the same as producing feminist art history, and concludes that the process of rediscovering and recording female artists would not, by itself, insert those women into the mainstream of art history; it would merely

create a parallel history[49]. While my works featured 'lost' and resurrected historical women, and not specifically women excluded from the art canon, I came to recognise that previous efforts to resurrect and revision historical figures from obscurity have not prevented important women from slipping from the collective memory and needing to be rediscovered again (Juhasz 2001 p. 2). Furthermore, the imaging of historical women links to a strand of feminist practice which, like Spero's oeuvre, has been criticised for essentialism (though, as noted in Chapter Two, such criticism was not always entirely justified). Two of the ten-panel portraits of 'lost women' were exhibited as part of an exhibition titled *Imagining and Imaging* at Umbrella Studio, Townsville in 2012, and Four were exhibited at the Lux Gallery, James Cook University, Cairns, in 2016. What persists, or is adapted, from that work in my current practice, however, is the portrayal of mythic women – specifically the classical deities, Venus and the Furies.

Some of the working methods and visual devices of the earlier practice (as well as activist motivations), are also much expanded in the current creative practice research project, especially collage and femmage media (defined and discussed below), grid-like structures, repetition and digital manipulation of media imagery. These elements are used for perceived efficacy in an activist practice, and for the sensual, aesthetic possibilities offered. The female body is a constant motif in all of these works, past and present, and is consistently the focus of the activist discourse that reveals and, in the process, destabilises prejudices and assumptions about women. This process also turns on the initial appeal to the pleasure of the spectator.

It will now be clear that, throughout my professional creative life, thinking about feminist theory has accompanied the making of artworks in an ongoing project of contributing to the critique of patriarchal imagery, and hence, to a vision of women beyond patriarchy. Projects that were formulated as activist works have formed an abiding aspect of my professional practice. Entry into PhD research challenged me to reconceptualise this practice as *research*, and it is in this context that I came to CPR as a methodology that underpins my approach to activist art-making. In the following section, therefore, I discuss the relevance of CPR to the overall project design and the making of the exhibited works, and I suggest how CPR

[49] This is part of the background to the call by Pollock (2007), outlined in Chapter One, for a 'virtual feminist museum'.

generates the new knowledge of activist art and feminist theory that emerges in the practice. In outlining the genesis of the Interconnective model of CPR methodology, I also describe and reflect on the guiding principles with which I approached the making of the works and which deepen the interconnectivity of the theoretical and creative elements of the research practice.

Plate 37. Left: Laurel McKenzie, *Untitled*, 1985, lithograph, 56 x 38 cm; Right; Laurel McKenzie, *Untitled*, 1985, lithograph, 56 x 38 cm.

Plate 38. Left: Laurel McKenzie, *The Women We Wanted to Look Like i*, 1986, linocut, 66 x 50 cm; Right; Laurel McKenzie, *The Women We Wanted to Look Like v*, 1986, linocut, 66 x 50 cm.

Plate 39. Left: Laurel McKenzie, *Beautify ii*, 2013, archival pigment print on canvas, 30 x 30 x 4.5 cm; Right; Laurel McKenzie, *Lovely*, 2013, archival pigment print on canvas, 30 x 30 x 4.5 cm.

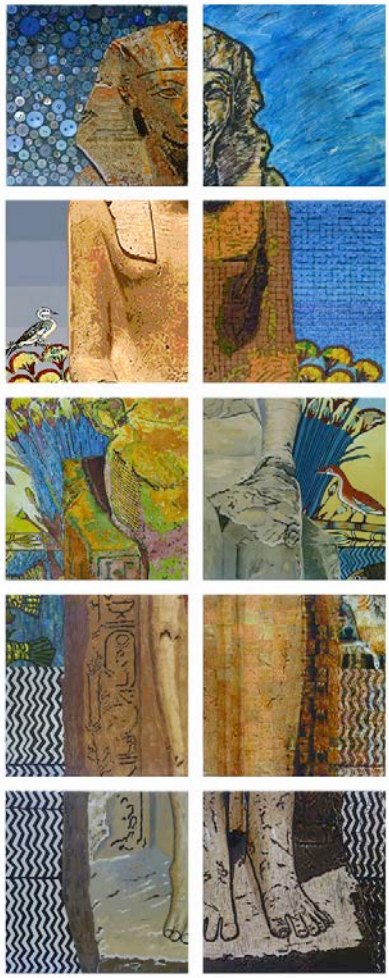

Plate 40. Laurel McKenzie, *Hatshepsut*, 2012, mixed media on canvas, 65 x 170 x 4.5 cm.

Creative Practice Research (CPR): A Model for Integrating Theory and Practice

CPR is an integrated mode of visual arts research. The Interconnective model of CPR presented here is initially premised on the 'research-question' model advocated by Milech and Schilo (2004, 2013) which combines elements of 'context' and 'commentary' models of research design in creative practice research. The context model provides the historical and theoretical context for the creative practice. It 'deals with theoretical, historical and disciplinary matters' (Milech & Schilo 2004 p. 7). This model is posited as situating creative production as research, but without adequately clarifying the exact nature of the relationship between the creative work and the exegesis. The commentary model focuses on the practice in a reflective way and gives insights into the realisation of the practice. It elucidates, reports on, or offers commentary on the creative work, but a division between theory and practice is maintained (Milech & Schilo 2004 pp. 6-8). The research question methodological approach provides a way of understanding the relationship between the two components of CPR: '[B]oth the exegetical and the creative component of the research thesis hinges on a research question posed, refined and re-posed […] across the several stages of a research program' (p. 9). Both components of the thesis – the written document and the creative production – address the same question, in the autonomous 'languages' of the separate disciplines; the components of the research thus maintain their integrity, but form part of a coherent whole (p. 9).

Hamilton and Jaaniste (2010 p. 39) fuse the context and commentary models of CPR into a version they term a 'hybrid connective model'. This model enables the situation of the researcher's practice within the broader research framework, while it allows the researcher/practitioner a personal voice in the description of their creative practice (the formulation of ideas, analysis, reflection and responses to the challenges of the creative process) (Hamilton 2014a). The contextualising approach might be applied in some sections of the exegesis, and the commentary approach in other sections. The hybrid connective approach consequently 'connect[s] the creative practice and its processes with its broader theoretical and practical contexts' (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2010 p. 39). This methodology allows for what Hamilton (2014a p. 2) describes as a 'dual orientation – looking outwards to the established field of research, exemplars and theories, and inwards to the methodologies,

processes and outcomes of the practice'. The hybrid connective model calls for the researcher to synthesise multiple perspectives; in this way, the practice is connected with the established field, while the methods involved in the unfolding creative practice and how these contribute to innovation and advancement in the field are elucidated. This 'dual orientation' might call for the adoption of different subject positions, styles and 'voices' (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2010 pp. 39-40). In the visual arts field of enquiry, the 'evocative voice' might be used, for example, where it echoes the 'evocative intent of the [created] artefact', and sometimes the first person voice is necessary (Hamilton 2014a p. 9). Thus the hybrid connective approach entails aspects of Hamilton and Jaaniste's (2014 p. 234) evocative practice research which emerges from 'individual preoccupations', as well as specific cultural concerns. The critical reflections on aspects of my previous practice and experience as a feminist artist are therefore described above with reference to the motivations for and the outcomes of the research.

A synthesis of these methodological approaches – the research question model and the hybrid connective model – is adapted further in this CPR project and named *an Interconnective model*. It is illustrated in Figure 1 by a diagram adapted from one designed by Barbara Dover (2008 p. 203). The Interconnective model also reflects Craig Batty's (2016) insistence that in all models of research where visual art (or design) practice is an essential component, the practice 'performs' the research. Making and writing occur simultaneously, and are philosophically tied together, and, furthermore, in describing the creative output, *process* is privileged as the contribution to knowledge. Crucial to the Interconnective methodology is the formulation of considered guiding principles for the practice that envision projected goals. This element I derive from Hamilton and Jaaniste (2009b p. 6)[50], although they do not formalise the guiding principles as an element of the hybrid connective model. I incorporate the guiding principles in the Interconnective model as a bridging element between the contextual framework for the project – past personal experience and motivations, theoretical and philosophical investigations and a survey of the visual arts field – and the creative process of developing new works for exhibition.

[50] Guiding principles are referred to in the context of 'effective', or problem-based practice, more typically associated with research in the design field (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2009b pp. 1-14).

The practice is thus informed and shaped by the guiding principles that are described later in this chapter.

Figure 1[51] therefore illustrates the processes of the interconnective research design, whereby investigations of the theoretical, philosophical and practical fields inform and occur contiguously with the development of the creative practice, moderated by the conceptual narrative of the guiding principles. The creative practice, conceptualised from the 'individual preoccupations' and cultural concerns (about the representation of women's experience in art) evolves within the context of research into feminist visual art and theoretical literature and historical and contemporary precedents of practice, and mediated by the guiding principles. Handling materials and giving shape to concepts in the processes of making and exhibiting the works takes place amidst reflexive internal processes of critique – self assessment and self-evaluation of successes and failures at each stage of the making of the works – and external critique at intervals by colleagues and peers. These processes of internal and external appraisal also drive the direction of the theoretical and practical investigations. The interconnected components of the research practice thus advance concurrently. The knowledge that emerges is embodied in the exegesis and the artworks created, and evidenced in the capacity to generate 'affect through evocation and resonance' (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2014 p. 236).

[51] Figure 1 follows Dover (2008 p. 203) in its general form, with a flow of linked text boxes illustrating the relationship of the components and stages of the research. However, the content of the fields and how they relate to each other in Figure 1 differs substantially from Dover. The figure has been devised to illustrate the interconnective nature of the current research project.

Creative Practice Research – An Interconnective Model

Venus Rising, Furies Raging: Bodies Redressed in Contemporary Visual Art

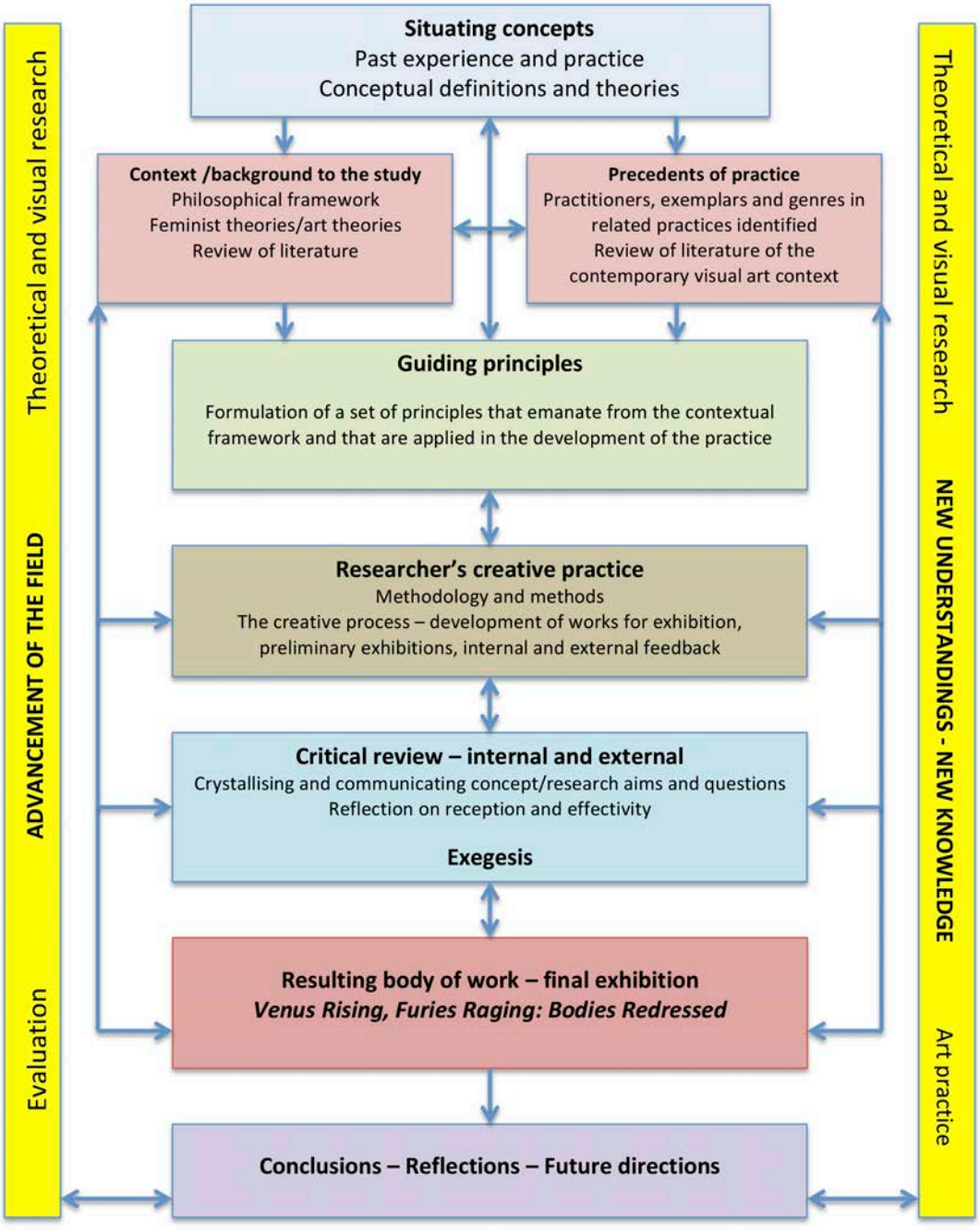

Figure 1. Figure adapted from diagram devised by Dover (2008 p. 203).

Situating Concepts, Applying Context and Background

Approaching the rethinking of the body as a motif in contemporary feminist art practice required initial surveys of the theoretical literature, and the field of feminist art. In the theoretical field, Jones's writing on parafeminism emerged as an influential paradigm that met my interest in revisiting second wave artists in a contemporary context and directly addresses issues in feminist theory and practice concerning the body and representation. The visual art field, however, is broad and constantly evolving. An initial strategy was to create a data repository (see Appendix 1) that spans historical and contemporary feminist art. The primary criterion for inclusion in the repository was that the selected works referred, directly or indirectly, to the body. The range of works sampled includes many well-known and important works, and I added many that are named or discussed in the theoretical literature, and works that I encountered in gallery and museum exhibitions, or that are discussed in reviews sourced for research. I sought to include an expansive list, unrestricted by location or nationality, and I annotated the selected works based on specific theoretical constructions, such as: objectification, sexualisation, gendered roles and symbolism. The list was also annotated with specific methods and strategies, including: collage, photomontage, femmage, performance of femininity, fragmentation, re-membering, parody and humorous critique. Attention was given to the use of particular motifs, especially the use of classical or mythic female figures where they occurred in the oeuvre of the artists listed. This process of recruiting works to the data repository was a key strategy in observing artists' practices and in formulating my specific interest in the body as a figure of the woman/nature nexus. The attention to essentialism was presented by sources on parafeminism, but also developed as a persistent aspect of representations of women in the works listed in the repository.

Assembly of this repository was commenced at the start of the project, and continued concurrently with, and as part of the process of, creating the new works for exhibition. In the course of developing the repository, feminist imaging strategies were appraised for the ongoing value in an activist practice. Compiling the repository helped to synthesise the issues that concerned a large number of artists, and how their choices of motifs, materials and methods functioned to articulate those concerns. This in turn assisted my identification of a small number of artists whom I

considered exemplary in applying parafeminist approaches in their practices and whose work supported the guiding principle of investigating humorous parody, in which the irony is 'playful instead of belittling' (Hutcheon 2000 p. 32). These artists, namely Rist, Davis, Kelly and Smart, were further investigated and are discussed in Chapter Three as precedents of practice. The selection of works in the data repository expanded during the course of the research to encompass artists and works that were not directly (or immediately) relevant to the project at hand, but which form part of the wider framework of feminist practice. Works that represented, or appeared to represent, what Jones describes as impasse (see Chapter One), for example, are included to provide a broader survey of the field. More recently, the data repository holds potential as an ongoing resource and it is proposed to consolidate and store it for future research (by me or other researchers) (see Chapter Six).

Towards New Directions: Media, Methods, Materials and Motifs

Theoretical and artistic research coalesce in the exhibited works. Below, I explain how the artistic and theoretical research led to the decisions regarding the (mythical) motifs chosen to figure the body; and the methodology of formulating guiding principles with which to shape the practice. The guiding principles are crucial interconnective channels for translating the theoretical and artistic ideas derived from the research into a coherent thesis, and as such form a key element of the methodology. As I explain, these represent new directions, and also stem from some abiding interests.

The evidence of the foregoing critical reflections on my past practice (in this chapter) is that a number of methods and motifs persist in my current practice. The use of collage as a technique for imaging the body, and the parodic effects of serial reiteration of images, and the potential for humour are much expanded in the present work. However, through the influence of the guiding principles, innovations are notable in methods and materials whereby collage and digital printing, and three-dimensional works of femmage, and the use of craft practices of sewing and beading, expand the feminist remit. These practices instil the parafeminist character of the practice, and contend with the theoretical debate about essentialism (see Chapter Two). Moreover, in unity, as an exhibited whole, these practices acknowledge and pay tribute to feminist genealogies and notions of memory, and thus connect with, or

at least gesture towards, Pollock's conceptual framework of the 'virtual feminist museum' (outlined in Chapter One).

The question of how to figure the central motif of the body was answered by the convergence of theory and practice. I was initially attracted to depicting the classical deity, Venus, and this was propelled by repeated reference to Venus in theoretical discourses and allusions and themes in feminist art (see Chapters One and Two). As noted earlier, a pre-historical figurine of Venus was among the (un)recovered women of my earlier project. For the research practice, I decided to create an installation revisioning Venus (in the first instance; the Furies followed later) because she represents a feminine archetype whose naked body, in Western imaging traditions, is esteemed as a beautiful object for contemplation – historically, by men, although as the precedents (Chapter Three) suggest, the contemporary pleasures of contemplating Venus are meaningful to women in a range of new ways informed by feminism, and with great scope for parafeminist portrayal. In fact, the work was well underway before I began to recognise the growing appearance of Venus in the work of contemporary artists, like Davis and Kelly, but this reinforced the conviction that this figure offered a meaningful motif. My treatment of Venus, however, brings further dimension through the deliberate sampling and multiplication of the images that reference and disrupt specific canonical art works (explained further in Chapter Five) which are parodied to disrupt the linear histories represented.

Venus is historically portrayed as a passive and mutable figure who can connote a range of ideas and values, and both positive and negative emotions. In the classical Greek and Roman worlds, and in the Renaissance period and beyond, she is a vehicle for the projection of ideals of feminine beauty, linked always to her watery origins. She has been imbued with various moralistic and allegorical connotations, especially during the medieval era. At the time of the Renaissance, when earthly beauty was intertwined with the divine, the skilled artist could instil beauty in a painted image of Venus that would bring it closer to divinity (Silas 2017). Depictions generally strip the figure of individualism and signs of 'reflexive awareness', Diana Tietjens-Meyers (2013 p. 142) contends; she is the opposite of the living, corporeal body. Typically (prior to Manet's *Olympia*, 1863), the gaze of Venus connects with

no one, though in some instances she has an ‘alien subjectivity’ imposed upon her, such as when she gazes at her reflection in a mirror (Tietjens-Meyers 2013 p. 142). Many paintings of Venus (most famously Velasquez’s *Rokeby Venus*) show her looking at herself in a mirror – where the mirror-image functions to cast doubt on the painted figure’s beauty (p. 142), though the mirror is more widely interpreted as a symbol of narcissism. The pictorial tactic of presenting an idealised but static body, robbed of vitality and self-ownership, grants the male spectator permission to stare at her naked body while at the same time elevating himself to the sphere of aesthetic appreciation (p. 142).

When feminist artists and theorists began to critically examine idealised and objectified representations of women – and female nudes in particular – as allegorical signifiers of something else (truth, justice or virtue, for instance), or the embodiment of characteristics including beauty and sin, these readings had become wholly naturalised. And while subsequent generations of feminist artists have attempted to disrupt such associations, the woman/nature visual metaphor lingers in contemporary advertising and some other forms of popular media. My adoption of the motif of the Furies, who are closely related to Venus in mythology, but who are not passive and signify a different set of values, followed a decision to expand the representations of mythic figures to incorporate (and parody) some of those lingering metaphorical associations, specifically from the gameworld branch of popular media. Digital collage techniques facilitated the cut-and-paste method of incorporating disparate appropriated elements into coherent figures. The femmage works are installed with the idea of foregrounding the material grain of the medium and Carter’s (2004 pp. 78-182) notion of material thinking and his approach to creative research as a ‘discourse of material signs’, where the discourse between materials creates and animates the work, and matter conveys knowledge. This understanding is literalised in the installation works to register and unsettle the conceptual representation of women, which is a specific feature and strategy of femmage.

The activist intent of the decisions made in approaching the creative practice are encapsulated in a set of guiding principles that arise from the theoretical literature and the precedents of practice and provide further rationale for the choices of materials, methods, media and motifs. These guiding principles, which form an

element of the Interconnective model of CPR, were outlined in the Introduction and are described at length below.

To connect with and celebrate the achievements of earlier feminist practices while engaging creatively with the history of essentialism

Shifting values and attitudes towards women, inscribed culturally through images of their bodies, are reflected in imaging over the broad span of Western art history. While second wave artists were successful in pioneering new modes of expression that sought to disrupt objectifying stereotypes and focus on women's bodily experiences, some of their strategies drew the critique of essentialism, with enduring implications for the imaging of women in subsequent decades, as discussed in Chapter Two. Parafeminism has suggested ways of thinking and working that draw on valuable aspects of earlier feminisms, where the body is not avoided, but rather celebrated as a motif. The body is sexed and sensual, but it evades essentialist interpretation through the playful parody of normative imaging regimes. Images of mythic women, which have been used by male artists to instantiate a universal category of 'woman', are reiterated to highlight, and thus unsettle, the tropes using materials and techniques championed by second wave artists.

To contest the connection between the body and nature (or what is 'natural') in visual representation

The dualistic, essentialist thinking embodied in Western imaging traditions in which women and their bodies are correlated with the unruly, uncontained aspects of the natural world, and their fixity *in* nature, is traced by Susan Bordo (2004 pp. 33-34) to ancient cosmogonies (mother nature) and to Plato's *Timaeus*. In these sources, she argues, rational organisational systems such as 'the state', which impose order on chaotic nature, are characterised as gender-neutral. In this thinking, 'man' signifies order, geometry and culture (epitomised in Leonardo's *Vitruvian Man*), and 'woman' signifies physicality and nature. Woman is both *mater* (mother) and *materia* (matter) (Nead 1997 p. 18). Images of women as bearers of life, linked to the seasons in their biological cycles – abundant in Western art history – situate women in proximity to nature, and this proximity has been an instrument of women's suppression (Robinson, M 2016).

These links between women's bodies and nature – where 'woman *is* the body' – allow multiple negative imputations: 'distraction from knowledge, seduction away from god, capitulation to sexual desire, violence or aggression, failure of will, even death' (Bordo 2004 p. 5). In this tradition of pitting nature against rationality, not only the body but passion, animality, the primitive, physicality and madness – 'everything that reason excludes' (Plumwood 1993 p. 19) – falls to nature. Notwithstanding some changes over time – and Merchant's (1990, pp. pp. 100-5) view that the romantic tradition elevated both women and nature, and that men's bodies are also linked to nature in this tradition – the general effect has been to consolidate masculine power (Plumwood 1993 p. 20).

The (pre-feminist) naked female body prominent in Western art is described by Lynda Nead (1997 p. 2) as a metaphor for art and connoisseurship more generally. Through the formal conventions of art, the corporeality of living bodies is transcended. The motif of the body has come to 'symbolize the transformation of the base matter of nature into the elevated forms of culture and the spirit' (Nead 1997 p. 2). When conceptualised this way, as unformed matter, the female nude can be seen as a vehicle for the control of the 'unruly body', with the conventions of art situating it 'within the securing boundaries of aesthetic discourse' (p. 2). Feminist scholars, endeavouring to move conceptions of the female body from the side of nature to that of culture, have pointed to the consistent treatment of the body as 'something apart from the true self (whether conceived as soul, mind, spirit, will, creativity, freedom …) and as undermining the best efforts of that true self' (Bordo 2004 p. 5). That which is 'not-body' is elevated and noble, while the body is portrayed as 'the albatross, the heavy drag on self realization' (p. 5).

In their endeavour to understand how the female body is implicated in the construction of gender and sexual difference (as well as other differences), feminist theorists have interrogated the nature/culture dualism in gendered representational practices as part of their analysis of the processes of subjugation and control of women. Braidotti (2011 p. 133), for example, sees efforts to unify nature with culture, enacted on the body of woman, as emanating from the 'political necessity to make biology coincide with subjectivity, the anatomical with the psychosexual, and therefore reproduction with sexuality'. The body has thus come to be posited by

feminists as a site of opposition and resistance to power, and opposition can be undertaken through subversive practices, including artistic practices. When Kruger created *Untitled* (*We Won't Play Nature to Your Culture)*, she was directly confronting the notion of 'men as producers of culture and women as products of nature' (Buszek 2005 p. 8). Other visual strategies developed by feminist artists (see Chapters One, Two and Three) expose the idealised configuration of women's bodies as depersonalised or subdued objects of contemplation, fixed in the cone of vision. These bodies are appropriated in parafeminist mode in the practice.

To recollect, restore and revision images of women's bodies

As noted earlier, reading and thinking about the omission of women artists from recorded art history has been a motivating factor in my own career as an artist, as it has for many others. The 'absence of women's histories in world archives has defined a vision of the human on the pattern of a privileged masculinity', claims Pollock (2007 p. 12); what is seen in the archive shapes where we believe we came from, and hence what we might become. Indeed feminist art practices had their origins in activism aimed at securing greater recognition in the art world, while at the same time critiquing the thinking that had caused their exclusion (Korsmeyer 2012).

Women who began what Pollock (2011 p. 70) describes as the 'radical gesture' of speaking and writing from their particular situations and experiences were responsible for 'opening up the half-empty archive of patriarchal cultures to a fuller understanding of plural, inclusive humanity'. Her concept of a virtual feminist museum evolved from this understanding, and was inspired in part[52] by observation of the art historian Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne,* or Memory Atlas, of the 1920s (Pollock 2007 pp. 11-12). Warburg's collection favoured works that conveyed deep feelings which recurred in cultural memory from prehistory to modernity, and which countered what he saw as the closures of a linear, stylistic approach to art history at the time. It suggested to Pollock a different way of reflecting on artefacts and their meanings, how these might be assembled and displayed, and how alternative histories might be crafted.

[52] Another inspiration for the virtual feminist museum is Sigmund Freud's collection of antique sculptures from around the world, which cluttered his consulting room in Vienna (Pollock 2007 p. 11).

Pollock's concept of the virtual feminist museum is reflected in my thinking about components of the practice, where a linear approach to art history is parodied. What is omitted and what is included in the archive, and the genealogies of aesthetic practice – the arc of imaging traditions in the works that have been accepted into the Western canon, and the lives, stories and careers that have been erased or supressed – forms an underlying part of my approach to making artworks that represent women. Consequently, I have found affinity with artists such as Rist, Kelly, Davis and Smart, described in Chapter Three, for their retrieval and revisioning of histories through the motif of women's bodies. Memory and restoration are also frequently invoked in their works through methods and materials, such as those discussed further below. Recollection involves processes of remembering and collecting (including fragments for reassembly), drawing on and reconfiguring past experiences – a practice literalised in cut-and-paste techniques.

To parody with humour and through processes of quotation and appropriation of imagery

Parody and humour are means of destabilising and criticising systems of representation. Historical and contemporary imagery and media are juxtaposed in the exhibited works in playful and ironic ways as a strategy for exposing or highlighting underlying ideologies, in order to make apparent (and thus to unsettle) patriarchal constructions of women and their bodies. In this parafeminist practice, parody is the process of repetition with critical distance whereby the politics of representation are denoted, following Hutcheon (2002 p. 89), by a 'double process of installing and ironizing', and where 'contesting revision or rereading of the past […] both confirms and subverts the power of representations of history' (p. 91). Reiterated images, though, are not entirely separated from their past context, neither free of values, nor ahistorical. On the contrary, they are a 'value-problematizing, de-naturalizing form of acknowledging the history (and through irony the politics) of representations' (Hutcheon 2002 p. 90). Because current audiences are separated from the original imagery by time and the intervening history of the representations, there is both continuity and ironic difference evoked by that history (p. 90). In this understanding of the parodic effect of quotation or referencing, contradictions are not resolved;

rather, the contradictions in the process of representation itself are brought to the fore (pp. 90-91).

Humour, with its multiple forms and potential for political disruption, remains a pervasive feature of feminist art (as discussed in Chapter One). Ironically, given its prevalence and the use of bodily fluids as a motif, sometimes as shock tactic, the modern word 'humour' originates from Latin 'humor', meaning moisture, including bodily fluids. Ancient and medieval physicians thought that balance between the five cardinal fluids (humors) determined a person's mental and physical disposition. Heather Phillipson, in dialogue with Elina Suoyrjo (2015 p. 90), observes that humour, thus defined, is variance from the norm: 'it's surely no coincidence that the origins of humour are about how a "body" is managed by a system'. She asserts that what becomes humorous is 'our capacity to depart the physical for the metaphysical, to be dis/connected, both attached and detached, looking out, looking in – observing, and also feeling the absurdity of our physical scrape' (Suoyrjo & Phillipson 2015 p. 90). The watery environment from which Venus emerges in canonical paintings depicting her birth, is therefore a ripe source for (humorous) parody.

The use of parody, pastiche and appropriative strategies to intervene and rework motifs from art-historical archives, however, are paradigmatic of feminist art practice, according to Horne (2015 p. 35). This raises the question of the effect of these tactics as *parafeminist* art. I offer that they enter into critical and often overtly humorous engagement with the art historical canon and re-vision and re-cite earlier feminisms in ways that have the potential to augment knowledge of art and feminism.

To embody meaning in materials

Powerful works of art can intervene in 'the production of historical knowledge' argues Meskimmon (2003 p. 16), who contends that this occurs through the processes of manipulation and reconfiguration of materials, ideas and images. Memory, fragmentation, restoration and reconstruction are embodied in and engendered by materials and methods. Of particular importance for this current practice is the use of cut-and-paste media such as collage and femmage, which take

existing materials and reconfigure them. *Collage* is an enduring strategy of activism, as evidenced in the data repository (Appendix 1). Suzanne Anker (2013) claims collage is 'the most revolutionary idea of the twentieth century'. Lippard (1995 p. 25) associates collage with a particularly feminist aesthetic, and she links collage to the dismantling by 1970s feminism of modernism and formalism in art, with the practice of taking-apart and reassembling elements signifying the foretelling of possible futures. The collage aesthetic is characterised as 'positive fragmentation' (p. 136), a concept taken further by Edward Colless (1996 pp. 304-305), who describes 'the poetics of fragmentation' in relation to all art forms where historical components are appropriated, assembled, inserted, sampled and mixed.

The feminist practice of collage emerges from antecedents in both the domestic sphere (hobby or folk arts such as decoupage), and the fine arts, where, from the time of the surrealists, the medium served women artists' desires to 'use political consciousness as a glue with which to get the pieces in some sort of order' (Lippard 1995 p. 168). In contrast with Lippard's adhesive analogy, Gwen Raaberg (1998), frames collage, since its inception in the fine arts, in terms of its 'oppositional' praxis. Incorporated in cubist works by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in the early decades of the twentieth century, collage subsequently served a succession of avant-garde art movements (futurists, Dadaists and surrealists), with its supposedly revolutionary potential. Found and fragmented materials formed part of an impulse to disrupt realist representational conventions and were used by Dadaists and surrealists to express social critique and psychological inquiry by juxtaposing disparate elements and jarring viewers into different perceptions of reality (Raaberg 1998).

In support of the revolutionary potential of collage, Rosalind Krauss (1981 p. 23) contends (in relation to Picasso's use of pasted elements), that it 'effects the representation of representation'. The capacity of the medium to disrupt ideological (as opposed to visual) conventions is questioned, however, by Craig Owens (1994a p. 282), who sees the introduction of collage as 'the moment at which the logic of consumption definitively entered the work of art'. Nevertheless, the feminist use of collage differs from its application in the arts more generally. According to Lippard (1995 p. 136), being a woman artist is 'a collage experience', whereby the feminist

identity itself remains a collage of dissimilar and not necessarily harmonious parts. In her view (p. 168), 'putting things together without divesting them of their own identities is a metaphor for cultural democracy'. While this interpretation of woman as collage is dismissed by Pollock (2011 p. 73) as an essentialist one, whereby certain culturally desirable attributes or fantasies can be too easily imposed on women, the notion of a positive or poetic fragmentation and reconfiguration retains aesthetic and conceptual appeal for contemporary practice.

While second wave feminist artists viewed collage and related media as tools for disrupting modernist principles (such as aesthetic autonomy and patriarchal notions of artistic originality), feminist collage aesthetics in the postmodern era continued to play a central role in cultural critique. Cut-and-paste techniques, in combination with other tactics, were used by artists who came to prominence in the 1980s, such as Kruger, Holzer and Kelly, as a means of slicing into the 'fabric of representation' (Nochlin 1988/1972 p. 29). This was a strategy for focusing on gender as a social construction as opposed to 'a natural phenomena' (p. 29). Artists working within the postmodern theoretical framework thus directed collage toward deconstructing cultural representations, often juxtaposing oppositional elements of appropriated image and text. In the parafeminist context, as shown in the work of Rist, Kelly, Smart and Davis (see Chapter Three), and in the current practice, these approaches are renewed and extended as tactics of parody and humour, while cut-and paste processes also evoke layered memories of feminism's past.

Femmage, or feminist collage, sought to embrace 'women's culture' (Schapiro & Meyer 1978 p. 68) – a reference to tasks in the domestic sphere that historically, although sometimes undertaken by men, were usually assigned to women. These include knitting, crochet, stitching, darning, embroidering, tapestry, quilting and other textile crafts and relating to the resourcefulness of necessity. As noted in Chapter Two, the notion of 'women's culture' elicited the critique of essentialism – a valid criticism insofar as second wave femmagists like Schapiro and her contemporaries were defining a specifically 'feminine' form of art. These artists aspired, however, to not only reclaim devalued skills, but to make insistent links between visual forms and embodied experience (Reckitt 2012 p. 37). In contemporary practice, femmage functions as a strategy to connect with feminist

artists of the second wave and the painstaking and intimate work of their predecessors, but the connection might be playful or ironic, as seen in the installations of Smart and Rist (discussed in Chapter Three).

'*Remix*' culture began in the late 1990s (Navas, Gallagher & Burrough 2015 p. 1), though the history of the method is traced by Markham (2013 p. 69) to music forms in the late 1960s when 'Jamaican Dub' artists (who influenced later hip-hop artists) sampled and reassembled audio tracks to make new products for different audiences. The term 'remix', however, is now more widely applied to processes of collecting and recombining fragments of cultural material, using the copy-and-paste techniques of collage to produce new products (Markham 2013 p. 64). Facilitated by ready access to large repositories of open-source, digitised material through the Internet, remix foregrounds methods that might usually go unnoticed, such as 'using serendipity, playing with different perspectives, generating partial renderings, moving through multiple variations, borrowing from disparate and perhaps disjunctive concepts' (p. 95). In feminist practice, moving images from film and video were altered and reimagined from the 1970s onwards (Stermitz 2013 p. 24), and were used to critique male-authored constructions of femininity in television and other mass media forms. Digital technology, global communications and the Internet greatly enhance the possibilities for rearrangement of found footage in the visual art field. Feminist artists, as demonstrated by the precedents (Chapter Three) can readily revive old genres, challenge the commodification of women's bodies in mainstream media and articulate alternative subjectivities with irony or humour. The challenge of visually representing female embodiment continues to interest artists who find value in connecting with cultural history and memory and in working inventively with both traditional or marginalised techniques and more recent technologies to give voice to contemporary concerns, as evidenced in the current practice.

To evoke sensual and aesthetic pleasure for women looking at art about women

The final guiding principle concerns a much-debated concept in and since second wave feminism: women's pleasure. The intersections between gender, embodiment, pleasure and power endure from the second wave, especially in the context of visual imagery and spectatorship. Aesthetic pleasure for viewers has been an abiding interest in my work (as suggested in the foregoing reflections on past

practice) and in the current practice I contemplate the range of potential pleasures that women might experience in looking at parafeminist art.

The feminist debate about pleasure has long been invested in the sexuality of the gaze. For instance, Rosemary Betterton (1985 p. 3) was among the earliest critics of Mulvey's (1975) observation about visual pleasure and the presumed active male and passive female gaze on cinematic and other images (although, as indicated in Chapter One, this is a somewhat reductive account of Mulvey's theory). Betterton (p. 7) argues, based on Mulvey's characterisation, that the only potential for gazing pleasure for women (in this psychoanalytically-informed approach) could be gained in identifying with the powerful, heterosexual male gaze, or by identifying narcissistically with the passive but desirable women depicted. Betterton is one of many critics over the years to contest Mulvey's ideas, and it is beyond this research to detail the debate that ensued[53]. However, Betterton argues that women spectators do not necessarily see themselves in ways that accord with the (presumed) masculine way of seeing, and more specifically, might respond to representations of women's bodies, by women artists, in quite different ways (pp. 3-4).

Feminist artists from the second wave who engaged in new kinds of cultural production frequently sought to deconstruct prevailing patriarchal imaging traditions and regimes of vision while, at the same time, constructing images that were positive *for* women. Such interventional strategies emerged, Betterton (p. 4) suggests, from 'mapp[ing] out the shifts and changes within representations of the female body'. While an element of voyeurism might not be totally avoided in the gaze on images of female bodies and sexuality, some representations are more pleasurable for female viewers than others; beauty might be perceived in images that attribute agency to the bodies depicted, for example, to a greater degree than in idealised portrayals of beautiful women, whether in fine art or in popular media.

Conventional constructions of female beauty are countered in depictions of bodies by artists such as Alice Neel, Joan Semmel and Jenny Saville, who succeed in conveying subjective experience in painted bodies, and that might translate to the

[53] In later work, Betterton (2003 p. 12) noted that audiences bring an expanded range interpretative skills to visual culture generally (though not to the same extent to fine art), including an 'awareness of how gender shapes looking and the "gaze"', as a result of decades of feminist teaching.

experience of pleasure for women viewers. Approaches to imaging, however, whether celebratory, deconstructive or both, tend to be constrained by existing representational regimes (Wolff 1990 p. 137). The idea of *la peinture féminine*, the visual equivalent of Cixous's *l' écriture féminin*e or writing from the body (see Chapter Two), has inspired some artists, but – aside from the essentialism presumed to arise in these images – has remained elusive in the sense that it is difficult to work outside of existing (visual) language systems. In the current practice, reinvented forms and processes aim to provide pleasure in looking in several ways, including presenting agentic, strong and energetic women that invite viewers into a fantasy world, and by not diminishing the beauty of the body of Venus and her lovely environment. *Femmage* works provide visual pleasure in both the tactile materiality of the pieces, and (fragmentary) representations of beautiful bodies collaged and printed on their surfaces, or delighting viewers with glittering materials and form.

In posing an idea of the virtual feminist museum, and provoking responses to a parafeminist experience, the exhibition aims to stimulate an idea of pleasure that is also invested in intellectual engagement and the pleasures of ideas, knowledge, critique and reflection. Exhibitions, Kokoli (2012) observes, 'are not only the product of scholarly research but a visual form of it and […] as such, exhibitions engender new knowledge and put forward arguments'. These are pleasures of the body beyond only the visual regimes. Parafeminist art invites spectators to engage through knowledge, memory and desire and to experience these processes as sources of pleasure and power. Jones (2006 pp. 8-9) argues, with reference to the 'Kantian aesthetic' and via Joan Copjec and Jacques Lacan, that the bridging of the gap between subject and object occurs through the introduction of 'a third element', that of 'the desire of the Other'. The addition of this element 'introduces time and the body (through desire and pleasure) into the scheme of subject formation'. Lacan's system, she notes (p. 9), 'acknowledges the pollution of the object with the subject and vice versa, implicating the desiring (viewing) body of the subject in every image'. This is a parafeminist quality which Jones demonstrates with reference to Rist's work.

In shaping and rationalising approaches to the practice, the Guiding Principles form a crucial component of the methodology. The Interconnective Model

offers a flexible, informed and rigorous framework for a contemporary creative research practice project such as this one that is driven simultaneously by historical and contemporary objectives. The methodological model must be at once responsive to the diverse and rapidly evolving landscape of creative research media and methods, and receptive to the deep and historical traditions of activist feminist art. This project is realised through neither a research-led nor strictly practice-based approach, because its aims are better met by an Interconnective model of CPR. This model enables recognition of the unique processes whereby the sequencing of the practice occurs in conjunction with the investigations of theoretical, philosophical and practical contexts, and the mutual influences of each aspect of the project.

In Chapter Five, the practice is discussed and explained at length. In the simplest sense, the feminist goal to expose the ideological limitations of cultural constructions of femininity is in play in the works. As observed by Janet Wolff (1990 p. 137), an approach which presents a positive celebration of women's lives in artworks cannot, by itself, be effective in disrupting a patriarchal culture, because of the impossibility of 'miraculously circumvent[ing] the dominant regime of representation' and replacing it with an alternative visual language. Engaging with and destabilising that regime, with strategies of parodic collage and critical reappropriation of historical imagery, becomes contemporary feminist practice. In Chapter Five, discussion of *The Versions of Venus* and *Furies i-v* becomes an extended and parodic retelling of the classical myths of Venus and the Furies as I elaborate the histories of the various fine-art works and popular cultural sources from which the collaged images are appropriated and reconfigured. The femmage installations, *Dress Ups, Accoutrements* and *Rave,* aim to represent a profound juxtaposition of crafted art in the second-wave tradition that speaks to the historical and radical vibrancy of these art forms amidst contemporary digital culture.

Chapter Five – Bodies Re-dressed, Research Performed: The Practice

> *[I]f art is defined as the conversion of matter into form, imagine how much greater the triumph for art if it is the female body that is thus transformed – pure nature transmuted, through the forms of art, into pure culture. The female nude, then, is not simply one subject among others, one form among many, it is the subject, the form. (Nead 1997 p. 18)*

Diverse media and technologies are utilised in the installation works for exhibition. All of the works consciously draw attention to the potential for art to embody and materialise meaning and knowledge, or what Meskimmon (2003 pp. 3-4) calls a 'double play of materiality and agency', where

> [t]he specific corporeality of subjects and works ("texts") in conjunction with their historical location and material presence in the world, are neither dismissed as irrelevant nor reified as the essential origin of their meaning. Corporeal specificity is, instead, implicated in relations, processes and practices through which matter comes to matter, or becomes meaningful. (pp. 3-4)

Through this play of agency and materiality, the practice aims to empower women viewers, and to provide pleasure for women and men. The final exhibition comprised five installations, and the process of the making and presentation of each installation, and the relationships between the installations, are discussed at length in this chapter. The *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* parodically re-cites images of the mythic figure who symbolises ideals of feminine beauty throughout the long history of fine art. *The Furies i-v,* dynamic action women, composed of collaged elements from fine art images and superheroines from contemporary games, stand in counterpoint on an opposite wall. The femmage *Dress-ups* and *Accoutrements* revolve around implied female bodies in the form of garments and accessories inscribed with fleshy images of Venus on the outer surfaces. The femmage triptych,

Rave, performs text-as-image, alluding to the body through the power of language to shape women's experiences of being in the world.

Together the installations juxtapose contemporary art practices with the feminist tradition of reclaiming craft traditions, valorising domestic and utilitarian production and dissolving differences between 'high' and 'low' art. Visual strategies of seriality, repetition and (ironic) quotation are adopted to expose the naturalised connection between imaged and implied bodies and social and political structures. Collectively, the works employ a collage aesthetic that Lippard (1995 p. 181) describes as a way of 'exposing by juxtaposition the disguises of certain words and images and forms and thus also expressing the cultural and social myths on which they are based'. As a parafeminist practice, the collage aesthetic is deployed in revisioning the body, recognised in second wave feminism as a site of women's oppression, as a central motif in the art of materiality and agency.

Installation 1. *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus*

> *Eternal Venus (caprice, hysteria, whim) is one of the seductive forms of the devil. (Baudelaire 1919)*

Wall of Watery Women: Version of Venus (Plate 46) samples and reframes historical works in a parafeminist mode. The installation of forty-four panels quotes multiple versions of the birth of the deity, stretching from the first century to the late nineteenth century AD. It presents the viewer with an array of conventions for representing female beauty that, at once, universalise 'women' and reflect shifting cultural and aesthetic values of the patrons who commissioned the works in the several eras. Quotations of the many iterations of Venus reference and bring attention to the various objectifying tropes and the fluid, mutable states in which this archetypal figure is, paradoxically, fixed. These tropes are parodied through visual devices of repetition and fragmentation, and the parody extends in the jumbling of historical eras. The images are not debased or openly ridiculed, but reconfigured ironically, at a distance, following Hutcheon (2002 p. 98), so that a parody emerges of the historical politics of representation of women, by men. It is a recollection, and a parodic restoration, of a whole tradition, revisioned.

The Story of the Birth of Venus

Greek mythology provides different accounts of the birth of Aphrodite/Venus, the Greco/Roman deity of beauty, love, sexuality and fertility. The version that has entered the iconography of Western art is the one told by Hesiod in *Theogony*, an epic of the eighth or seventh century BCE. In this account, the deity is born out of sea foam. Cronus, the son of the sky-god Ouranos, castrated his father and threw the severed genitals into the sea, which began to foam. From the churning sea, Venus emerged, and was carried to Cythera then Cyprus (Hesiod 1914 lines 173-206). She is generally depicted being carried to shore on a giant scallop shell, and is sometimes greeted at the shore by the Horae (deities of order and the seasons) who clothe and adorn her, as they do in Sandro Botticelli's 1482-85 painting, probably the most famous version of the birth of Venus. Born fully formed as a beautiful young woman, perfect and virginal, Venus is the embodiment of the generative powers of nature.

The physical element that most strongly connects Venus with nature is water. Her youthful, naked body, pictorially emplaced in nature – in water – comes to symbolise nature. Her 'to-be-looked-at-ness', permanently situated in the watery realm, connects her with fluidity – alluding to female bodily fluids, fertility and fecundity. These connections function to dilute her agency, even though, in mythology, Venus is capable of making things happen; she was partly responsible for the Trojan War, and enticed gods and mortals into illicit affairs. The many Venuses in artworks exemplify the 'watery women' that the artist and theorist Burgin (1993 p. 133) refers to – the historical tradition of representations of women in watery environs that reinforce the female/body/nature versus male/mind/culture oppositions in Western visual imaging traditions. Burgin (p. 133) notes 'a myriad of […] delegates from a history of Western representations flooded with watery images of women – from the Birth of Venus to the Death of Ophelia'.

The element of water, liquid environments and fluidity, in relation to women and female sexuality, have been rich topics for debate in second wave feminism, with Irigaray criticised for the perceived essentialism of her conceptualisation of the feminine based on female sexuality as fluid, unstable and with no definite borders. In *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1991), one of a series of her works dealing

with the elements of water, air, fire and earth[54], Irigaray uses the sea as a metaphor for fluidity and depth that cannot be delimited. In 'The Mechanics of Fluids', a chapter in *This Sex Which Is Not One* (Irigaray 1985c pp. 106-118), *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Irigaray 1985b), and elsewhere in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, the feminine is characterised by fluidity, flux and resistance to containment. Rather than dismiss her work as essentialist, some critics have applauded Irigaray for her emphasis on strategic disruption of the nature/culture opposition. Margrit Shildrick (1997 p. 177) interprets Irigaray's argument as an understanding of culture, contrary to conventional definition, as something that requires 'repetition and sameness', while biology is 'inherently interactive and dynamic'.

Irigaray's ideas have stimulated a range of feminist critiques of knowledge which, like those of Astrida Neimanis (2014 pp. 59-60), are premised on contesting the Western metaphysical tradition in which the body is understood as 'bounded materiality that houses an individual subject'[55]. More influentially, in her critique of psychoanalysis, Grosz (1994b p. 203) questions whether female bodies have been 'constructed not only as a lack or absence but […] as a leaking, uncontrollable, seeping liquid; as formless flow; as viscosity, entrapping, secreting; as lacking not so much or simply the phallus but self-containment'. The linking of post-pubescent femininity with disorder and indiscrete boundaries reflects, Grosz (p. 203) hypothesises, men's desire to disassociate their own corporeality from such indeterminacy and disorder. The masculinist confusion that arises from the concurrent dynamic of desire, attraction and repulsion, along with 'deep-seated fear of absorption', is evidenced, she suggests (p. 203), in common cultural themes. I argue that depictions of the birth of Venus are paradigmatic of such themes.

[54] Hippocrates and other ancient physicians held the male body to be characterised by dryness and stability, while the female body remained cold and wet. Because of this wetness or porosity, women were more at risk than men of infiltration (of both their minds and bodies) by dangerous emotions associated with wetness – especially love and emotion – which they believed could dissolve the physiological perimeters of men (Parker, H 2012 pp. 107-124).

[55] Neimanis extends Irigaray's ideas in an eco-feminist argument that we not only embody water but exist in, and are dependent on, wider (planetary) bodies of water. Iris Young (2005 p. 80), drawing on the metaphysics of fluids and solids, sees Irigaray's aqueous analogy as a productive way to think about being in the world: 'Fluids surge and move, and a metaphysic that thinks being as fluid would tend to privilege the living, moving, pulsing over [...] inert dead matter'. Young (2005 p. 81) argues that Irigaray enables rethinking of a link between the domination of women and the domination of nature, because culture imposes 'identification with the abject body' on women, but humankind (female and male) and other life forms are mostly constituted of wet matter and have the same degree of biological fluidity or solidity.

The watery identity of Venus appears to emerge in a particular phase of history and culture, and this is suggested by the research that I undertook on the prehistoric so-called Venus figurines (for a summary see Appendix 3). However this constitutes another strand of the representation of the female body. But, as Nead (1997 p. 18) argues in an essay quoted in the epigraph to the chapter, if art is 'the conversion of matter into form', the female form represents pure nature and physicality, necessitating conversion (by artistic means) into pure culture. In this formulation, the female nude 'encapsulates art's transformation of unformed matter into integral form' (p. 19). *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* takes this 'integral form', the naked woman as nature *par excellence*, and strategically disrupts the emphasis on her archetypal connection with watery nature.

Venus as Archetype: Nudity, Desire and Beauty

Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus, in its iterations of fragmented Venuses over multiple panels, reveals and contests conventions in the formal aspects of representations of this archetypal figure. It also shows how meaning is imbued, transformed, layered, lost and reinvented; moralistic values and associations can be seen to accrue and fall away. Yet the cosmogenic connection of Venus to fertility, fecundity and fluidity endures in representations, despite the mythological story becoming largely irrelevant (beyond the Roman era) to the belief-systems of the artists, their patrons and audiences. A popular figure for imaging for over two thousand years, the figure communicates ideology and 'Venus', conceivably, has been applied to paintings that in fact depict lovers or muses, made permissible by the appellation of the deity. But the poses and presentation of these figures, parodied in the practice, can be traced to archetypal forms in ancient statuary, and include three distinct poses: Venus pudica, supine pudica and crouching Venus.

The mythological figure appears in a number of forms in the ancient world. In sculptural representations, from the time of Praxiteles' sculpture, *Aphrodite of Cnidus* (330-360 BCE), at a temple at Cnidus (southern Turkey), she is typically presented as a naked woman. The sculpture is lost, but numerous copies and thematic variations were made by Greek and Roman sculptors (Plate 41), and some written descriptions of the original exist, providing a general indication of the appearance of the original (Havelock 1995 pp. 3-11). Praxiteles' sculpture is an early representation

in Greek statuary of a naked woman, as depictions of naked women were apparently unacceptable prior to this, although statues of naked boys and men had been crafted and admired for at least three centuries (Salomon 1996 p. 71). The Praxitelean sculpture became immensely popular, as evidenced by the proliferation of replicas and the surviving written descriptions by witnesses (Havelock 1995 p. 10). Responding to written descriptions, Clark (1956 p. 73) records that 'no one questioned the fact that she was an embodiment of physical desire, and that this mysterious, compulsive force was an element in her sanctity'.

More specifically, the pose of Praxiteles' sculpture, with one hand obscuring her pudendum, gives rise to the description of a type – *Venus pudica.* Some of the replicas of the sculpture, and those thought to most closely resemble the original (Havelock 1995 p. 11), present her with some drapery in her left hand, and a pitcher of purifying water at her side. Others depict her with her left hand partially screening her breasts, and with the vessel replaced by a dolphin (a reference to her emergence from the sea), and the god Eros/Cupid at her side. In each variant, the figure rests her weight on one leg and leans slightly forward, shoulders softened, in a further gesture of modesty or shame. She at once signals self-protection and draws attention to her nakedness – a pose that, in the words of Nanette Salomon (1996 p. 72), 'sexually defines the represented woman by her pubis, and […] keeps her in a perpetual state of vulnerability'. This gesture, repeated in innumerable representations of women in Western art, has great significance in its 'configuration as ideological artifice' (Salomon 1996 p. 70); the woman thus represented is sexually defined and her subordination confirmed. Statuary of naked men from the mid-fourth century BCE, where no greater attention is paid by the sculptor to one body part over another, and self-consciousness is not evident in the poses of the male figures, is compared by Salomon (1996 p. 72) for 'the asymmetrical terms of [male and female] nudity'.

The Venus pudica pose became a trope that continued beyond the Hellenistic and Roman eras, through the Christian period, and into fifteenth century paintings by artists such as Lucas Cranach the Elder, Masaccio and Sandro Botticelli (Plate 42). The pose persisted through subsequent centuries in the work of artists like Amedeo Modigliani in the early twentieth century (Plate 43). Eight of the paintings of the birth of Venus referenced in *Versions of Venus* depict her in standing pudica pose,

reflecting this powerful tradition of woman naturalised as a sign of sexual vulnerability coupled with shame.

Another enduring pose of Roman replicas from the Hellenistic period is a crouching and turning figure who appears to be startled, perhaps while bathing (Plate 44). These figures are thought to take their type from a bronze original from about 200 BCE. These sculptural pieces have inspired innumerable painted representations of the pose, surviving (through multiple stylistic shifts) into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and two are referenced in *Versions of Venus*. Salomon (1996 p. 81) also includes the 'supine pudica' as an expansion of this tradition, where the reclining figure is 'couched, literally and metaphorically, in passive terms', as she is in Giorgione and Titian's *Sleeping Venus* (1510) (Plate 6), Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538) and Manet's *Olympia* (1863). Four of the sources for *Versions of Venus* follow the supine pudica form.

Whether imaged standing, crouching or reclining, Venus infers not just *beauty* – an ideal or abstract quality – but the *beauty of art*. Through much of Western history, alignment with classical Greek subject matter and forms has conferred elite status upon creators and audiences who connected with 'rational, logical and universalist' values (Salomon 1996 p. 69). Feminist history interrogates such received values, and the politics of representation of a female archetype is underlined in *Versions of Venus*. The abiding portrayal of woman as nature, situated in nature – as matter to be contained, controlled and moulded by culture (as outlined above and in Chapter Four) – is parodied in this work, or rather, the historical works in which Venus appears are parodied to gain 'critical distance' on the traditions in which these works occur. The parody is parafeminist in its 'rethinking, pushing the boundaries of, but not superseding' (to adapt Jones 2006 p. 213) foregoing feminist interrogation of female archetypes. The archetypal image is re-visioned by situating the parody among the counter-works that compose the exhibition.

Plate 41. Left: Ludovisi *Cnidian Aphrodite*, Roman copy after Greek original, c. 350-340 BCE, marble;
Right: Borghese *Cnidian Aphrodite*, Roman, second century AD, marble.

Plate 42. Left: Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Adam and E*ve (detail), 1530, oil on board;
Centre: Masaccio, *The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden* (detail), c. 1425, fresco;
Right: Sandro Botticelli, *Venus* (detail), c.1490, tempera on canvas.

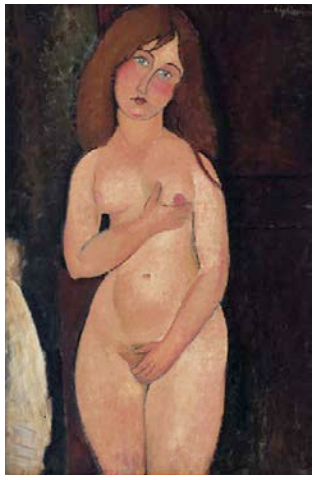

Plate 43. Amedeo Modigliani, *Venus (Standing Nude)*, 1917,
84.5 x 99.5 cm, oil on canvas.

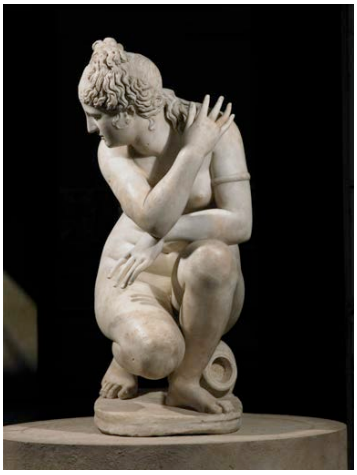

Plate 44. *Aphrodite Crouching at her Bath* or *Lely's Venus*, second century AD, Roman copy of a Greek original, marble.

Plate 45. Artist unknown, *Nature with Venus, Juno and Pallas Athene* from the manuscript *Echecs amoureux*, c.1500.

Venus Parodica: Art Historical Sources for *Versions of Venus*

The sources are not sequenced chronologically in the panels of the installation. However, for the purposes of the exegesis, to give insight into the rationale for the selection of sources quoted and parodied, the commentary is presented as a chronology of the works and art historical periods referenced, a linear history that is disrupted in the parodic appropriation of the works as a 'wall of watery women'. The earliest work referenced is the *Venus Anadyomene* fresco from Pompeii (before 79 AD) which is quoted in a panel positioned roughly mid-way along the wall in the installation (Plate 47, Centre). *Venus Anadyomene* is thought to be a reiteration of a famous Hellenistic painting by Apelles (mentioned in Pliny the Elder's Natural History) (Zoja 2012 pp. 95-96). Here Venus reclines in a half shell,

with her hair arranged in the style of a wealthy Roman woman, with billowing pink drapery forming a canopy behind her (a piece of drapery which, as noted, was to become a convention in depictions of the birth of Venus). There is likely a melding of Greek and Roman artistic and religious traditions in the Pompeian fresco. In my quotation of this ancient work, the watery context is a collage of rippling (contemporary, resort-style) swimming pool water.

As the goddess of sexuality, love and procreation as well as beauty, the nakedness of Venus was not only permissible, but perhaps expected in Roman and later artworks, and not only in scenes of her watery nascence; in most narrative depictions, where she appears in the company of other deities and mortals, she is depicted naked or partly dressed. A degree of subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) eroticism is thus also sanctioned. Venus' nakedness is even maintained in medieval images, where, along with other pagan gods, she is imaged, but with Christian or moral allegory. The Greek and Roman tendency to personify abstractions was extended to allegory and didactic symbolism (Seznec 1961 pp. 84-87), with the mythological characters symbolising virtues or vices, or embodying moral truths. For example, in a miniature painting of *Nature with Venus, Juno and Pallas* (Plate 45), Venus stands naked with a mirror in a walled garden, symbolising the 'Amorous Life', and contrasted with 'the Active and Contemplative Life' in the form of Pallas and Juno (Seznec 1961 p. 107). Elsewhere, Venus is portrayed as Passion, or 'the mother of all vices', and she is opposed by Virtue and Chastity (Seznec 1961 p. 109).

A medieval version of Venus appears in the installation in the unlikely location of a farmyard pond or a stream, rather than on the ocean. It is inspired by the medieval collusion of morality and mistranslation between languages whereby Venus came to be portrayed in some late fourteenth century illustrations with her hand around the neck of a large bird. Panofsky (1970 p. 86) claims that this strange iconography occurs as a result of a misreading in *Metamorphosis Ovidiana* of 'sea shell' for 'sea goose'.[56] The deity in the medieval work referenced in *Versions of Venus* (Plate 48, Centre and Right), is an illustration by an unknown artist for an

[56] In one late fourteenth century illustration from Ovid's *Moralise*, the artist has gone so far as to furnish the goose with fish scales, to better convey that it was a *sea* goose. In another corruption of text, the seashell held by Venus is translated as a writing slate, giving rise to an image in which the slate, rather than Venus, is adorned with flowers and surrounded by doves (Panofsky 1970 pp. 86-87).

Ovide Moralise text in verse, late fourteenth century. Although naked and surrounded by flowers and doves, this half-immersed Venus, wearing a crown and clutching her goose, is attended by three Horae as fully dressed courtly ladies of the period.

Themes and motifs from the classical world endured and altered through the medieval era, as indicated above, and were revived during the Italian Renaissance. *Versions of Venus* (Plate 49, Right) references Giorgio Vasari's 1555-57 fresco which continues the allegorical tradition. The wall painting as a whole, executed with Christoro Gheradi in the sixteenth century, is known as *Allegory of Water: Birth of Venus*, from the *Room of the Elements*, Palazzo Vecchio, in Florence. Vasari is known from his own writing (1823)[57] to have studied Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, along with Roman replicas of Praxiteles' *Cnidian Aphrodite*, but his Venus appears rather muscular in comparison with those works. The piece of red drapery held by Vasari's Venus is a decorative overhead flourish, with a mere tassel making a pretence of obscuring but rather drawing attention to the naked woman's pudendum.

The popularity of Venus in painting continued through subsequent centuries and artistic cycles, with numerous works commissioned by patrons for largely private viewing. Venus was fixed in the cone of vision of the subject/author/owner/knower, and imaged with connotations relevant to the gender constructs of the eras in which she is depicted. Malleable Venus could be made to convey the messages that patrons sought to impart. She could suggest romance and desire, or virtuous (motherly or marital) love, and hence an inspiration to procreation and prosperity. Her image was also suggestive of lust, sin and predatory infidelity, and she gained a vulgar appellation as ruler of prostitutes. In French Salon painting of the nineteenth century, from which several *Versions of Venus* references are drawn, the deity 'serv[ed] to incarnate either Madonna or whore' (Shaw 2000 p. 92), functioning to remind contemporary viewers that in artworks from the Christian era both the Madonna and Eve are also frequently represented in the Venus pudica pose.

In the rococo *Birth of Venus* (1754) painting by Francois Boucher that is referenced in one panel (Plate 50, Centre and Right), Venus luxuriates, semi reclining, on a raft of pillows and drapery, with down-turned eyes and neatly coifed

[57] First published in 1588.

hair. There is a suggestion of the boudoir in Boucher's depiction, and what art historian Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen (2016) describes (in the erotic paintings of rococo artists), as an interest in the female subject's 'receptivity to love in both sentimental and carnal varieties'. In my panels quoting the Boucher painting, the sea in the foreground has waves styled like a series of flats for a stage play, and the sky is composed from a collage of engraved fragments depicting dramatic clouds. Both the waves and the clouds amplify the sense of contrivance of the scene, as well as alluding to Venus's supposed link to the natural world. Her detachment from the elements of her emplacement in the original painting is further exaggerated in my quotation.

A less sensual and more utopian portrayal of Venus occurs in English artist Edward Dayes's academy-style painting *The Triumph of Beauty* (1800). Standing Venus appears with long, golden hair and head in profile, riding her scallop shell to shore (like a ship). Eros sits at her feet in the shell – a symbol of the vulva (Lindquist 2012 p. 20) – and there is a retinue of sea nymphs, one of which is retained in my appropriation of this painting (Plate 51, Centre), along with the piece of red drapery that makes a flourish similar to the one in Vasari's fresco. My panels heighten the hue and romanticised backdrop of pink sky and dark land, and accentuate the already-mannered elongation of the central figure. In Spanish artist Antonio Maria Esquivel's *Venus Anadiomene* (1838) (quoted in Plate 49, Centre), she appears with dark hair and in contrapposto pose, with a wisp of pink gauze floating away behind her. The figure – soft and pale next to Vasari's robust Venus in the installation – is isolated, riding on a wave breaking near the shore in my version of this work. Also isolated and apparently alone, is my quotation (Plate 51, Left) of Louis Devedeux's *The Birth of Venus* (1894). In this painting a young woman with windswept hair huddles self-protectively at the sea's foaming edge, but she looks over her shoulder towards the viewer with a coy smile, reiterating the archetypal crouching, turning Venus pose. Another French academic painter, Amaury Duval, in his 1862 *Birth of Venus*, depicts the deity standing, with arms raised, winding or wringing her long red-gold hair. Duval's painting is referenced (Plate 47, Right) with Venus situated against a collaged sea and sky composed of engravings of those elements.

In Alexandre Cabanel's 1863 painting, quoted in four panels of *Versions of Venus* (Plate 52, Centre and Right), the figure reclines languidly on the surface of the sea, arranged so that her body tilts towards the viewer, in 'supine pudica' pose. Unlike the typical reclining pudica, this Venus has her arms raised, with one hand across her forehead, as if sleeping – but her eyes are open and she looks out, slyly, from under that arm. Eroticism in Cabanel's painting, as in most renderings of Venus, has a mantle of propriety conferred by the historicised, mythological theme. Jones (2012b p. 64) refers to this particular *Birth of Venus* as the 'quintessential French modern painting of woman as fetish', both offered up to the beholder, but withheld. The 'whiteness' of her skin symbolises 'purity and virginity', Jones (2012b p. 73) suggests, which is also 'implied (paradoxically) through the erasure of the genitals' in this painting. Cabanel's Venus has Erotes hovering above her, duplicated in my panels, where the sky is composed of hand-written and engraved notations about clouds made by the English water-colourist Alexander Cozens (1717-86) – the text forming the image of the clouds described.

Both Duval's and Cabanel's paintings of the birth of Venus were exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1863, two years before Manet's *Olympia* – which directly references Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538), and plainly presents the central female figure as a prostitute – was exhibited in the Salon. Venus clearly remained a popular motif at this time, though the salon painters of France, who enjoyed varying degrees of popularity amongst wealthy patrons, were reviled by the avant-garde as the movement towards impressionism and modernism was taking place. Gustave Moreau's symbolist painting *Venus Appearing to the Fishermen* (1866) has Venus stepping onto a shore with face in profile, but torso turned slightly towards the viewer, weight on one leg as in many other standing images. Moreau's painting is reconstructed (Plate 50, Left) with a watery background drawn from *La Source* (1856) by Jean Auguste Ingres. The watery backdrop carries inescapable connections between water and women's bodies as the wellspring of life.

One of several *Birth of Venus* pictures painted by the French academic artist Henri Pierre Picou, founder of the Neo Grec school, and inspired by the excavations at Pompeii, is referenced in *Versions of Venus* (Plate 53, Centre and Right). In the Picou painting (1871) Venus is carried, seated, and with her arms raised above her

head as if receptive to embrace, in an opened bi-valve shell. She has drapery around her legs, and holds a fragment of transparent fabric. This fabric, along with the body of Venus, the shell she reclines in and the figure of Eros, complete an oval shape suggestive of a vulva. The reading of a vulva in the composition is not fanciful, as Picou (along with Konstantin Makowski and, later, Odilon Redon) also depicted Venus as a central figure within a large shell, making a pronounced visual reference to female genitalia. The work of another popular French salon painter, William Adolphe Bouguereau, is twice referenced in *Versions of Venus*, namely his 1879 painting (Plate 52, Left), and the later (1894) *La Perle* (Plate 47, Left). Bouguereau's standing Venus picture is densely populated with sea nymphs, centaurs, putti and a dolphin; in my reiteration she is isolated, a figure with long red hair, standing on a scallop shell on a choppy sea. In *La Perle*, Venus crouches on one knee at the seashore with hands crossed at her breasts in the familiar crouching pudica pose. In the panels of *Versions of Venus* referencing this work, the figure is framed by an engraving of clouds that links with other panels in which this magnified image of sky is used.

Robert Fowler, a Scottish painter of the Victorian era, combined symbolist tendencies with classicism and Japonism in his watercolour *Birth of Venu*s (date unknown). She hovers on top of the sea, swathed in sheer drapery and holding a length of pink fabric which flutters above and around her and possibly symbolises the subordination of love to the powers of beauty (Blessing 2015 p. 33). In the three vertical panels quoting Fowler's painting (Plate 53, Left), the elongation and theatrical flourish of the pose are further exaggerated. Theatricality and romanticism are highlighted in the quotation of Russian academic painter Konstantin Makowski's (1915) Venus, (Plate 48, Left), where the conventions of the contrapposto pose, mass of long hair and floating fabric are all present. In this quoted painting, however, the shawl is pale yellow, draped over the head of Venus and behind her like a wedding veil – a device introducing another, possibly moralistic, level to the picture; the bride-like Venus might feasibly be aligned with virtue and fidelity.

All of the panels in the *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* installation are created using digital collage working methods. The appropriative and reproductive nature of the process is made apparent, with formal aspects and pictorial

details of the source images intensified, diminished, otherwise distorted or multiplied for particular effect and for the aesthetic cohesion of the whole. The parody in this work stems from the doubling process of 'installing and ironizing' that Hutcheon (2002 p. 89) describes. Critical distance is established by presenting representations of Venus from a vast span of Western art history, where both continuities and contradictions in imaging conventions are evident. Continuities include the persistence of standing, reclining and crouching pudica poses as 'quintessential' gestures of the female nude (Salomon 1996 p. 83), and the naturalising associations of Venus's watery environment. Contradictions emerge in the shifting array of ideological and moralistic values and attributes assigned to Venus and, by implication, to the bodies of all women. The installation condenses and concentrates Baudelaire's (1919) 'eternal Venus' since the BCE era. She might be a symbol of allegorical virtues, or an alluring form of 'the devil'. Women who view the *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* installation need not be literate in art history, however, to appreciate the parody of images of beauty, because such images abound in fashion and advertising. The humour that women viewers might respond to in the work is not carnivalesque or burlesque (in the terms described in Chapter One), but potentially derives from recognition of the playful parody of forms and tropes. They might also enjoy the irony of beautiful women who have the supernatural powers of walking and floating on water.

Plate 46. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (installation view), 2014-15, 44 archival pigment prints on canvas, 98 x 828 cm.

Plate 47. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after William Adolph Bouguereau – la Perle)*; Centre: *Versions of Venus (after unknown Roman artist)*; *Untitled 5 (water);* Right: *Versions of Venus (after Amaury Duval)*.

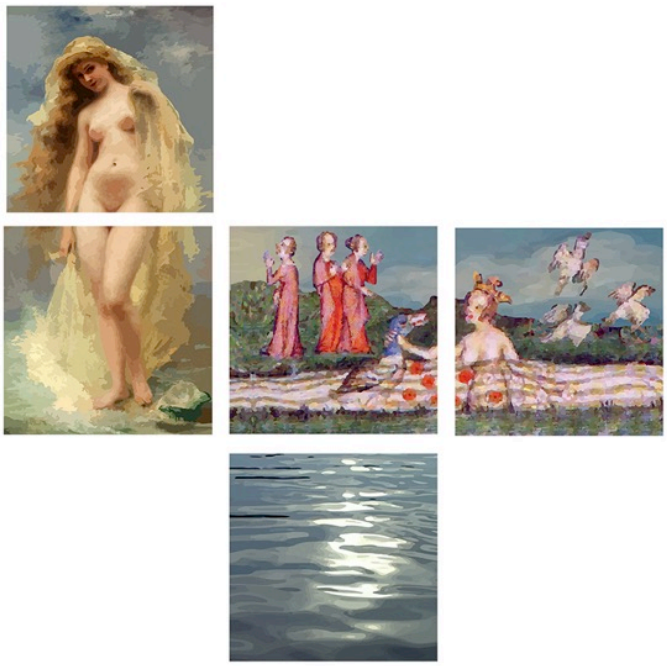

Plate 48. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after Konstantin Makowski)*; Centre and Right: *Versions of Venus (after unknown Medieval artist)*; *Untitled 3 (water).*

Plate 49. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Untitled 1* (water); Centre: *Versions of Venus (after Antonio Maria Esquivel)*; Right: *Versions of Venus (after Vasari and Gherardi).*

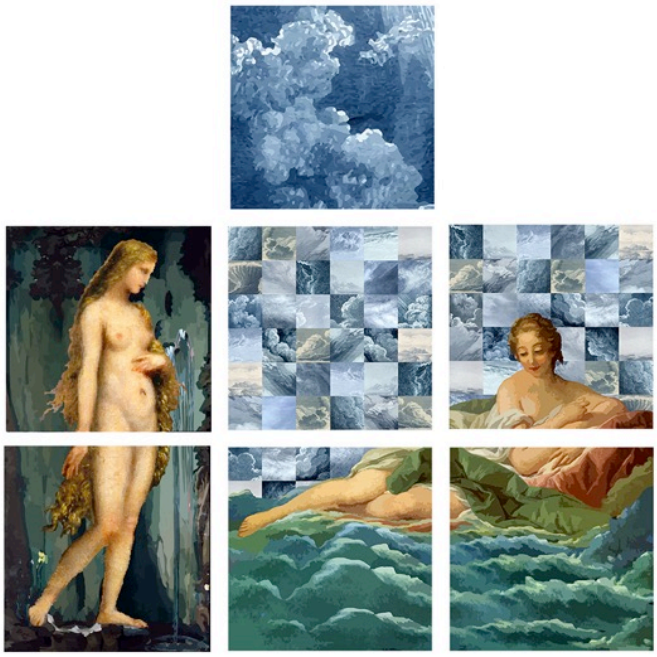

Plate 50. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after Gustave Moreau and Jean Auguste Ingres)*; Centre and Right: *Untitled 4 (sky)*; *Versions of Venus (after Francois Boucher)*.

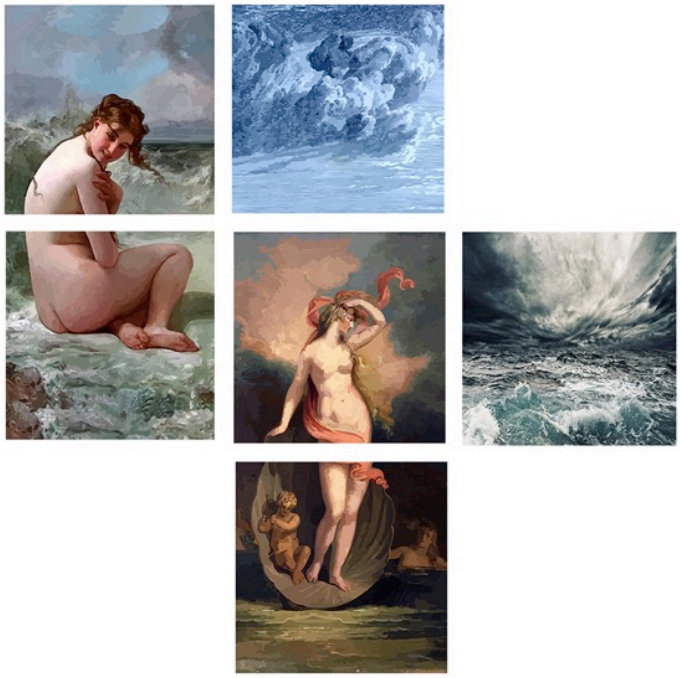

Plate 51. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after Louis Devedeux)*; Centre: *Untitled 6 (sky)*; *Versions of Venus (after Edward Dayes)*; Right: *Untitled 7 (water and sky)*.

Plate 52. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after William Adolphe Bouguereau)*; Centre and Right: *Versions of Venus (after Alexandre Cabanel)*; Centre: *Untitled 2 (water)*.

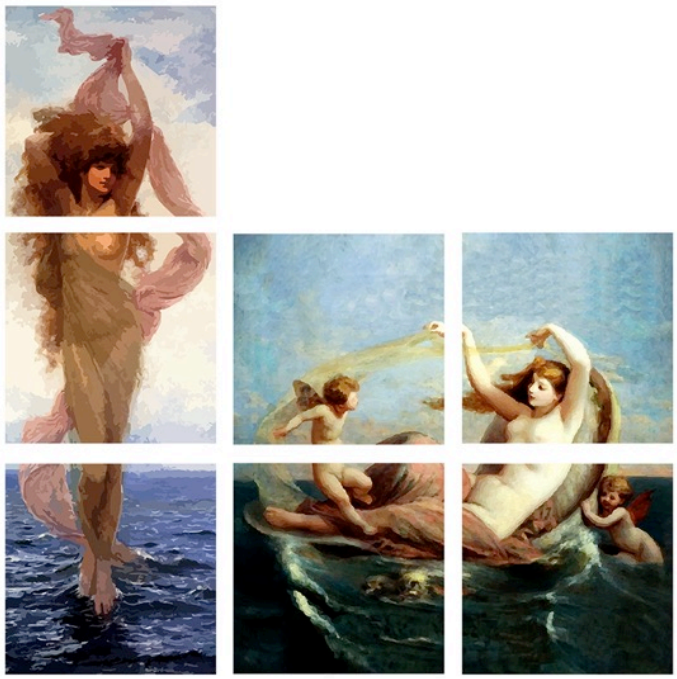

Plate 53. Laurel McKenzie, *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus* (detail), 2014-15, archival pigment prints on canvas: Left: *Versions of Venus (after Robert Fowler)*; Centre and Right: *Versions of Venus (after Henri Pierre Picou).*

Venus as Vehicle for Values, Materials and Methods

As a thematic vehicle for the expression of both eternal ideals and shifting or ambiguous allegorical values, Venus posed particular challenges for artists at different historical junctures. Jennifer Shaw (2000 p. 90) points out that in mid-nineteenth century France, for example, Venus, as goddess of love, 'encompassed that which was most threatening because most unrepresentable – sexuality, productivity and desire'. Additionally, the association of Venus with her birthplace, the sea, provided a connection between her mythological story and prevailing conceptions of women: in the nineteenth century 'the sea itself was a metaphor for the uncontainable ebbs and flows of female reproduction – and specifically for the taboo subject, menstruation' (Shaw 2000 pp. 90-91). Idealisation of the (painted) figure of Venus contained and controlled these associations. The male artist sought to demonstrate his 'transformative power or mastery' (p. 91). Anxieties about the status and agency of women and men's wish to control the feminine contributed, it is suggested, to the proliferation of images of Venus around this time; the deity 'served

as a locus through which man's control of woman's body, or his lack thereof, could be variously articulated' (pp. 90-91).

A dramatic shift in attitudes towards the representations of female sexuality and pleasure occurs in the works of eighteenth century French rococo painters and late nineteenth century French salon painters. According to Butterfield-Rosen (2016 p. 3), while the eighteenth-century painters of naked and semi-naked women, including Venus, were 'undoubtedly […] fulfill[ing] male fantasies', they also implied the erotic pleasure of the imaged female figures. By contrast, in the works of late nineteenth century painters, naked women exhibit a detached coolness – an absence of passion or enthusiasm – attributed to an altered understanding of love 'as a financial transaction' and to the emergence of a newly fetishised archetype, that of the 'frigid woman' (Butterfield-Rosen 2016 p. 5). Debates around the propriety of depicting naked bodies in England in the 1880s suggest that the female body was considered inappropriate for public viewing, according to Renate Brosch (2006 p. 6). This trend can be interpreted as Victorian-era prurience, but could also reflect an increasing awareness of the vexed issue of viewer's relation to the gaze on art. The objectification of the female nude, tilted Venus pudica-style toward an implied male viewer beyond the frame, suggests chastity, while the viewer's gaze is directed to her genitals and the painted woman's eyes 'are accorded no power of returning the look' (Brosch 2006 p. 4). Salomon (1996 p. 83) asserts that such paintings at once sanctioned male desire and consolidated already-privileged men as the opposite of essential and universal femaleness.

In the early twentieth century, visual representations of Venus diminished in number. Some artists, however, like Modigliani and Picasso, who made numerous works on mythological themes, continued to image Venus, and Raoul Dufy painted over twenty versions of Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* in the 1930s and 1940s. Some historical tropes in images of Venus persisted in representations of women more generally through the modernist era in the work of male figurative artists[58]. A

[58] For instance, Willem de Kooning's *Woman* series of paintings, begun at the end of the 1940s, could be considered in this context, with a 2006 gallery label from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, for *Woman i* reading: 'The hulking, wild–eyed subject draws upon an amalgam of female archetypes, from Palaeolithic fertility goddesses to contemporary pin–up girls. […] Combining voluptuousness and menace, *Woman i* reflects the age–old cultural ambivalence between reverence for and fear of the power of the feminine' (MoMA 2006)

renewed interest arose with artists associated with the pop movement, and postmodern artists concerned with quotation and pastiche. Jim Dine and Andy Warhol both made multiple iterations of Venus. Dine made many paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures (dating from c. 1980) that referenced the *Venus de Milo* statue of antiquity, while Warhol appropriated Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* in a series of screenprints (1984).

Venus is sometimes a motif in second wave feminist art, such as Ulrike Rosenbach's parodic *Reflections on the Birth of Venus* (1976-78). Venus is a difficult figure for feminist artists because of her history as idealised body-beautiful, embedded in nature, but since the 1990s, with the revival of attention to the body, she is more acknowledged in works such as ORLAN's *Omnipresence* (1990), Sam Taylor Wood's *Fuck Suck Wank Spank* (1993), Teresa Peterson's *The Birth of Venus* (2009), Petrina Hicks's *Venus* (2013) (see Appendix 1), and several works by Kate Just were exhibited under the exhibition title of *Venus Was Her Name* (2011).

Parafeminist treatments by Davis and Kelly are discussed as precedents to the practice (in Chapter Three) that bring the motif of Venus into a contemporary critical environment, as does *Versions of Venus*. The work is undertaken in the spirit of Davis's *Curtain i-vii* reworking of the slashed *Rokeby Venus*, and Kelly's 'rescued' Venuses from art history books, where the mythological figure is both reinvigorated as a motif, and imaged with the distancing effects of parody. *Versions of Venus* applies parody to the historical representations, subverting some fine art formal traditions. It draws attention to and critiques aspects of the contemporary politics of representation. The shifts in values, prejudices and traits invested in the body of Venus, the imposed ideals and allegorical associations, are playfully exposed as patriarchal constructions in *Versions of Venus*. The primary visual tactics include parodic reiteration of multiple versions of the deity, pictured at the moment of her birth and her delivery to the seashore on the crest of a wave, from over two millennia of imaging.

The installation arrangement of each figure over two, three or four panels, in a broken grid that can be read both vertically and horizontally is suggestive of a continuum, but linear chronology is avoided; the source images are displaced from the historical contexts. The segments form parts of whole figures, and the figures in

turn are parts of a larger installation. In the creation of the work, painted versions of Venus were surveyed, and candidates for re-representation identified, though not all at the commencement of the project. The number of figures and the visual links and juxtapositions evolved over time. The final configuration of the panels was not entirely pre-determined; while the gridded structure of the work was planned, several alternative arrangements were tested and considered during the making of the work.

The recollection and repetition of the history functions to draw attention to and subvert the assumed mutability of naked Venus in her 'natural' state with the element of water. The watery origins are amplified in *Versions of Venus* to subvert that connection by making it overt and thus exposing the *stability* or fixedness of the supposedly mutable figure. Additions to, and breakouts from, the gridded structure of the installation take the form of panels of water and of sky. These elements are exaggerated to emphasise the archetypal embededness in nature and, by implication, the presumed connection of all women's bodies with instability and uncontainability. Thus *Versions of Venus* performs an elaborate 'bait and switch' that unsettles not only a single figure but a fine art tradition.

The components of *Versions of Venus* are digitally manipulated, and each is taken through a series of processes, including vectoring, which renders the image as a mass of flat areas of colour. These areas of colour are manipulated to enhance visual coherence with other panels in the installation, and painterly qualities of brush stroke and texture from the quoted original works disappear. The fragmentation of images of bodies references tactics in art, advertising and other media that function to objectify and disempower the feminine and preserve the culture of the fetish that Jones identifies. As outlined in Chapters One and Two, second wave feminist artists attracted the critique of essentialism in their efforts to address these conditions by reclaiming female bodies and pleasure as topics and motifs in their artworks. Contemporary artists like Rist (see Chapter Three), working in a parafeminist mode, re-cite such tactics, parodying fragmentation in ways that affirm and celebrate female sexuality. *Versions of Venus* re-visions a female archetype in a comparable parafeminist presentation. Venus also rises as a touchstone figure in the counter installations in the exhibition.

Installation 2. *The Furies i-v*

> *Then from [Tisiphone's] hair*
> *She tore out two [snakes] and with a doom-charged aim*
> *Darted them. Down the breasts of Athamos*
> *And Ino, winding, twisting, they exhaled*
> *Their noisome breath; yet never any wound*
> *To see, the fateful fangs affect their minds.*
> *(Ovid 1986 p. 89)*

The Furies (or Erinyes) in literature and in visual iterations are not passive or malleable characters; they are dynamic and fearsome – forceful persecutors, dispensers of vengeance and justice. Unlike Venus, they resist the projection of shifting allegorical values linking them to virtue or vice, for example. The Furies, however, are strongly embedded in nature – they summon the forces of nature, capable of inflicting storms, drought, tremors, madness and disease. In artworks, they are generally imaged as aggressive forces *of* nature. Like Venus, they evolve in appearance over time to reflect the fears and prejudices of the eras in which they are depicted, but as supernatural forces from the underworld, the Furies remain unambiguous and unwavering in their retributive function. The Furies (along with the Three Graces) were, in the telling of their origins in Hesiod's *Theogeny*, born from the same event that led to the birth of Venus. The Furies are described as having emerged from drops of blood (rather than from the sea-foam of Venus' nascence); the blood spilled on the earth (Gaia) as a result of the castration of Ouranos/Dionysus, the sky god, by his son Cronus. The Furies are chthonic deities who persecute those who commit serious crimes – especially matricide and fratricide – until their victims show remorse. In artworks they are not idealised beauties; their iconography includes writhing serpents, flaming torches and other instruments of torment.

The number of Furies is not specified in the Greek and Roman texts where they have a role (such as Virgil's 29-19 BCE *Aeneid*), but three are named – Allecto, Megaera and Tisiphone. They are sometimes referred to euphemistically (and ironically) in literature as the Eumenides (the Kindly Ones), because, according to Robert Graves (1960), to call them by their name was imprudent. They are 'personifications of conscience […] aroused only by the breach of a maternal taboo'. In representations on Greek vases from the third and fourth centuries BCE (Plate 54) and relief carvings such as the second century BCE frieze from the Pergamon altar

(Plate 55), they are depicted as young and athletic women, generally dressed like huntresses. Although identified by the snakes in their hair and around their bodies, they are not grotesque. Later, in European paintings and engravings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, they are pictured as old as well as dreadful female figures, naked and with drooping breasts and with heads of dogs or wings of bats (Plate 56). This visual transformation likely reflects their move (beyond Greco-Roman religious belief) into the realm of mythology, extending the folkloric role of the sisters to that of 'the nag, the hag, the mother-in-law' (Drucker 2012 p. 95).

In the hands of academic neo-classical painters of the nineteenth century such as William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905) (Plate 57) and Carl Rahl (1812-1865) (Plate 58), who are both sources for *The Furies i-v*, the deities are robust, muscular and agile women, neither young nor old, and partly clad in loose, swirling drapery. They strike dynamic poses and their facial expressions are menacing, as they go about their torment of Orestes, the transgressor in the mythological events these paintings record. In the twenty-first century, Greek and Roman mythology and the world of comics converge in, for example, a *Wonder Woman* comic series (Abnett & Lanning 2011) featuring the Furies as winged warrior-women (Plate 59). Images of fighting females from comics and electronic gameworlds impressed me as having marked similarities to depictions of the Furies in fine art, with their use of strong diagonals, exaggerated perspective and dramatic lighting as visual devices to heighten drama and heroic qualities. This observation led to a process of garnering still images of gameworld characters in action poses; images of heads, torsos, legs and arms were dissected, along with body parts from the nineteenth century paintings, and I collected fragments of costumes and weaponry, snakes (constant companions of the Furies) and landscape elements of parched earth and angry skies.

The young action-women from the gameworlds quoted in *The Furies i-v* (Plates 60-65) are tough, agentic individuals with superhuman powers on one hand, and hypersexualised figures on the other; they often have enormous breasts and tight or minimal clothing. Though the gameworld characters are agile and strong (and capable of defeating male opponents) they are portrayed as erotic and exotic fantasies in those digital environments; the gender stereotyping is extreme. The

neoclassical painters and the games designers iterate normative visual conventions from their respective eras. In the case of the nineteenth-century works, superior knowledge and cultural status was conferred on artists and audiences through their literacy in classical Greek motifs and forms (Salomon 1996 p. 69). The partial nakedness and eroticism of the classical subjects is made respectable by the mythological contexts of the painted scenarios, as outlined in relation to images of Venus earlier in this chapter. In comparison, the creators of the gameworlds overtly objectify the eroticism of these characters, as attested by numerous websites dedicated to illustrated lists of 'hottest' and 'sexiest' female video game characters.

The manner in which both genres conjure presumed dark, subterranean powers inherent in womanhood, recalls Camille Paglia's (1990 p. 12) contentious characterisation of women as 'Dionysian' or 'chthonic', closely linked with the miasmic, swampy chaos of nature. Men, in this dichotomous scheme, are described as 'Apollonian', associated with light (the sky and sky-god Apollo), orderliness, reason and clarity, as opposed to the earth and the underworld. Paglia, in her book *Sexual Personae* (1990 p. 9), famously declared: 'Men, bonding together, invented culture as a defence against female nature'. The book received widespread media coverage but was extensively criticised by feminist scholars on multiple grounds, not least for its biological determinism and its dangerous placement of blame for male violence against women on the victims of that aggression (Noble 2000 p. 226). The dark, superhuman forces that Paglia applied to *all* women, throughout history, persist, however, in the traces of the mythical Furies in contemporary popular culture gameworlds, in the form of sexualised, fighting females with exceptional (supernatural) powers. It is this residual, universal characterisation of women in electronic games – carried forward from the mythological depictions of the neoclassical art world – that *The Furies i-v* parody.

Like the bodies of the mythological deities in the nineteenth century paintings and the female characters from the referenced games, the Furies are visualised with exaggerated perspective and strikingly theatrical poses. These invented, hybrid figures are assembled using conventions of photomontage derived from feminist (and pre-feminist) practices, and the methods of remix media where genres can be deconstructed and reconstructed, facilitated by the Internet. These combined working

methods are inherently destabilising of mass media images of women and patterns of imaging in use since the Renaissance era. The figures, composed from appropriated fragments of historical and contemporary culture, disclose the commodification of women's bodies through repetition of archetypes and the stylistic and aesthetic practices. The composition and performative spectacle of The Furies therefore recalls Butler's (1999 p. 191) insistence about gender identity not as 'stable', but rather 'tenuously constituted in time, instituted […] through a *stylized repetition of acts*' (her emphasis).

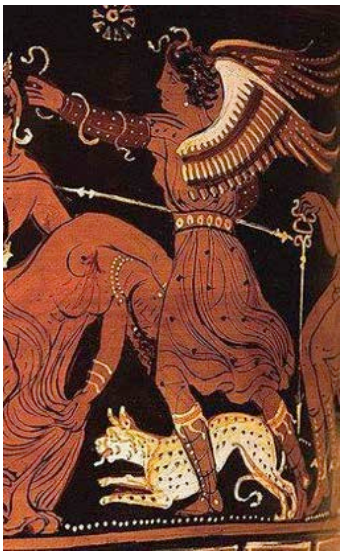

Plate 54. Artist unknown, Erinyes with Dionysus and Lykourgos (detail), Apulian red-figure krater, c. 330 BCE.

Plate 55. Artist unknown, Erinye throwing a snake vessel, Pergamon altar frieze, c. 166-156 BCE.

Plate 56. Gustave Doré, *Mark Thou Each Dire Erinnys* (detail), engraving illustrating Canto IX of *Divine Comedy, Inferno* by Dante Alighieri, c. 1890.

Plate 57. William Adolphe Bouguereau, *The Remorse of Orestes*, 1862, oil on canvas, 227 x 278 cm.

Plate 58. Carl Rahl, *Orestes Pursued by the Furies*, c. 1852, oil on canvas, 154 x 202 cm.

Plate 59. Cover art, *Flashpoint: Wonder Woman and the Furies*,
August 2011 Issue 1 of 3, DC Comics.

The process of creating the figures entailed a material form of re-membering (Carter 2004 p. 191). The Furies are approximately life-sized assemblages of images from bodies of various characters. They have mismatched limbs, exaggerated anatomical features and distorted perspective, underlining that they are not *natural*. The gameworld components are derived from characters named Chun Li, Cammy and Ibuki (*Street Fighter*)[59], Ayane (*Dead or Alive*)[60], Ivy Valentine, Taki and Cassandra (*Soulcalibur*)[61], Mileena (*Mortal Kombat*)[62], and Nina (*Tekken*)[63], and one Fury incorporates an element of the body of *Wonder Woman* from the comic strip[64]. Tropes from neo-classical paintings and gameworld imagery merge in the composite figures to amplify action, drama and menace. Hybridity relates not only to the cut-and-pasted image components of the fighting females, but disparate media, high art and popular culture, historical and contemporary eras, the divine and the human. The melding of genres and time frames confronts Andreas Huyssen's (1986 p. 42) notion that women (at least since the nineteenth century) have been associated with mass

[59] Franchise first developed by Capcom in 1987 as an arcade game, produced and directed by Takashi Nishiama.
[60] Fighting game developed by Team Ninja for Techmo in 1996, now a franchise.
[61] Originally released as an arcade game in 1996, the *Soulcalibur* series was developed as a video game by Bandai Namco Entertainment.
[62] Franchise developed in 1992 by Midway Games, later acquired by Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment.
[63] Published in 1994 by Namco for arcades and in 1995 for PlayStation.
[64] Published by DC Comics.

culture, while ‘high art’ or authentic culture has been regarded as the privileged realm of men.

Apocalyptic backgrounds of stormy skies and parched earth re-cite dystopian gameworld environments, and parody the reductive woman/nature nexus, with implicit reference to Butler’s (1999 p. 200) idea that, as an ‘act’, gender is capable of ‘self-parody, self-criticism, and those hyperbolic exhibitions of “the natural” that, in their very exaggeration, reveal its fundamentally phantasmatic status’. Butler (1999 p. 200) notes the potential of parody and pastiche to consolidate the ‘politics of despair’, whereby ‘marginal’ genders are affirmed as outside the realm of the real or natural. Parodic practice and subversive laughter can also expose what is taken to be real, authentic and natural about sex, gender and the body as cultural configurations, comprised of a series of often repeated (naturalising) effects (Butler 1999 pp. 200-203). *The Furies i-v* perform the parody that focuses attention on the position of the (female) body in culture, and how citing a convention becomes a means, via the self-contradictory or doubling effect (Hutcheon 2002 p. 106), to subverting the position.

The parody is presented with humour that I trace to the ironic humour and ‘serious play’ that Haraway (1991 p. 149) shows is involved in envisaging a cybernetic creature who is also ‘a rhetorical strategy and a political method’. The Furies are not quite the posthuman amalgam of machine and organism that Haraway (1991 p. 149) calls a ‘cyborg’. But they are synthetic, hybrid, post-human figures with the ‘monstrous feminine’ (Creed 1993) in their mythic lineage and realised form. Derived from mythical and fictional women that dwell in digitally-altered environments, the *Furies* purposely and ambiguously blur the boundary between what is *natural* and what is *crafted*. So, too, gender boundaries are blurred by technology according to Braidotti (1996), with implications for the representation of sexual difference in the crafting of such figures. Haraway’s (1991 p. 149) conception of the cybernetic figure itself is ironic, as it concerns the unresolvable contradictions and ‘the tensions of holding incompatible things together because both or all are necessary and true’. The serious playfulness of the *Furies* equally depends on recognition of this irony.

The mixing of lived experience and (science) fiction in the iconic figure of the cyborg has become an important concept in feminism because embracing

technology was initially posited as a way of overcoming categorisation and a means to liberation from (patriarchal) ideology. Braidotti (1996), for example, suggests that computer technology promised 'a world beyond gender differences', though the gap between the promise and the realisation of this ideal appears to have grown rather than diminished. The great creative potential offered by new and emerging technologies also continues to be paradoxical for contemporary feminists, because violent pornography persists in the electronic sphere. Debate continues about the implications for the representation of 'posthuman' bodies and embodied experience in the fields of visual art and philosophy under terms such as 'new materialism' (Barrett & Bolt 2013; Van der Tuin & Braidotti 2012) or 'material feminism' (Alaimo & Hekman 2008) where the materiality of the human body, and processes of materialisation and transformation are central. Scholars such as these who align with the new materialist movement are critical of feminist theory that pays insufficient attention to material bodies and lived experiences (Cifor 2017).

The characteristics and attributes of the Furies and Venus (in classical mythology) are wildly divergent, though the deities are closely related in the genealogy of the Olympian pantheon. Both are intimately connected with nature and embody stereotyped connotations of the nature of women that have been consolidated and naturalised in art and culture. The parody particularly references fine art in *Versions of Venus,* while *Furies i-v* is a counter parody more obviously in dialogue with the electronic gameworlds sphere of contemporary popular culture. The works all enact parafeminism insofar as they place the female body at the centre of imagery, alluding to female power, feminine subjectivities, sexuality and gender formation in ways that aspire to 'mess […] up binary structures of sexual difference' (Jones 2006 p. 213). They do this by foregrounding, amplifying and ironically re-citing the delimiting woman/nature connection. *Furies i-v* also parodies the post-feminist 'bad girls' works of sexualised and commodified bodies that Jones (2008 p. 9) characterised as leading to an impasse in feminist art that led her to formulate parafeminism (see Chapter One). Collaged from overtly sexualised representations from popular culture, the reconfigured Furies turn this imagery against the grain, playfully referencing and evoking ambiguities in imaging traditions. The figures loom large, and their colour and tonality is intensified to amplify their drama and emphasise their dynamic power.

The creation of these hybrid figures is restorative both in the sense of bringing the ancient deities into a contemporary context, and in their composition from disparate sources using the techniques of collage and photomontage derived from the genealogy of feminist art. The work also aims to give the pleasure of the sensation of empowerment, with the Furies presented as agentic, superhuman action figures dominating apocalyptic landscapes that reference fantasy gameworlds. *The Furies i-v*, printed onto canvas and installed opposite *Versions of Venus*, offer a contrasting but also highly mediated representation of 'womanhood'. Similarities in medium and working method are set against dissimilarities in scale and temperament between the *Furies* and *Versions of Venus*, but both expose and parody the historical association of women's bodies with nature. Bringing the 'bad-girl' Furies into the contemporary realm by converging them with characters from electronic games expands knowledge of these conventions, and of the practice of digital collage, and playfully foregrounds the body as a site of re-empowerment in art and popular culture.

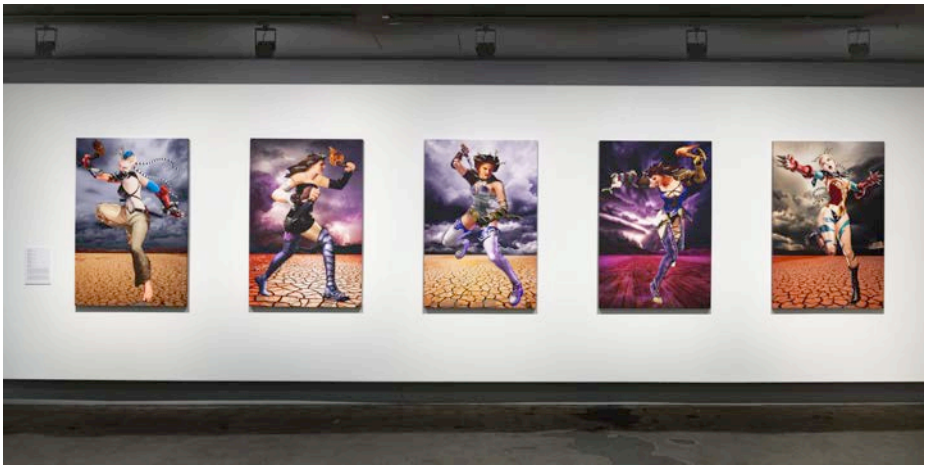

Plate 60. Laurel McKenzie, *The Furies i-v* (installation view), 2015,
archival pigment prints on canvas, each 135 x 90 cm.

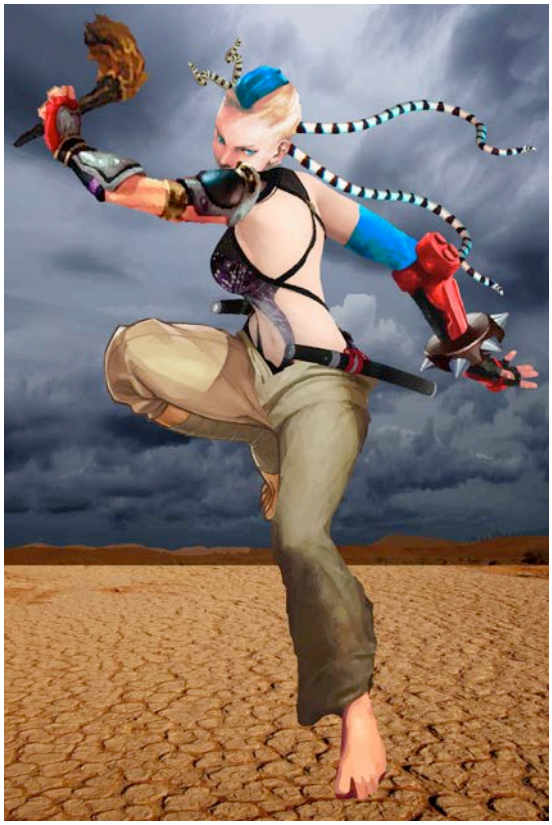

Plate 61. Laurel McKenzie, *Fury i*, 2015,
archival pigment print on canvas, 135 x 90 x 4.5 cm.

Plate 62. Laurel McKenzie, *Fury ii*, 2015,
archival pigment print on canvas, 135 x 90 x 4.5 cm.

Plate 63. Laurel McKenzie, *Fury iii*, 2015,
archival pigment print on canvas, 135 x 90 x 4.5 cm.

Plate 64. Laurel McKenzie, *Fury iv*, 2015,
archival pigment print on canvas, 135 x 90 x 4.5 cm.

Plate 65. Laurel McKenzie, *Fury v*, 2015,
archival pigment print on canvas, 135 x 90 x 4.5 cm.

Installations 3, 4 and 5. *Dress-ups, Accoutrements* and *Rave*

> *Creative research deals in matter that signifies. It is a discourse of material signs. To say this is not only to redefine the meaning of 'sign' but to reconceptualise matter. (Carter 2004 p. 182)*

At first glance, the one hundred calico dresses in *Dress-ups*[65] (Plates 66-67) might appear to be dolls' dresses, but they are not cut to fit chubby, baby-like dolls or the elongated and curvy form of Barbie or similar toys. They are scaled-down garments of adult proportions. A mosaic of printed imagery on the dresses is composed from collaged 'tiles' of (represented) skin. Each tile in each of six mosaics is an appropriated fragment from an historical painting. The mosaics are superimposed onto the 'canvas' of the swags of miniature calico garments. The fleshy components of the six separate mosaics allude to historical conceptions of idealised feminine beauty, while the dress styles signify notions of evolving fashion; dresses are things that can be put on, taken off and changed, but they also reflect social/cultural pressures and constraints.

[65] Winsome Jobling has a work titled *Dress-ups* (1996) (see Appendix 1). The replication of the title in my work is entirely coincidental.

The printed representations of skin on the garments refer to the cultural inscription of (female) bodies, and refers to women's embodied experiences of being 'in their own skin'. A movement between the external and internal surfaces of the body is also suggested in this work, recalling Grosz's (1994b p. 23) call for metaphors which 'implicate the subject and the object', and blur the binary oppositions in which meanings of women's bodies, and what is seen as 'natural', are constructed. *Dress-ups* turns inside-out the role of garments as coverings of flesh, protectors of modesty. More importantly, the work employs the feminist media of collage (in the surface printing) and femmage materials in the fabric of the dresses. It links those media metaphorically with what once would have been described as 'women's work', rather than 'works by women'. The 'double play of materiality and agency' that Meskimmon (2003 pp. 3-4) describes is embodied in the processes of making the work and creating meaning from tactile substances. Ideas concerning the social construction and reconstruction of bodies and body images, self-representation and subjecthood are engaged with, but bodies are not posited as 'mute' (Bolt 2013 p. 3); rather, through notions of matter as agency, the 'materiality of the human body and the natural world' (Alaimo & Hekman 2008 p. 1) are used to political effect.

Dress-ups took a significantly different form in the final exhibition to that of its first incarnation at KickArts Contemporary Arts, where the little dresses were displayed as plain calico garments, with the fleshy mosaic video-projected onto the garments and the wall behind. Critical reflection and constructive critique from respected peers suggested that the piece should be modified to enhance the sharpness of the imagery and the evocative materiality of the media. The installation was subsequently reworked for the final exhibition (as outlined below) in order to make the skin analogy more explicit. Seen in its earlier iteration by a curator from Singapore, the work was selected for inclusion in a small group exhibition titled *Her Letters: Shifting Perspectives in the Global Age of Anxiety* at Shophouse 5 Gallery, Singapore, March 2016. In the very narrow gallery space a projection over the entire four-metre span of the work was impossible. The raw calico dresses, installed in an exhibition with works by two other Australian women artists[66], functioned aesthetically in a way that was not originally intended but which the audience at the

[66] The works by Rose Rigley and Aylie McDowall shown in this space had some aesthetic affinities with *Dress-ups.*

exhibition launch responded to positively. The dresses were subsequently printed, and the work installed at Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art with the natural light of that space playing a role in the audience's experience.

For *Dress-ups*, I planned to make a work that depicted women and their bodies in a way that differed from the representational *Versions of Venus* and *Furies i-v*. Decisions concerning media, scale, style, installation format and other practical and aesthetic considerations were made in this context. Miniaturised clothing was decided upon for its signification of the absent bodies that might wear the dresses, and dresses sewn from fabric have strong associations with women's bodies. Collaged images of female skin appropriated from canonical paintings of naked women were digitally assembled into mosaics to sit on the surface of the fabric. The six separate mosaics comprise details (heads and torsos) from three of the paintings parodied in *Versions of Venus*[67]. Visual and conceptual links with the works depicting mythical women-as-nature were thus conceived.

Dress-ups was originally planned to occupy a single wall, as a series of swags of small dresses, roughly forming an inverted pyramid in shape. Ten swags of dresses in four tiers provided the desired shape, and ten groups of dresses, each of a single style, could include a style of garment from every decade of the twentieth century, as if to suggest a retrospective, spanning a century of women's fashion. With multiples of ten dresses in each style, one hundred garments were needed. In the first instance, I collected commercial dress patterns from each decade of the twentieth century. From these patterns, a selection of typical or representative styles, recognisably associated with particular eras, was designed. A dressmaker was commissioned to draw up a pattern for each design, scaled to the designated size in the proportions of an adult woman. I worked with the dressmaker to produce a series of prototypes. The process took some time, but as the trial dresses were refined and approved, groups of ten in each style were sewn. The dressmaker was asked to leave the garments unfinished, with hems unturned and cotton threads not tied off.

[67] The details from Venus paintings can be read from a distance, as they were seen in the projection on the dresses in the first iteration of *Dress-ups* at KickArts, and in the video projection behind the shoes and bags of *Accoutrements* in the final exhibition (see below).

Hanging the garments required small coat hangers to fit the dresses, but these could not be found ready-made. A material that would be barely visible – clear Perspex – was decided upon, and I created a template for the hangers and sent the file to a company that would cut one hundred hangers to order. Calico (unbleached cotton) was selected for the dresses because of its pale colour, drawing visual and metaphorical connections with a blank canvas and ideal for the projection of the mosaic. Calico is not normally used for finished clothing, but as a lining material, and as a medium, therefore, it is suggestive of prototype and process, and connects with ideas about the social construction of identity. The scale of the dresses was determined, in part, by the gallery spaces; one hundred full-sized dresses would not be feasible, nor would this option have had the desired effect of resembling artefacts which signified clothing, but were not functional, wearable apparel. The little dresses needed to be massed – the swags of each style hung like samples or garments in a factory production line, to reinforce the concept of transformation in material form.

When all of the dresses had been sewn, a mock-up of the installation was undertaken; fourteen temporary hanging devices were attached to a long wall, and jute string strung between them. The dresses, on their hangers, were hung on the string running between the posts and pegged in place with miniature wooden clothes pegs. From this temporary installation, adjustments were made to vertical and horizontal spacing to arrive at the optimal placement of the posts. Measurements were recorded and photographs taken for the gallery staff, who would need to screw metal posts into the wall at appropriate points during installation. The dresses were grouped according to the decade they represented, starting from 1900 to 1910 in the top left and finishing with 1990 to 2000 in the bottom swag, though the chronological grouping was intended only to assist viewers in reading the styles as belonging to particular points in time, subject to changing ideals and expectations.

For the first iteration of this work at KickArts Contemporary Arts, where a video projection threw the slow-transitioning mosaics onto the raw calico garments, the intention was for the viewer to read the six separate mosaics as details from paintings of Venus. The gallery staff were able to restrict the lighting on the *Dress-ups* wall to some extent, by moving the other works back from that unlit section, but the ambient light in the space and the distance of the projector from the work

rendered the projected imagery too soft and diffused to be read as planned. Appraisal led to consideration of a solution for the final exhibition. I made digital files from the fleshy mosaics to be surface-printed onto the individual dresses. But because the dresses were already made, with pleats and folds, getting them printed was problematic. Numerous fabric printers within Australia were contacted, but their equipment could not print on three-dimensional surfaces, or they were unwilling to test it on a single, non-industrial job. I contacted equipment suppliers as far afield as Switzerland and Russia (where large format printers are manufactured with a platen that can be lowered to accommodate three-dimensional items). I located businesses in Australia that had purchased their digital printing equipment, but none were willing to undertake my project. Finally, I located a local T-shirt printer with an adjustable-platen digital printer who was willing to experiment and test-print one dress to see if the outcome was satisfactory. The result was exactly as hoped for, so the one hundred dresses were printed in this way, with no wastage. Bows and other embellishments were removed from the dresses prior to printing, separately printed and then re-attached.

Experiments with printing the collaged imagery of the earlier projection onto ‘wallpaper’ (self-adhesive, digitally printed fabric) were conducted, with a view to providing a large-scale backdrop for the dresses on the wall of the gallery for the final exhibition. The test results led to rejection of this concept on aesthetic grounds – I judged that the dresses would be subsumed into the background. In its final form, *Dress-ups* was exhibited at Umbrella Studio with the printed dresses hung against a wall painted pale pink.

Accoutrements (Plates 68-69), like *Dress-ups*, is a femmage installation that includes replica apparel typically associated with the outward (dress) codes of ‘femininity’. Shoes and handbags are constructed from polyester satin fabric printed with some of the same mosaics of fleshy fragments from historical paintings as used in *Dress-ups*. The accoutrements are arranged in a shop-like display. Such accessories link notions of fetishism with commodification of women’s bodies, a connection further emphasised by the video projection that screens on a monitor behind the shoes and bags. The projection consists of a slow-transitioning series of six collaged mosaics composed of square fragments of painted skin, like those

printed on the fabric of the accessories (and printed on the dresses for *Dress-ups*). The six mosaics comprise head or torso details from three of the parodied paintings of the birth of Venus. The use of multiples highlights the conceptual underpinnings of the work, and links the installation to other works in the exhibition. As in *Dress-ups*, *Accoutrements* combines the technologies of digital collage and digital printing with femmage (fabric and hand-crafting) to parody social processes of cultural inscription and the material effects of commodification.

Accoutrements was created after the other works for inclusion in the final exhibition. It developed as a response to my desire to extend the visual and conceptual links between the exhibition components, and the spatial environment (size, layout and lighting) of Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts. The collage aesthetic, femmage materials, and layered references to women's bodies in this work were planned as an extension and reinforcement of *Dress-ups*. The mosaics inscribed on the surfaces of the bags and shoes, and projected as moving images on the monitor, form traces of the mythological *Versions of Venus*. The addition of this work altered the relationship and resonances *between* the installation pieces and how the audience might apprehend them. My attention to this element grew as my research on feminist art history, and close examination of the precedents, showed more compellingly the profound innovation represented by femmage and collage as a political means of depicting the body, and the extent and parodic potency of cut-and-paste techniques in feminist art. The 'paradoxical logic' (Dickens 2015) of the media and its potential for interruption and transformation are explored (in digital form) in all the works described above.

Rave[68] (Plates 70-73), the collective title given to the triptych of square panels was first exhibited with the title of each of the imaged phrases: *Lean in, Destroy the joint, Like a girl.* The femmage panels with the phrases spelled out in buttons and beads give material form to language about gender. The panels allude to the decorative arts of hand-worked samplers with sentimental expressions like 'Home Sweet Home' or 'Bless this House', but the messages are not about domesticity. Text-as-image references and materialises the binary opposition that Meskimmon (2003 p. 151) identifies between 'the word' (text) and 'the flesh' (image

[68] The decision to title the triptych *Rave* was made while the catalogue (McKenzie 2017) was in-press and too late to amend.

or object): the rationalism of text-based knowledge that dominates imagery or aesthetics. She argues that text has served to 'disguis[e] the connections between thought and the body', enabling 'linear, progressive narratives of universal truth, unencumbered by their material origins [to] be seen as stable and natural'. This subordination of 'the flesh' to 'the word' is equated with the (Christian) notion of body and soul (pp. 151-152) and sexual difference is coded in the oppositional terms as feminine (body) and masculine (soul). The viewer who takes meaning from the material (imaged) form of the text responds to its strategic deployment as image or object, and hence the interplay of materiality, subjectivity and agency.

The injunction to 'lean in' is derived from the title of a book by Sheryl Sandberg and Nell Scovell: *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead* (2013). The best-selling publication followed a TED Talk delivered by Sandberg in 2010, and offers practical advice from a successful woman in the corporate environment, for women aspiring to career or professional goals. The book was criticised by bell hooks (2013) and Susan Faludi (2013) who drew attention to the challenges of applying Sandberg's advice for single mothers and women in low-paid and insecure jobs. Even so, 'Lean in' has entered the (some might say post-feminist) lexicon of empowering assertiveness for women in the workplace to take greater control of their situations. Indeed, 'Lean In' has become a movement with groups (or 'Circles') for joining, courses for taking, and merchandise bearing the 'Lean In' slogan for purchasing. A follow-up book, *Lean In For Graduates* (Sandberg 2014), was published the following year.

'Destroy the joint' entered the Australian feminist vernacular following an outburst by the broadcaster Alan Jones in September 2012, during the tenure of Julia Gillard as the country's first female Prime Minister. Jones grouped the Prime Minister with other female leaders in the country, proclaiming that they were 'destroying the joint':

> She [Gillard] said that we know societies only reach their full potential if women are politically participating. Women are destroying the joint — Christine Nixon [former Victorian Police Chief] in Melbourne, Clover Moore [former member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly and Lord

> Mayor, City of Sydney] here. Honestly […] there isn't a chaff bag big enough for them.[69]

Jones's comments led to withdrawal of advertising from his program, and a Twitter campaign was launched by Jane Caro[70], and a group of outraged women set up *Destroy the Joint*[71], a Facebook page where 'destroyers' report instances of misogyny, and conduct campaigns against domestic violence, among other activism. Their appropriation of Jones's offensive statement successfully transformed it into an ironic slogan for rebuttal of abuse of women. The triptych reappropriates their efforts in parafeminist avowal of the art of femmage.

'Like a girl' is a phrase that has been in long use as an insult, directed chiefly at men and boys. Running, throwing or doing anything else 'like a girl' is an accusation of weakness or incompetence. Iris Young (2005), in her essay 'Throwing Like a Girl', traces the origins of this phrase in modern parlance to a 1952 essay by Erwin Straus, who observed differences in the throwing styles of boys and girls at five years of age. Because of the age of the children, the difference in the way they used their bodies was judged to be 'biological', rather than 'acquired' (Straus cited in Young 2005 pp. 27-28). The phrase is reclaimed and inverted by a popular short video, commissioned by the makers of a sanitary product (Proctor and Gamble's *Always*) and produced as a social experiment (Greenfield 2014a). For the video, people of different ages were asked to mime running, throwing, fighting 'like a girl'. Older individuals, men and women, and boys, acted out stereotypes of flailing, self-conscious ineptitude. Girls under ten years of age, by contrast, mimicked running, throwing and fighting as vigorously as they could. When confronted with a replay of their demeaning enactment of a cliché, the older participants appeared embarrassed and even remorseful. The video (originally screened on television during an American Superbowl football match, when a premium price is paid for advertising time because of the vast audience reach) has been watched by many millions of viewers, and the experience is reported as moving for many (Greenfield 2014b).

The impact of discriminatory language on girls and women is defiantly highlighted in this triptych, as panels of glittering pink and blue beads and pearly

[69] Alan Jones, Radio 2GB, 31 August 2012.
[70] 'Got time on my hands tonight so thought I'd spend it coming up with new ways of "destroying the joint" being a woman & all. Ideas welcome.' Jane Caro on Twitter, August 31, 2012.
[71] https://www.facebook.com/DestroyTheJoint.

white buttons ironise the messages, and affectionately parody the media. As a feminist strategy, text-as-image has been in continuous use over several decades (as shown in Appendix 1 and discussed in Chapter Two) and it retains vitality in the contemporary context. With humour, *Rave* exposes the ideological biases in language and identity construction. That exposure can make visible some of the unconscious structures that define female subjectivities by redeploying the negative words and phrases to activist ends, weakening their power to derogate and constrain women and girls.

My decision to use buttons and beads to spell out the phrases for *Rave* was intended to set two disparate elements into play; the quoted phrases admonish or denigrate girls and women, while the materials and techniques are emphatically decorative. Beading, applied to garments and purses as well as (historical) utilitarian items like milk-jug covers, has strong associations with women's traditional decorative practices. Buttons – especially mother-of-pearl buttons – have decorative and historical connotations, having been used to adorn the clothing of London street-traders (Pearlies). In *Rave,* harsh and commanding phrases are ironically spelled out in different fonts, a sparkly medium with connotations of frivolity or ornament. The beads are glued (rather than stitched) onto the canvases, to purposefully resemble the contemporary medium of digital pixilation which is – ironically – less visible in the actual digital works in the exhibition. Each bead can be seen as a pixel component of a whole image. The phrases chosen have potential to be read together as a sentence of sorts. Gender-coded pink and blue beads with fields of pearly white buttons make up *Lean in* and *Like a girl!,* and *Destroy the joint* is declaimed in sparkling black and white – white upper-case lettering on a black background.

Prior to the final exhibition, the three panels of *Rave* were installed at KickArts Contemporary Arts in a vertical configuration, reading top to bottom, rather than horizontally (and under the earlier title of *Lean in; Destroy the joint; Like a girl*). This configuration was dictated by the low-light requirement for *Dress-ups* (in its first iteration), which imposed unanticipated space constraints in the gallery setting. The work was otherwise unchanged for the final exhibition, where it was positioned on the wall facing the street at Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts. Thus placed, *Rave* formed part of the signage for the exhibition, while the other

installations were viewed, in any sequence, from any position in the main exhibition space. Visual connections are made with *Versions of Venus* through the identical size and shape of the components of the work, and the femmage material signs of *Dress-ups* and *Accoutrements*, while the 'collage aesthetic' binds all the installations together.

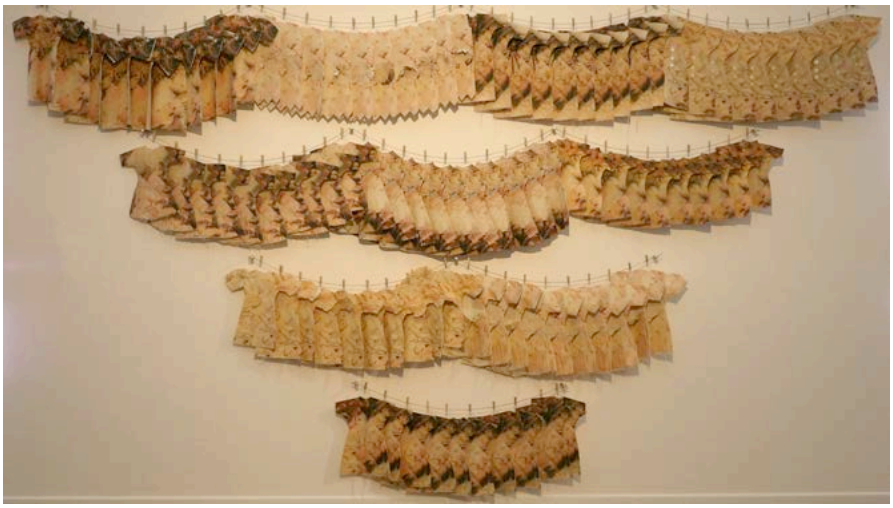

Plate 66. Laurel McKenzie, *Dress-ups* (installation view), 2017, cotton garments, wooden pegs, acrylic hangers, metal posts, string.

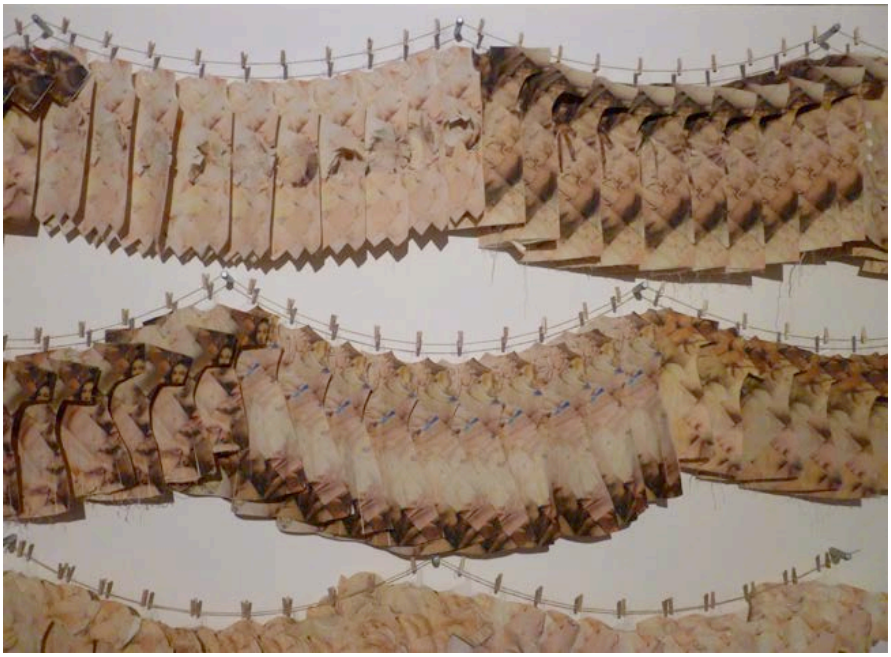

Plate 67. Laurel McKenzie, *Dress-ups* (detail), 2017, cotton garments, wooden pegs, acrylic hangers, metal posts, string.

Plate 68. Laurel McKenzie, *Accoutrements* (installation view), 2017, digitally printed polyester fabric, card and projection.

Plate 69. Laurel McKenzie, *Accoutrements* (installation view, detail), 2017, digitally printed polyester fabric, card and projection.

Plate 70. Laurel McKenzie, *Rave* (installation view), 2016, beads and buttons on canvas, 106 x 32 x 4.5 cm (framed).

Plate 71. Laurel McKenzie, *Rave* (detail – *Lean in*), 2016, beads and buttons on canvas, 106 x 32 x 4.5 cm (framed).

Plate 72. Laurel McKenzie, *Rave* (detail – *Destroy the joint*), 2016, beads and buttons on canvas, 106 x 32 x 4.5 cm (framed).

Plate 73. Laurel McKenzie, *Rave* (detail – *Like a girl*), 2016, beads and buttons on canvas, 106 x 32 x 4.5 cm (framed).

Exhibitions: Processes and Evaluations

In the course of developing the work for the final exhibition, and as part of the research process, two preliminary exhibitions occurred – *Re-Representation* at KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns (November 2015 to January 2016), and *Her Letters: Shifting Perspectives in the Global Age of Anxiety* at Shophouse 5, Singapore (March 2016). The solo exhibition at KickArts included installation of all elements except *Accoutrements*, while only *Dress-ups* (which was identified by the curator for the work's relevance to her theme) was exhibited in the three-person woman's art exhibition in Singapore[72]. The making of the works for exhibition was undertaken at the same time as research on the limitations of parafeminism and the debate about essentialism (which is now incorporated in Chapters One and Two of the exegesis) was underway. *Versions of Venus* was created as an experiment in parafeminism in the first stage of the theoretical research after reading Jones's work and sensing its relevance to a number of the guiding principles, in particular that of connecting with and celebrating feminist art traditions. By the time of the preliminary exhibitions, I was becoming more aware of the potential of parafeminism as parody. I also had begun to more critically evaluate parafeminism in the context of feminist thinkers and art makers, to engage more, for instance, with Pollock's notion of the virtual feminist museum and the potential to realise or trace the concept of time and the archive in my exhibition.

Four of the five installation pieces – *Wall of Watery Women: Versions of Venus*, *The Furies i-v*, *Dress-ups* and *Rave* – were exhibited and reflected upon prior to final exhibition. *Versions of Venus* and *Rave* (not so-named at the time) were slightly reconfigured, and *Dress-ups* was substantially modified in the light of aesthetic appraisal, as detailed above. *Accoutrements* was created after the other works and exhibited only in the final exhibition at Umbrella Studio. *Versions of Venus* was installed at KickArts wrapping around a corner to occupy two walls in the gallery, a format largely dictated by the nature and dimensions of the space. Although conceived as a single-wall installation, the extremity of the forty-four panel work needed to be moved away from a third wall where *Dress-ups* was installed because the projection on *Dress-ups* (in this first iteration) required the gallery

[72] An essay by Christina Arum-Sok (2016) documenting the exhibition titled *Her Letters: Shifting Perspectives in the Global Age of Anxiety* is published by Visual Arts Development Association Singapore.

lighting in its vicinity to be minimised. The work subsequently titled *Rave* was displayed in a vertical configuration in the KickArts space. *Dress-ups* alone, in modified form, was exhibited (as noted) at Shophouse 5, situating this installation piece in the wider (international) context of a curated exhibition of recent work by three Australian women artists. A reflexive eye was cast on the works during their creation and in mock installations, as well as in the earlier exhibitions, and the critical advice of respected artists and researchers was sought and taken into account. The final exhibition at Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, Townsville (January to March 2017) presented the works following appraisal and modification as outlined above.

Locational and practical factors such as the size and layout and of the gallery spaces in the Cairns and Townsville exhibition venues ultimately had minimal impact on the practice. A benefit of the Cairns and Singapore preliminary exhibitions was to enable the works to be professionally installed and seen in spaces where a substantial number of viewers – members of the public[73] and professional peers – could respond to the works. New understanding of the works resulted from this in situ appraisal, guiding the progression of the practice towards its final presentation. In particular, I extended the femmage works with the creation of the additional installation, *Accoutrements*, to strengthen this element and 'complete' the exhibition. The addition of this work altered the relationship and resonances *between* the installation pieces and how the audience might apprehend them. My attention to this element grew as my research on feminist art history, and close examination of the precedents showed more compellingly the profound innovation represented by femmage as a political means of depicting the body, and the extent and parodic potency of cut-and-paste techniques in feminist art. This realisation has greatly deepened my appreciation for the power of these art forms to speak politically – and thus to materialise feminist politics – in contemporary culture, and to resonate in contemporary settings with past feminisms.

Each work in *Venus Rising, Furies Raging: Bodies Redressed* connects with second wave feminist artistic practices, paying homage to precedents and earlier artists. The political potential of parody is used in the exhibition works to target

[73] A Visitor's Comments Book at the KickArts exhibition provided external feedback, which was almost entirely positive. One comment was dismissive, and one was not legible.

imaging traditions in both fine art and the gameworld branch of contemporary popular culture. Specific media and visual strategies of the practice, as outlined in this chapter, are utilised to locate the female body and the articulation of women's embodied experiences in a central position. The audience for the exhibition is invited to consider how bodies are inscribed and reinscribed with meaning, sexualised and feminised, disempowered and re-empowered, in their manner of representation. The historical, reiterative aspects of the imaging, with its 'corporeal preoccupations' (Castagnini 2015b p. 30) and homage to earlier, often humorous, feminist works, enacts parafeminist parody. The humour involved in the exhibition works is not the 'libidinal gratification' (Isaak 1995 p. 4) of the carnivalesque or burlesque, though some viewers might see elements of burlesque in the *Furies'* flirtations with the 'female grotesque' (Castagnini 2015b p. 29). Foregrounding contradictions – the paradoxical differences between past images and their present reiterations – perhaps arouses ironic humour, rather than laughter – although this might occur. In Hutcheon's (2000 p. 32) terms, the parodic humour is playful and critically constructive. The exhibition works will elicit different responses from different people, depending on their familiarity with the sources and art-historical contexts of the works appropriated, and their political allegiances, amongst other factors. Some viewers will derive pleasure from recognition of the re-contextualised images, but those who do not identify the specific background context of the representations will recognise ambiguities in the parodied imaging conventions, and potentially enjoy – and be amused by – that identification.

Aesthetic (as well as conceptual) coherence in the works for exhibition is enhanced by allusion to patterns and structures, through repetition of size and format in the components of the installations. The installations are devised to be in dialogue with each other, and for the audience to experience the mythical figures of Venus and the Furies, and the femmage works *Dress-ups* and *Accoutrements*, 'in the round'. The works could, if installed in a different venue, be arranged differently to suit the gallery space, but maintaining the opportunity for viewers to turn from one piece to another and make the visual connections between them is an essential aspect of the exhibition design. In seeking a suitable venue for the final exhibition, several galleries were investigated, but, in addition to availability within the required time frame, a single rectangular space (such as that offered at Umbrella Studio) was a

fundamental requirement. Without the constraints of time (between signing a contract with the gallery and the exhibition launch date) I might have made more bags and pairs of shoes for the *Accoutrements* installation, and my preference, on reflection, would be to display them on a cluster of plinths of different heights (assuming the availability or the possibility of constructing multiple plinths).

The exhibition installations in unison respond to Jones's (2008 p. 9) call for representations of the body that do not shield it from a 'fetishizing gaze', but rather situate it, as it is experienced, in a complex set of inter-connected relationships. The shifting 'politics of positionality' (p. 9) are effected in the exhibition through the several interventions in historical art, feminist art and contemporary culture. The practice recollects, restores and revisions aspects of second wave feminist artist's approaches, and strategically parodies the essentialist trope that links women's bodies with 'nature' and the 'natural'. Through the guiding principle of celebration, I valorise pioneering motifs and methods of earlier feminisms; these are privileged over the 'scornful and ridiculing' potential of parody's ironic inversion that Hutcheon (2000 p. 6) identifies.

Comments left by audiences at Umbrella Studio were all positive, and pleasure appears to have been the dominant response – some visitors said they 'loved it', that it was 'engaging', 'inspiring', 'mysteriously evocative' and other words that indicated that they enjoyed the work. One wrote that the exhibition 'challenged me and my suppositions about women and about what I understood as art', and another that they 'love[ed] the […] "out of the box" take on traditional forms of art'. But I could not ascertain if audiences experienced humour. Most of these observations were independent in the sense that I did not know the writers, but independent critique by an external reviewer was not published, reflecting a particular disadvantage of practicing as an artist in a regional or relatively remote location; newspapers and other local publications do not sustain art critics who might review exhibitions. Short notifications of events and general interest editorial pieces are published in the local press, but as reviewers have no assurance of publication and payment, they have left the field.

Other restrictions associated with working in a small city, distant from the main centres of population, are overcome to a large extent by the Internet, with the

availability of online ordering for art materials and access to research resources. However, seeing a number of important exhibitions in person requires travel, and some services are difficult to access. A significant amount of time was spent, as described above, seeking a printer who had the appropriate equipment and was willing to digitally print the already-made dresses for *Dress-ups*. The search was frustrating at the time, but I was satisfied with the solution that was ultimately found, and ideas for future work will benefit from the knowledge and experiences gained. Another disadvantageous aspect of working in a regional centre is the cost and the logistics of moving artworks to and from exhibition venues, especially if the works are fragile. Exhibiting in a centre where I do not have an extensive professional or friendship network could have posed some problems, but Umbrella Studio has a large local following of supporters, which helped to mitigate this factor for my exhibition launch. The exhibitors[74] in an adjoining Access Gallery space – young women whose work is described as feminist and working in a wholly different rhetoric to parafeminism – whose launch occurred simultaneously, were, similarly, not Townsville-based artists. However, a small exhibition in a third, tiny space, The Vault, featuring works by local environmental activists, attracted a substantial audience. This might be considered a 'borrowed' audience, but a favourable ambience was created and a large number of people[75] saw *Venus Rising, Furies Raging: Bodies Redressed*.

Umbrella Studio staff also organised a panel discussion that focused on Women in Contemporary Art. This was well attended by an appreciative group of (mostly) women artists. Didactic panels that gave an overview of the content and intent of the installations supported the exhibition. An exhibition catalogue (McKenzie 2017), an ABC North Queensland interview (published on social media with images) (Dickson 2017) and a video record of the exhibition and its launch (Gibbs 2017) provide an enduring record of the event.

[74] Hayley Megan French and Carla Liesch with *A Postcard From Clandulla State Gallery 5/6.*
[75] 758 people attended during the exhibition period (Little 2017).

Chapter Six – Material Effects:

Bodies Revisioned and Restored

> *Since we cannot just add women's art unproblematically to the category of "things known", we are obliged to reconceive the very process of knowing in acts of experimental and creative thinking. (Meskimmon 2003 p. 2)*

Realisation of the goal of the research – to investigate how an activist feminist practice might expand and affirm the body as a means of expression for women's experience – is enabled by Interconnective CPR. As explained in Chapter Four, it is devised for this project as an innovation upon Connective methodology through the elevation of the guiding principles as the basis for formulating a cohesive research practice. Interconnective CPR provides a reflexive framework for a body of new work for exhibition, with its elements of background research and contextualisation, critical reflection, identification of precedents, and development of the guiding principles for the practice. Within this framework the 'acts of experimental and creative thinking' that Meskimmon (2003 p. 2) refers to are organized and executed. The creative work grew concurrently, and in dialogue with, the theoretical and philosophical investigations in the study, which are, together, 'revealed' in the exegesis. The present, and final, chapter concludes the exegesis with final reflections on the contribution the work makes to new knowledge, and hence, advancement of the feminist visual arts field.

The approach that I have applied to the investigations and practical outcomes has been aided by the re-emergence of feminist art theory, curatorial focus and artistic practice. The works for exhibition have been created amidst a resurgence of interest (evidenced in recent global exhibitions and events listed in Appendices 2A and 2B) that might, in part, reflect acknowledgement of ongoing gender imbalances in gallery and institutional representation. Such interest is also indicative of an increased awareness amongst theorists and practitioners of the important legacy of feminist insights and artistic strategies that emerged with the second wave and

progressed in the ensuing decades (Millner 2014). A survey of these insights and strategies is summarised in the Data Repository that I compiled (Appendix 1), a collection of data that makes a significant contribution to the documentation of feminist media, motifs and tactics in art over roughly a century. The Data Repository played an important part in the research methodology, as explained in Chapter Four, and this approach assisted me in formulating the set of guiding principles for the creative practice. The data provides evidence of the range of issues that arise in relation to representing the body from a feminist perspective, and how perceived essentialist tropes both emerge and are countered in imaging of female bodies. In Chapter Two of the exegesis, my critical evaluation of the debates about essentialism provides new knowledge of the scope and sustained nature of these theoretical arguments and their powerful influence on the trajectory of feminist art in the ensuing decades, and which continues in contemporary practices.

Informed by the data collected and the theoretical critique (Chapters One and Two), I made the decision to represent the classical figures of Venus and the Furies in the research practice. My discussion and creative responses to historical, popular cultural and contemporary feminist depictions of these mythical bodies expands knowledge of them as motifs and bearers of meaning in art. My parafeminist representations of these deities contribute to their growing depiction in, and hence their meaning and relevance for, contemporary feminist practice (Chapters Three, Four and Five). Compiling the Data Repository specifically identified precedents for the practice in works by Pipilotti Rist, Kate Davis, Deborah Kelly and Sally Smart. These artists are exemplars for my adaptation of parafeminist theory for the creative practice. In Chapter Three, I show how these artists reinvigorate the imaging of female bodies by highlighting their reflections on past feminist practices, and the playful and critically constructive humour deployed in their art, and the diversity of materials and methods – particularly collage and femmage – they utilise. Works by each of the four artists described in Chapter Three, but particularly those of Davis, prompted me to consider that ‘recollection and restoration’ (as well as revision), for example, might form an integral part of parafeminist practice.

While Jones’s theory of parafeminism is critically evaluated (Chapter One), its dual discourse of critique and celebration of earlier feminist art is expressed in my

practice, in alignment with strategic essentialism and the concept of the virtual feminist archive. The substance of the critique of parafeminism is drawn from theoretical approaches and the tactics of earlier feminist artists and is realised creatively in the parodic images and installations. In productive exchange with both past and contemporary politically-motivated art, as a strategy for empowerment, the works affirm the centrality of the body as a motif of women's subjectivities and experiences.

The new body of work created for exhibition 'take[s] wisdom from' (Jones 2008 p. 2) the political and practical interventions of feminisms of the past fifty years. It embraces the dynamic nature and form of a material practice that Bolt (2004 p. 8) refers to as the 'exchange [that] can occur between objects, bodies and images', and how, through this process of exchange, the 'transformative potential' of images takes effect. Those material effects constitute 'the power of imaging'. In this research project, deep interest in the body, subjectivity and the 'transformative potential' of imagery is maintained, in alliance with the evolving political potential of feminist art. Parafeminist interventions are performed in the works where women's bodies – defining figures in feminist art, and central to feminist thinking about the political effects that images produce – are represented and alluded to in several ways. The body is shown, through the strategic essentialism of the parafeminist parody, to be not only a viable motif in contemporary visual practice but a valuable one, capable of producing resistance to patriarchal values that are perpetuated in imaging conventions. The absurdity of ideological assumptions (such as those that historically link women, through their bodies, with nature), are exposed, and playfully parodied. Through this interplay of materiality, subjectivity and agency, minds and bodies are shown to coexist in the works created, while the 'corporeality and intelligence' (Jones 2006 p. 212) of audiences are also engaged. Viewers are presented with images of women that acknowledge the pleasure that women (as well as men) might derive from the beauty and evocative power of past images, while highlighting, and hence disturbing, some of the limiting connotations of those images.

Responding to the practice, viewers' ideas and perceptions are potentially altered by their recognition of the parody and their experience of the encounter. The pleasure that women in particular will experience from looking at parafeminist works

will derive, in part, from that recognition. Some viewers, with art-historical knowledge, will enjoy decoding the layered meanings and contradictions that accrue to historical works when reiterated in altered contexts. Others, however, with less literacy in art history, will potentially experience enjoyment in recognising the parodied *imaging conventions*, because many of those conventions persist in contemporary popular media, and are therefore familiar. As Betterton (2003 p. 14) notes, the successes of feminism have already influenced the viewing practices of twenty-first century audiences.

Similarly, first hand experience of second wave feminist practice is not a pre-condition for understanding and responding to parafeminist works. Neither is such experience essential for artists engaged in making parafeminist (or parodic parafeminist) works. My own experience (discussed in Chapter Four) was important for engendering the current practice, but individual artists draw on knowledge gained from multiple sources, including their personal and professional experiences, and approaches to enacting parafeminism vary accordingly. This is demonstrated in the *Backflip* exhibition where the works of several generations of artists are represented. But for viewers, recognition of broad representational styles and tropes will be sufficient for them to access levels of meaning and the intent of the practice, including its humorous, parodic intent. In the vision of parafeminism that Jones articulates, the gestures of individual artists and specific works are used to illuminate her theory for a contemporary activist practice. While the vigour of feminism's historical legacy is championed by Jones, Pollock's notion of a 'virtual feminist museum' offers an alternative perspective on the project of feminist art history, and I have drawn on this notion in the work for exhibition. Pollock's approach does not describe humour or parody – she focuses, rather, on moments of trauma and disruption – but delving into and utilising art-historical archives in ways that play with a strictly linear approach to history presents a useful strategy for revealing some of the biases and inequities in patriarchal conventions. The pleasure of images of beautiful bodies is also embraced by Pollock in the virtual feminist museum, and in this respect her approach accords with an aspiration of parafeminism.

Feminist practices that revisit archives, recall past images and narratives and respond to temporal issues (including the visual transformation of bodies over time),

need not, however, preclude ironic humour or parody. This is demonstrated in the works of Davis, Kelly, Smart and Rist, where a complex range of emotions and potential reactions is evoked as the dynamic contemporary effect of several decades of feminist theorising and debate, including Beauvoir's formative influence on feminist theory of sexual difference, and subsequently Butler's theory of performativity. Reflection on associated debates about the reification of patriarchal tropes in imagery and attendant critiques of essentialism for activist artists motivated me to use images of women's bodies in ways that incorporate parodic parafeminism with strategic essentialism as a basis for innovation. The bodies represented articulate women's experiences, but evade the impasse of 'bad girl' feminist art and the universalism historically attributed to the female body, while opening the potential for viewers to experience a 'visceral response' (Gorman 2017) to the apprehension of the images.

The site for the synthesis of the overlapping components of the project is the making of the work for exhibition, which extends parafeminist aims by drawing on past feminisms and integrating alternative theories, guided by the principles formulated for the practice. The exhibition installation works thus materialise feminist politics in a contemporary environment, to evoke fresh understandings and contribute new insights into the wide-ranging implications of visual representations of, and allusions to, the female body in contemporary art. The body is, in a sense, 'restored' but the 'restoration' results from a process of parody and disruption of representational traditions. The imaged (or alluded to) body therefore is not 'restored' in the sense of returned to a former idealised state as a coherent 'whole', but rather 'redressed'.

This research project has addressed the question of how, following decades of feminist enquiry and debate, representations of women's bodies can effectively affirm the centrality of the body for conveying women's experiences in contemporary visual art. A parafeminist approach, where the spectacle and politics of the woman/nature nexus are embraced rather than evaded, has been adapted to expand feminist practice. Ironic humour and critique are applied to historical motifs, feminist traditions and contemporary art practices as a form of intervention. Women audiences are empowered by the interplay of agency and materiality in the exhibition

installations, where the naturalised connection between imaged bodies and social and cultural structures are exposed, parodied and thus redressed.

Future Directions

Illuminating how hierarchies of 'power and value' attach to subjects and objects in relation to works of art (Jones 2006 p. 215) remains an abiding interest. The complex relationships of bodies, desire, identifications and imaging traditions remain a rich field for feminist exploration and imaging. Consequently, I envision investigation of the art historical and popular media archives in future projects, with bodies at the heart of the resistance. Enlisting the expanding range of new materials and digital technologies, coupled with the older materials and techniques of collage and femmage, is also projected. For example, equipment that can print onto three-dimensional surfaces and various substrates remains generally outside the reach of individual visual artists, but it exists in the industrial sphere. A research grant could potentially support a project aimed at discovering the technologies and their utilisation in creative practice, facilitating an extended range of applications and greater access by visual artists. In relation to publications, discussion with the Women's Art Register concerning the adaptation and ongoing expansion of the Data Repository (Appendix 1) has been initiated. This could also constitute a postdoctoral research project for which a grant will be sought to provide an expanding resource for wider distribution and for future researchers. The revisioning of women's bodies that occurs in the works for exhibition forms part of a process – 'the very process of knowing in acts of experimental and creative thinking' that Meskimmon (2003 p. 2) refers to – where restoration of imagery in altered contexts extends feminist activism in art. It disturbs essentialist notions of culture and nature, subjects and bodies, and in the process opens the way for altered and new perceptions.

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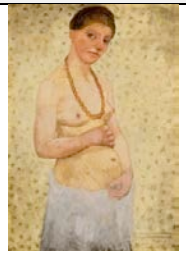
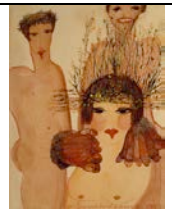
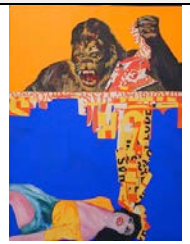
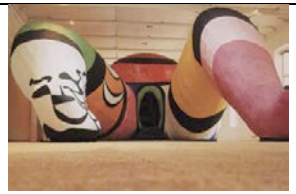
Appendix 1

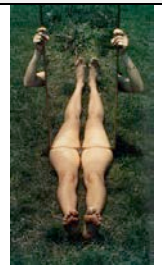
Data Repository Feminist Issues and Interventional Strategies: An Overview From 1900 to 2000s

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Modersohn-Becker, Paula 1876 - 1907	*Self Portrait on the Sixth Wedding Anniversary* Oil on composite board 101.6 x 71.1 cm	1906		The body/nude; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity	Self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object
Valadon, Suzanne 1865 - 1938	*La chambre bleue (The blue room)* Oil on canvas 90 x 116 cm	1923		The body/nude; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; representational traditions	Self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object
Höch, Hanna 1889 - 1978	*Love (*or *la Petite Mélancolie*) Photomontage 21.8 x 21 cm	1931		Advertising/popular culture tropes; constructs of beauty; objectification/idealization	Collage/photomontage; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Openheim, Meret 1913 - 1985	*Ma Gouvernante/My Nurse/ Mein Kindermädchen* (1967 replica of 1930s version) Shoes, string, paper, metal 14 x 33 x 21 cm	1936		Female sexuality or eroticism; objectification/idealization; fragmentation; gendered symbolism	Femmage/assemblage; evocation of bodies; parody/humorous critique
Rama, Carol 1918 - 2015	*Appassionata* Watercolour on paper 22.86 x 18.24 cm	1943		The abject body; female sexuality or eroticism	Previously taboo topics/motifs; performance of gender
Bourgeois, Louise 1911 - 2010	*Femme Maison* Oil and ink on linen 91.4 x 35.6 cm	1945-47		The body/nude; fragmentation	Discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; the familiar made strange; parody/humorous critique
Tanaka, Atsuko 1932 - 2005	*Denkifuku (Electric Dress)* Lacquered lightbulbs, lacquered striplights, felt, cable, electrical unit (performance; reconstituted 1999) 165 x 90 x 90 cm	1956		Transformative potential of technology; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; transformation/immanence	The familiar made strange; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; assemblage; parody/humorous critique; artist as subject and object

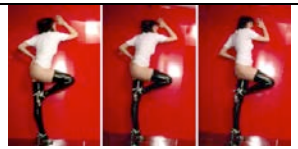
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Drexler, Rosalyn 1926 -	*King Kong aka The Dream* Acrylic paint and collage on canvas 101 x 76 cm	1963		Violence/brutality against women; gender roles in popular culture	Mediated imagery; parody/humorous critique
Ono, Yoko 1933 -	*Cut Piece* Still from performance piece	1964		The abject body; violence/brutality against women; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; voyeurism	Artist as subject and object; audience interaction; transgression
Marisol 1930 - 2016	*Women and Dog* Wood, plaster, synthetic polymer, taxidermed dog head, photography, mixed media 183 x 185 x 77 cm	1964		Gendered symbolism; representational stereotypes/clichés	Femmage/assemblage; parody/humorous critique
De Saint Phalle, Niki (with Jean Tinguely) 1930 - 2002	*Hon* Mixed media installation 28 m long	1966		Voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Female body as a void; body core/vaginal iconography; audience interaction; inversion of scale; transgression; parody/humorous critique

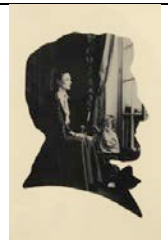
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Smith, Mimi 1942 -	*Steel Wool Peignoir* Steel wool, nylon, lace 150 x 66 x 20 cm	1966		The body as site of resistance; surface/interiority; gendered symbolism	The familiar made strange; femmage; meaning embodied in materials; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; parody/humorous critique
Rosler, Martha 1943 -	*Hot House or Harem* from *Body Beautiful, Body Knows No Pain* series (detail) Printed paper on paper 50.8 x 123.2 cm	1966-72		The body/nude; Objectification/idealisation; female sexuality or eroticism; gender roles in popular culture	Collage/photomontage; repetition; parody/humorous critique
Kent, Sister Corita 1918 - 1986	*There will be new rules next week* Screenprinted poster Size variable	1967-68		Deconstructing verbal language; exposing political structures	Text as image; parody/humorous critique
Abakanowicz, Magdalena 1930 -	*Abakan Red* Sisal and mixed media 405 x 382 x 400 cm	1969		Fragmentation; surface/interiority; female sexuality or eroticism	Body core/vaginal iconography; femmage; inversion of scale

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Jonas, Joan 1936 -	*Mirror piece i* Chromogenic print (documentation of performance) 101 x 57 cm	1969		The body/nude; voyeurism; politics of spectatorship; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Audience interaction; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Hesse, Eva 1936 - 1970	*Contingent i* Cheesecloth, latex, fiberglass 350 x 630 x 109 cm overall	1969		Gendered symbolism; presence/absence	Evocation of bodies; repetition; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; meaning embodied in materials
Hershman Leeson, Lynn 1941 -	*Roberta Breitmore* Collage - photo documentation of action	1970-79		Objectification/idealisation; transformation/immanence; social norms and expectations; constructs of beauty; transformative potential of technology	Mediated imagery; performance of gender; collage/photomontage; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
Piper, Adrian 1948 -	*Catalysis iv* Silver gelatin print (documentation of performance) prints c. 40.6 x 40.6 cm	1971		The abject body; invisibility/erasure; Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race;	Self-imaging/self-definition; gender performed; audience interaction; artist as subject and object; transgression

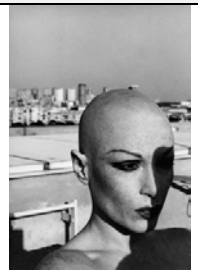
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Szapocznikow, Alina 1926 – 1973	*Desert iii* Dyed polyester, porcelain vase 18 x 18 x 25 cm	1971		The abject body; fragmentation; female sexuality or eroticism	The familiar made strange; parody/humorous critique; meaning embodied in materials
Sleigh, Sylvia 1916 - 2010	*Philip Golub Reclining* Oil on canvas 106.7 x 157.5 cm	1971		Venus or mythological reference; representational stereotypes/clichés; objectification/idealization; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity	The gaze returned; quotation/appropriation; self-imaging/self-definition; parody/humorous critique
Ukeles, Mierle Laderman 1939 -	*Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside* (detail) Photo documentation of performance at Wadsworth Atheneum Museum 1 of 12 prints and 2 text panels, dimensions variable	1973		Women's work or labour; social construction of identity; social norms and expectations	Domesticity performed; repetition/exaggeration; masquerade/role play; artist as subject and object
Kelly, Mary 1941 -	*Post-partum Document* (detail, part of six-section,165-part work) Mixed media including 18 slate and resin units each 20 x 25.5 cm	1973-79		Deconstructing verbal language; social construction of identity; politics of spectatorship	Text as image; assemblage; repetition; historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Schneemann, Carolee 1939 -	*Up to and including her limits* Performance with crayon, paper, rope, harness, two-channel video	1973		The body/nude; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Performance of gender; self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object; parody/humorous critique
Kozloff, Joyce 1942 -	*Three Facades* Acrylic paint on canvas 203.2 x 149.8 cm	1973		Women's work or labour	Pattern and decoration
Chicago, Judy 1939 -	*The Dinner Party* (detail) Mixed media including ceramic, porcelain, textiles	1974-79		Fragmentation; women's work or labour; gendered symbolism; female sexuality or eroticism; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; invisibility/erasure	Evocation of bodies; collaboration; femmage; meaning embodied in materials; body core/vaginal iconography; historical documentation
Levrant de Bretterville, Sheila 1940 -	*Pink* (detail) Poster for broadsheet for an American Institute of Graphic Arts exhibition 76.2 x 76.2 cm	1973		Gendered symbolism; representational stereotypes/clichés; women's work or labour	Collaboration; pattern and decoration; mediated imagery; text as image; superficially feminine style

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Wex, Marianne 1937 -	*Let's Take Back Our Space (detail from installation: Leg and feet positions)* silver gelatin prints mounted on cardboard	1973-77		The body as site of resistance; social norms and expectations; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Collage/photomontage; historical documentation
Wilke, Hannah 1940 - 1993	*S.O.S. Starification Object* Gelatin silver prints and chewing gum (from series) 101.6 x 148.6 x 5.7 cm	1974-82		The abject body; fragmentation; female sexuality or eroticism; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Repetition; performance of gender; artist as subject and object; body core/vaginal iconography
Benglis, Linda 1941 -	Advertisement in *Artforum*,13:3 Nov 1974 26.7 x 26.5 cm	1974		The body/nude; advertising tropes; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; representational stereotypes; female sexuality or eroticism	Previously taboo topics/motifs; the gaze returned; artist as subject and object; transgression; performance of gender; parody/humorous critique
Freed, Hermine 1940 - 1998	*Art Herstory* Still from video, 10:49 mins	1974		Assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; representational stereotypes; invisibility/erasure; social construction of identity	The familiar made strange; masquerade/role play; quotation/appropriation; performance of gender; remix or animation; historical documentation; parody/humorous critique
Fanni Tutti, Cosey 1951 -	*Magazine Actions* (detail) Photographs	1974-78		Female sexuality or eroticism; gender roles in popular culture; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Performance of gender; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Abramovic, Marina 1946 -	*Art must be beautiful, artist must be beautiful* Performance piece (50 min), recorded as black and white video, 14:15 min	1975		The abject body; social norms and expectations; objectification/idealization	Repetition/exaggeration; performance of gender; masquerade/role play; artist as subject and object
Levine, Sherrie 1947 -	*Untitled* (President series) Photograph 14 x 9 cm	1975		Domesticity/interiors; social construction of identity; representational stereotypes	Mediated imagery; historical documentation
Schapiro, Miriam 1923 - 2015	*Anonymous Was a Woman* Acrylic and collage on paper 76.2 x 55.9 cm	1976		Women's work or labour; domesticity/interiors	Pattern and decoration; collage/photomontage; superficially feminine style
Hawkes, Ponch 1946 -	*Ponch and Ida* from the series *Our Mums and Us* Gelatin silver print 17.7 x 12.7 cm	1976		Social norms and expectations; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity	Self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object; historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Mendieta, Ana 1948 - 1985	*Untitled* from the *Silueta* series C-print (from original transparency)	1976		Presence/absence; invisibility/erasure; woman/nature nexus; Venus or mythological reference	Evocation of bodies; performance of gender; female body as a void
Linder 1954 -	*Untitled* Printed paper on paper 13.6 x 21 cm	1976		Fragmentation; gender roles in popular culture; representational stereotypes/ clichés	The familiar made strange; collage/photomontage; performance of gender
Rosenbach, Ulrike 1943 -	*Reflections on the Birth of Venus* Still from video 20.34 min	1976-78		The body/nude; female sexuality or eroticism; constructs of beauty; woman/nature nexus; Venus or mythological reference	Quotation/appropriation; performance of gender; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition; parody/humorous critique
Chadwick, Helen 1953 - 1996	*In the Kitchen* Performance/installation with metal frame, fabric, live models	1977		Objectification/idealization; domesticity/interiors; invisibility/erasure	Domesticity performed; parody/humorous critique

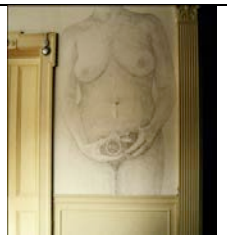
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Manon 1946 -	*La Dame au Crane Rasée* Gelatin silver print 70 x 50 cm	1977		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes	Gender performed; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Steckel, Anita 1930 - 2012	*New York Landscape #5 (Eat your power honey before it grows cold)* Screenprint and oil paint on canvas 160 x 251.5 cm	1977		The body/nude; gendered symbolism	Collage/photomontage; mediated imagery; transgression; parody/humorous critique
Dodd, Margaret 1941 -	*Bridal Holden* from the series *This Woman is Not a Car* Earthenwear, silk 24 x 42 x 20 cm	1977		Gendered symbolism; social norms and expectations; objectification/idealization	The familiar made strange; evocation of bodies; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; parody/humorous critique
Stevens, May 1924 -	*Soho Women Artists* Acrylic on canvas 198 x 361 cm	1978		Social norms and expectations; invisibility/erasure	Historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Maureen Conner 1947 -	*Count Orgaz Comes Again* (installation view) Clothing dimensions variable	1978		Gendered symbolism; female sexuality or eroticism; presence/absence	Evocation of bodies; femmage; meaning embodied in materials
Birnbaum, Dara 1946 -	*Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman* Still from video, 5:50 mins	1978-79		Gender roles in popular culture; politics of spectatorship; the body as site of resistance	Remix or animation; repetition/exaggeration; parody/humorous critique
Jones, Lyndal 1949 -	*Ladies a Plate* from *At Home series* Photograph of performance	1979		Social norms and expectations; women's work or labour; exposing political structures	Domesticity performed; repetition/ exaggeration; masquerade/role play
Spero, Nancy 1926 - 2009	*Notes in Time* (detail) Mixed media on paper each of 24 panels c. 274 cm long	1979		The body/nude; the body as site of resistance; female sexuality or eroticism; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; woman/nature nexus; deconstructing verbal language	Collage/photomontage; repetition/ exaggeration; quotation/appropriation; text as image; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Neel, Alice 1900 - 1985	Self portrait Oil on canvas 137 x 101 cm	1980		The body/nude; life events/passage of time; invisibility/erasure	Artist as subject and object; self-imaging/self-definition; the gaze returned
Ferran, Anne 1949 -	*Scenes on the Death of Nature, Scene iii* Gelatin silver print 112 x 152 cm	1980-86		Gendered symbolism; representational stereotypes/clichés	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
O'Grady, Lorraine 1934 -	*Cross Generational* from *Miscegenated Family Album* series Cibachrome diptych 66 x 94 cm each	1980-94		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés	Quotation/appropriation; historical documentation
Berg, Niki 1939 -	*Self-portrait With Mother as Landscape* C-print 41 x 51 cm	1982		The body/nude; life events/passage of time	The gaze returned; self-imaging/self-definition; artist as subject and object

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
EXPORT, VALIE 1940 -	*Zupassung*, from *Body Configurations in Architecture* series Black and white photograph 55 x 79 cm	1972-76		The abject body; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; invisibility/erasure	The familiar made strange; repetition/ exaggeration; gender performed; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Spence, Jo 1934 - 1992	*Remodelling Photohistory (Colonization)* (in collaboration with Terry Dennett) Gelatin silver print on paper mounted on cardboard 35 x 26 cm	1982		The abject body; representational stereotypes/clichés; life events/passage of time	The gaze returned; domesticity performed; self-imaging/self-definition
Ely, Bonita 1946 -	*Dogwoman Makes History* Documentation of performance piece	1983		Woman/nature nexus; transformative potential of technology; deconstructing verbal language	Masquerade/role play; audience interaction; gender performed; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Lacy, Suzanne 1945 -	*The Crystal Quilt* Performance with 340 women aged over 60, tables, chairs, fabric, pre-recorded sound c. 25 sq m	1985-87		Women's work or labour; gendered symbolism; presence/absence; domesticity/interiors; life events/passage of time	Collaboration; inversion of scale; pattern and decoration; gender performed

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Walker, Deborah 1954 -	*Marriage* Lithograph 43 x 58 cm	c. 1985		Invisibility/erasure; surface/interiority; social construction of identity	The familiar made strange; parody/humorous critique; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Burgin, Victor 1941 -	*Office at Night* Colour print, mixed media 183 x 244 cm	1986		Voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; representational stereotypes/clichés; exposing political structures	Quotation/appropriation; the familiar made strange; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Granet, Ilona 1958 -	*Curb Your Animal Instinct* Silkscreen on metal 61 x 66 cm	1986		Social norms and expectations; violence/brutality against women	Text as image; parody/humorous critique
Gurney, Janice 1949 -	*Screen* Cibachromes, photocopies and plexiglass 98 x 363 cm	1986		Life events/passage of time; deconstructing verbal language	Quotation/appropriation; repetition; text as image; collage/photomontage; historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Scott, Mary 1948 -	*Imago (v) Red 'Who isn't there'* Embroidery, golf leaf 1.65 x 10.65 m	1987		Invisibility/erasure; women's work or labour; social construction of identity	Femmage; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Sterbak, Jana 1955 -	*Vanitas – Flesh Dress for an Albino Anorectic* Raw meat, salt, thread mannequin 157.5 x 42 x 30.5 cm	1987		Woman/nature nexus; the abject body; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Assemblage; meaning embodied in materials; parody/humorous critique
Allen, Davida 1951 -	*It's Nice Feeling Sexy No. 2* Oil on canvas 130 x 130 cm	1989		Gender roles in popular culture; female sexuality or eroticism	Self-imaging/self-definition; parody/humorous critique
MacKenzie, Elizabeth 1955 -	*Baby Food* (detail – installation view) Site-specific graphite drawing and text	1989		Fragmentation; the body/nude; invisibility/erasure	Superficially feminine style; artist as subject and object

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Hoffie, Pat 1953 -	*This is Not Art* Mixed media on paper, 53 x 85 cm	1990		Gender roles in popular culture; social norms and expectations; representational stereotypes/clichés	Quotation/appropriation; parody/humorous critique
Kozic, Maria 1957 -	*Maria Kozic is Bitch* Billboard 300 x 600 cm	1990		Voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; advertising tropes	Inversion of scale; the gaze returned; gender performed; self-imaging/self-definition; transgression
ORLAN 1947 -	*Hybridization of Botticelli's Venus and ORLAN's Face, In-between Hybridizations* (detail from *Omnipresence*) Duratrans photograph in light-box in aluminium frame 49 x 53 cm	1990		The body as site of resistance; Venus or mythological reference; Integrity of the body/physical boundaries; objectification/idealization; transformative potential of technology	The familiar made strange; repetition/ exaggeration; gender performed; quotation/appropriation; femininity transformed
Weems, Carrie May 1953 -	*Untitled,* from *Kitchen Table* series Silver gelatin print 27.9 x 35,5cm	1990-2010		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés; constructs of beauty	Domesticity performed; masquerade/role play

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Kruger, Barbara 1945 -	*Untitled (We Won't Play Nature to Your Culture)* Photographic print size variable	1983		The body as site of resistance; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; deconstructing verbal language	mediated imagery; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; text as image
Ringold, Faith 1930 -	*Picasso's Studio* (from *French Collection* series) Acrylic on canvas, printed and tie-dyed fabric, quilted 185.5 x 173 cm	1991		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Femmage; pattern and decoration; quotation/appropriation; parody/humorous critique
Chadwick, Helen 1953 - 1996	*Piss Flowers* (installation detail) Bronze, cellulose lacquer dimensions variable	1991-92		Presence/absence; representational stereotypes/clichés	Body core/vaginal iconography; female body as a void; superficially feminine style; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Lou, Liza 1969 -	*Kitchen* Glass beads, wood, wire, plaster and found objects 243 x 335 x 427cm	1991-96		Domesticity/interiors; women's work or labour	Femmage; pattern and decoration; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Antoni, Janine 1964 -	*Loving Care* Performance with Loving Care Natural Black hair dye	1993		Gender roles in popular culture; transformation/immanence; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Gender performed; femininity transformed; self-imaging/self-definition; repetition/ exaggeration
Cross, Dorothy 1956 -	*Bust* Dressmaker's dummy and cowhide with udders	1993		Fragmentation; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; the abject body; gendered symbolism	Assemblage; meaning embodied in materials; parody/humorous critique
Grove, Kathy 1948 -	*After Brassai* Gelatin silver print 31.8 x 24.8 cm	1993		Invisibility/erasure; presence/absence	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage
Saville, Jenny 1970 -	*Plan* Oil on canvas 274 x 213.5 cm	1993		The body/nude; the abject body; fragmentation; violence/brutality against women	Self-imaging/self-definition; exaggeration

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
VNS Matrix	*All New Gen* Still from video game/installation	1993		The body as site of resistance; gender roles in popular culture; female sexuality or eroticism; Transformative potential of technology	The familiar made strange; remix or animation; previously taboo topics/motifs; parody/humorous critique
Taylor Wood, Sam 1967 -	*Fuck Suck Spank Wank* C-print 57 x 45 cm	1993		Venus or mythological reference; the abject body; representational stereotypes/clichés	The gaze returned; artist as subject and object; transgression
Leonard, Zoe 1961 -	*The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (detail) Photographs and notebook of typed text for Cheryl Dunye's film, *The Watermelon Woman* (1996), later published as book	1993-96		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; life events/passage of time	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; historical documentation
Lucas, Sarah 1962 -	*Au Naturel* Mattress, melons, oranges, cucumber and bucket 84 x 167.5 x 146 cm	1994		Gendered symbolism; representational stereotypes/clichés	Evocation of bodies; assemblage; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Cox, Renee 1960 -	*Venus Hotentot 2000 Colour* (in collaboration with Lyle Ashton Harris) Dye infusion Polaroid photograph 51 x 61 cm	1994		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Femininity transformed; masquerade/role play; artist as subject and object
Ford, Sue 1943 - 2009	*Shadow Portrait* (detail) Colour photocopies 166 x 594 cm (overall)	1994		Presence/absence, domesticity/interiors; fragmentation; representational stereotypes/clichés	Evocation of bodies; quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; repetition; historical documentation
Hartoum, Mona 1975 -	*Corps Etranger (Foreign body)* Video projection of integrated endoscopic photography, sound	1994		Fragmentation; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Previously taboo topics/motifs; artist as subject and object; female body as a void
Hunt, Barbara 1971 -	*Root Dress* Plasma-cut cold-rolled steel c. 200 x 100 cm	1994		Presence/absence; social construction of identity; woman/nature nexus	Evocation of bodies; pattern and decoration; meaning embodied in materials; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction

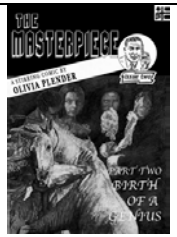
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Simpson, Lorna 1960 -	*Wigs* (detail) Screenprints on felt 686 x 249 cm (overall)	1994-2006		Representational stereotypes/clichés; social construction of identity	Gender performed; repetition; meaning embodied in materials
Attie, Dotty 1938	*Sometimes a Traveller/There Lived in Egypt* Lithographic prints on paper each sheet 51.2 x 51.2 cm	1995		Fragmentation; female sexuality or eroticism; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Repetition; quotation/appropriation; historical documentation
Mori, Mariko 1967 -	*Birth of a Star* 3-D Durotrans, acrylic light box and audio CD 183 x 122 cm	1995		Gender roles in popular culture	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition
Piggott, Rosalind 1958 -	*Conversation* Cotton nightdresses, wire coat-hangers, cotton thread 215 x 900 cm	1995		Presence/absence; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials; inversion of scale

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Rego, Paula 1935 -	*Love* Pastel on paper mounted on aluminium 120 x 160 cm	1995		Female sexuality or eroticism; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; the abject body; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Transgression; gender performed
Dement, Linda 1960 -	*Cyberflesh Girlmonster* CD ROM – computer-based interactive work	1995		Fragmentation; transformative potential of technology; female sexuality or eroticism	Remix or animation; the familiar made strange; repetition; pattern and decoration; parody/humorous critique; audience interaction
Gough, Julie 1965 -	*Brown Sugar* Mixed media 180 x 300 x 15 cm	1995-96		Life events/passage of time; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; deconstructing verbal language	Historical documentation; collage/photomontage; femmage; text as image
Wilding, Faith 1943 -	*Battle Dresses* (left *Suppurating Dress*; right *Pregnant Dress* Ink and watercolour on velum each 190.5 x 63.5 cm	1995-97		Transformation/immanence; presence/absence; the abject body; violence/brutality against women	Evocation of bodies; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Deacon, Destiny 1957 -	*Last Laughs* Light jet print from Polaroid original 80 × 100cm	1995-2004		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
Jobling, Winsome 1957 -	*Dress Ups* Stencilled and watermarked cast banana fibre dimensions variable	1996		Presence/absence; social construction of identity	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials; inversion of scale; repetition/exaggeration
Neshat, Shirin 1957 -	*Speechless* Gelatin silver print and ink 36 x 27 cm	1996		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/culture; representational stereotypes/clichés; exposing political structures	Self-imaging/self-definition; text as image; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Smith, Kiki 1954 -	*Red Spill* Blown glass installation 75 parts, dimensions variable	1996		The abject body; gendered symbolism	Previously taboo topics/motifs; meaning embodied in materials; evocation of bodies

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Kolbowski, Silvia 1953 -	*After Atlas #4* (detail) Montage of tear-sheets from magazines dimensions unknown	1996-2009		Advertising tropes; representational stereotypes/clichés; fragmentation; constructs of beauty	Collage/photomontage; quotation/appropriation; repetition/exaggeration; parody/humorous critique
Sanpitak, Pinaree 1961 -	Womanly Bodies Saar fibre, rattan (installation view) 25 pieces, height 180-260 cm	1998		Women's work or labour; gendered symbolism; surface/interiority	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials
Patty Chang 1972 -	*Melons (at a loss)* Still from single channel video, 3.44 min	1998		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; violence/brutality against women; woman/nature nexus	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Green, Renee 1959 -	*Some Chance Operations* Still from video, part of mixed media installation	1998-99		Life events/passage of time; invisibility/erasure; exposing political structures	Remix or animation; mediated imagery; historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Jolicoeur, Nicole 1947 -	*Déprises I (Thérèse)* Lambda print (detail from photomontage installation) each c. 45 x 30 cm	1999		Life events/passage of time; invisibility/erasure; exposing political structures	Collage/photomontage; historical documentation
Prendergast, Kathy 1958 -	*The Secret Kiss* Knitted wool 30.48 x 40.64 x 16.5 cm	1999		Women's work or labour; female sexuality or eroticism; invisibility/erasure; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Femmage; the familiar made strange
Antoshina, Tatyana 1959 -	*The Turkish Bath*, from *Museum of a Woman* series C-print photograph 94 x 75 cm	2000		The body/nude; objectification/idealization; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Masquerade/role play; quotation/appropriation; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Emin, Tracey 1963 -	*Terminal i* Appliqué blanket 237 x 194 cm	2000		Representational stereotypes/clichés; female sexuality or eroticism; the abject body	Femmage; text as image; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Rrap, Julie 1950 -	*Overstepping* Digital print 99 x 99 cm	2001		Integrity of the body/physical boundaries; gendered symbolism; clichés/stereotypes; constructs of beauty	Gender performed; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Walker, Kara 1969 -	*Darkytown Rebellion* Cut paper and projection 457 x 1006 cm	2001		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés; invisibility/erasure	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; parody/humorous critique; transgression
Plender, Olivia 1977 -	*The Masterpiece, Issue 1, Strange Adventures* Drawing, graphic novel 29.7 x 21 cm	2001-06		Representational stereotypes/clichés; invisibility/erasure	The familiar made strange; text as image; parody/humorous critique
Baez-Hernandez, Sonia 1958 -	*Reconstruction ii* Mixed media installation dimensions unknown	2002		Life events/passage of time; presence/absence; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; the abject body	Assemblage; evocation of bodies; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction

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Ferran, Anne 1949 -	*Untitled (Blue Wedding Gown)* C-type photograms each 260 x 105 cm	2003		Presence/absence; social construction of identity	Evocation of bodies; superficially feminine style; historical documentation
Frueh, Joanna 1948 -	*The Performance of Pink* Still from video 31:32 min	2003		The body/nude; female sexuality or eroticism; deconstructing verbal language; exposing political structures	Gender performed; artist as subject and object; parody/humorous critique
Lee, Lindy 1954 -	*Doctrine of the Golden Flower* Inkjet print, synthetic polymer paint on paper on board 25 panels 166 x 207.5 cm	2003		Fragmentation; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; representational stereotypes/clichés; invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Repetition/exaggeration; mediated imagery; historical documentation
Kusama, Yayoi 1929 -	*The Moment of Regeneration* Sewn fabric, urethane, wood, paint 55 pieces, Dimensions variable	2004		Transformation/immanence; women's work or labour	Pattern and decoration: repetition/exaggeration;

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Cao Fei 1978 -	*Deep Breathing (COSplayers series)* Digital c-print 74.3 x 99.7 cm	2004		Transformative potential of technology; exposing political structures	Masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition; parody/humorous critique
Gallagher, Ellen 1965 -	*Wiglette* (from *Deluxe* series) Photogravure and plasticine 33 x 26 cm	2004-05		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; constructs of beauty; advertising tropes	Collage/photomontage/ assemblage; repetition/exaggeration; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Behm, Anthea 1977 -	*The Chrissy Diaries* Still from four channel video installation, 36:00 min	2005		Assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; gender roles in popular culture	Gender performed; masquerade/role play
Zeglin Brand, Peg unknown	*Picture Yourself Here: Sandro Botticelli's Venus Surfing (On a Seashell)* Oil on foamboard 91 x 119 x 2.5 cm	2005		Invisibility/erasure; presence/absence; representational stereotypes/clichés; Venus or mythological reference	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed; audience interaction; text as image; parody/humorous critique

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Wyman, Jemima 1977 -	*The Lady in Red* Still from video projection of artist's performance	2005		Voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; female sexuality or eroticism; gender roles in popular culture; the abject body	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition; transgression; parody/humorous critique
Bruce, Kirsty 1973 -	*Fresh Cut* (installation view – detail) Watercolour and pencil on paper	2006		Gender roles in popular culture; representational stereotypes/clichés	Quotation/appropriation; assemblage; superficially feminine style
Cohen, Liz 1973 -	*Bodywork Steering* from *Bodywork, The Gender Turntable* series C-print 127 x 153 cm	2006		Assertion of autonomy/subjectivity; gender roles in popular culture; advertising tropes	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition
Schorr, Collier 1963 -	*Dreamer* C-print 49 x 56.5 cm	2006		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; the body/nude; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed

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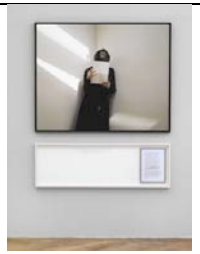
Klose, Anastasia 1978 -	*Film For My Nana* Still from single channel video	2006		The abject body; social construction of identity; life events/passage of time	Self-imaging/self-definition; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
Calle, Sophie 1953 -	*Universitaire* from *Prenez soin de vous* (*Take care of yourself)* series Photographic print and printed letter, framed 99 x 123 cm and 40 x 123 cm	2007		Women's work or labour; domesticity/interiors; social norms and expectations; life events/passage of time	Artist as subject and object; text as image; historical documentation; masquerade/role play
Stark, Frances 1967 -	*Subtraction* Ink on paper inlaid with found printed matter 234 x 203 cm	2007		Deconstructing verbal language; domesticity/interiors	Quotation/appropriation; Collage/photomontage/assemblage
Whiteread, Rachel 1963 -	*Cabinet viii* Metal and plaster 45.1 x 47 x 44.5 cm	2007		Domesticity/interiors; presence/absence; invisibility/erasure	The familiar made strange; assemblage

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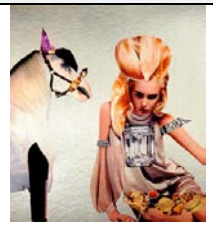
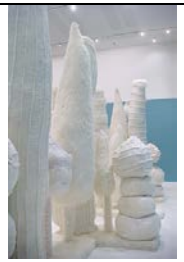
Fraser, Jacqueline 1956 -	*She's a Vile Gold-digging Cindy Sherman Cut-out* (from *The Hustler* series) Mixed media collage 100 x 100 cm	2007		Objectification/idealization; representational stereotypes/clichés; Social construction of identity	Collage/photomontage; pattern and decoration; parody/humorous critique
Catherine Bell 1969 -	*Baby Cake no. 47* Iced cake, documentation of ritual performance	2007		Women's work or labour; gendered symbolism	Pattern and decoration; domesticity performed; femmage; meaning embodied in materials
Gower, Elizabeth 1952 -	*Cuttings (From Paris)* Paper on drafting film 80 x 60 cm	2007-08		Women's work or labour; domesticity/interiors	Collage/photomontage; pattern and decoration
Temin, Kathy 1968 -	*My Monument (White Forest)* (detail from installation) Synthetic fur, fibre fill, steel, wood dimensions variable	2008		Gendered symbolism; women's work or labour; female sexuality or eroticism	Assemblage; meaning embodied in materials; the familiar made strange; seduction and subversion

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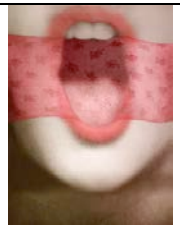
Kimsooja 1957 -	*Mumbai: A Laundry Field* Tricycle, used clothes and bedcovers from China (installation view) dimensions variable	2008		Women's work or labour; intersection of gender and class/race; invisibility/erasure	Assemblage; meaning embodied in materials
Brassington, Pat 1942 -	*Forget Your Perfect Offering* from *Anxious Bodies* series Pigment print 20 x 15 cm	2008		Female sexuality or eroticism; gendered symbolism; fragmentation	The familiar made strange; repetition/exaggeration; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; seduction and subversion
Floyd, Emily 1972 -	*Temple of the Female Eunuch* Pokerwork and plastic on wood dimensions variable	2008		Deconstructing verbal language; life events/passage of time; the body as site of resistance	Quotation/appropriation; evocation of bodies; text as image; parody/humorous critique
Holzer, Jenny 1950 -	*Selections from Truisms* Offset ink on paper each sheet 91.5 x 61 cm	1982		Deconstructing verbal language; exposing political structures	Text as image; quotation/appropriation; repetition/exaggeration; audience interaction

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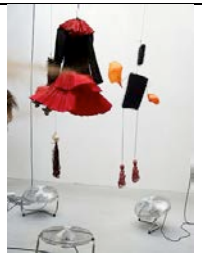
Lam Laam, Jaffa 1973 -	*Enclosed Conversation With Joseph Beuys* Acrylic and ink on fabric H 153 cm	2008		Presence/absence; invisibility/erasure; women's work or labour	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials
Ma, Ivy 1973 -	*Domestic Sample A* Construction site nylon netting H 153 cm	2008		Presence/absence; invisibility/erasure; women's work or labour	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials
Raetze, Silke 1975 -	*Ruby Red* Pen and ink on sculpted paper with stitched cotton 45 x 45 x 10 cm	2008		Presence/absence; women's work or labour; female sexuality or eroticism	Evocation of bodies; pattern and decoration; femmage
Sherman, Cindy 1954 -	*Untitled #183-A (History Portrait* series) Colour photograph 124.5 x 88.9 cm	1988		The body/nude; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; artist as subject and object; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Todd, Yvonne 1973 -	*Palumbo* Lightjet print 88 x 66 cm	2008		Gender roles in popular culture; fragmentation; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Gender performed
Geyer, Andrea 1971 -	*Intaglio, Audrey Munson #4* (from *The Audrey Munson Project)* Digital archival print and engraved glass 20 x 29 cm	2008		Invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Collage/photomontage; historical documentation
Messager, Annette 1943 -	*Motion-Emotion* (detail) Fabric, thread, found objects, electric fans dimensions variable	2009-14		Fragmentation; the body as site of resistance; social construction of identity	Evocation of bodies; femmage/assemblage; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Trockel, Rosemary 1952 -	*Replace Me* Digital print 59.7 x 90.2 cm	2009		Voyeurism/politics of spectatorship; representational stereotypes/clichés; fragmentation	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; parody/humorous critique

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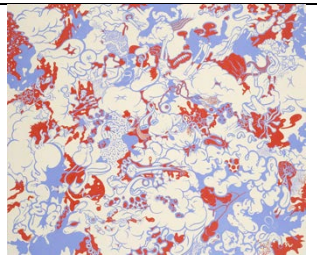
Yamamoto, Lynne 1961 -	*Insect Immigrants After Zimmerman, 1948* (detail from installation) Hand embroidery, found doilies dimensions variable	2009-10		Women's work or labour; invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Femmage/assemblage; meaning embodied in materials; historical documentation
Applebroog, Ida 1929 -	*Monalisa* (Detail from *Monalisa's House*) Gampi, mylar, ink, pigment, oil, watercolor and wood 279 x 366 x 371 cm	2009		Presence/absence; surface/interiority; domesticity/interiors; fragmentation; violence/brutality against women	Repetition; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Moffatt, Tracey 1960 -	*Other* Still from video 7:0 min	2009		Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; gender roles in popular culture; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Quotation/appropriation; repetition/exaggeration; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Williams, Sue 1954 -	*American Enterprise* Oil and acrylic on canvas 132 x 157.5 cm	2009		Violence/brutality against women; fragmentation; gender roles in popular culture	Seduction and subversion; pattern and decoration; repetition/exaggeration

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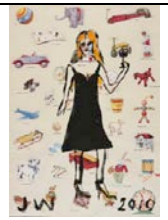
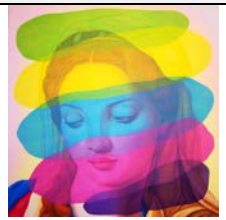
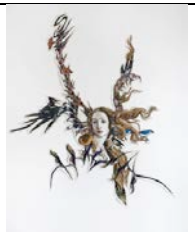
Sandresager, Sangeeta 1977 -	*Untitled (Self portrait of Prudence)* Felt, glass beads, sequins, cotton 88 x 60 cm	2009		Woman/nature nexus; presence/absence; social construction of identity	Femmage; seduction and subversion; parody/humorous critique; self-imaging/self-definition
Hannah Raisin 1987 -	*Sugar* Still from single channel video record of performance	2009		Venus or mythological reference; constructs of beauty; objectification/idealization; social construction of identity	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Minter, Marilyn 1948 -	*Orange Crush* Enamel on metal 274.3 x 457.2 cm	2009		The abject body; fragmentation; female sexuality or eroticism; gender roles in popular culture; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Parody/humorous critique; inversion of scale; transgression
Peterson, Teresa unknown	*The Birth of Venus* Digitally reproduced collage on paper 35.5 x 45.7 cm	2009		Venus or mythological reference; advertising tropes; woman/nature nexus; constructs of beauty	Collage/photomontage; parody/humorous critique

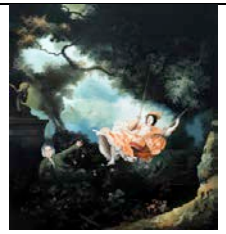
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Rist, Pipilotti 1962 -	*Massachusetts Chandelier* Used underpants, metal frame, 2 video projections, 1 translucent light bulb 250 x 167.5 cm	2010		The body as site of resistance; female sexuality or eroticism; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Evocation of bodies; femmage/assemblage; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; parody/humorous critique
Watson, Jenny 1951 -	*Classic Black 2* Synthetic polymer paint on nursery paper 90 x 69 cm	2010		Gender roles in popular culture; representational stereotypes/clichés; women's work or labour; social construction of identity	Self-imaging/self-definition; meaning embodied in materials; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Unterberg, Susan 1941 -	*Untitled Heads #5* Chromogenic print	2010		The body as site of resistance; mythological reference; invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Femininity transformed; self-imaging/self-definition; the gaze returned
Reichek, Elaine 1943 -	*Who Besides Me* (detail) from *Ariadne's Thread* series Hand embroidery on linen in frame 146 x 136 cm	2010		Women's work or labour; woman/nature nexus; objectification/idealization; mythological reference	Quotation/appropriation; femmage; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Bezor, Annette 1950 -	*Face Value #7* Oil on canvas 140 x 140 cm	2011		Gendered symbolism; transformation/immanence; representational stereotypes/clichés; objectification/idealisation	Quotation/appropriation; the familiar made strange
Edelson, Mary Beth 1933 -	*Venus With Viking Tendencies* (detail from wall installation) Collaged laser-printed paper backed onto canvas dimensions variable	2011		Venus or mythological reference; fragmentation; transformation/immanence	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; parody/humorous critique
Gupta, Shilpa 1976 -	*I Live Under Your Sky Too* Site-specific outdoor installation L c.10 m	2011		Deconstructing verbal language; advertising tropes; presence/absence	Text as image
Just, Kate 1974 -	*Matrika #7* (from *Matrikas* series) Collage on plywood 53 x 21 cm	2011		Venus or mythological reference; fragmentation; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; representational stereotypes/clichés	Collage/photomontage; evocation of bodies; repetition

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Simmons, Laurie 1949 -	*Day 30 - The Meeting (*from *The Love Doll Days 1-30* series*)* Fuji matte print 133 x 178 cm	2011		Gender roles in popular culture; the body/nude; social norms and expectations; objectification/idealization; representational stereotypes/clichés; domesticity/interiors	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction; transgression
Davis, Kate 1991 -	*Curtain i-viii* (installation view) Seven digital pigment prints, famed each 64 x 84 cm	2011		Venus or mythological reference; fragmentation; life events/passage of time; invisibility/erasure	Quotation/appropriation; repetition/exaggeration; mediated imagery; historical documentation; parody/humorous critique
Smart, Sally 1960 -	*In Her Nature (Performativities*) (detail) Synthetic polymer paint, ink, oil pastel, linen, cotton, velvet and collage elements Dimensions variable	2011		Fragmentation; women's work or labour; social construction of identity; woman/nature nexus	Collage/photomontage; femmage; gender performed; quotation/appropriation; parody/humorous critique
Peng Wei 1974 -	*Good Things Come In Pairs iv* Silk shoes with painted insoles (detail from installation) 23 x 17 x 4 cm	2011-13		Presence/absence; invisibility/erasure; women's work or labour	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials; femmage

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Orr, Jill 1952 -	*The Promised Land – Walking* Photographic and sculptural installation and performance (photographer Christina Simons) 58.7 x 90 cm	2012		Woman/nature nexus; exposing political structures	Gender performed; repetition/exaggeration; masquerade/role play
Walker, Lyndal (in collaboration with Hakim, Danielle) 1973 -	*Remake Remodel* (installation view) Latex prints on wallpaper dimensions variable	2012		Fragmentation; women's work or labour; gender roles in popular culture	Collage/photomontage; femmage; gender performed; quotation/appropriation; parody/humorous critique
Valdes, Juana 1963 -	*Colored China Rags i* Porcelain bone china 33 x 244 x 10.2 cm	2012		Women's work or labour; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; life events/passage of time	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials; repetition
Amer, Ghada 1963 -	*Test #5* Acrylic, embroidery and gel medium on canvas 45.7 x 50.8 cm	2013		Women's work or labour; the body/nude; gender roles in popular culture; representational stereotypes/clichés; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Femmage; quotation/appropriation; parody/humorous critique; seduction and subversion

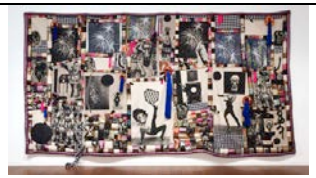
Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Hammond, Harmony 1944 -	*Cinch vi* Oil and mixed media on canvas 75 x 58.5 cm	2013		The body as site of resistance; intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; gendered symbolism	Evocation of bodies; meaning embodied in materials
Hattam, Katherine 1950 -	*The Rights and Wrongs of Women* Watercolour, drawing on board 61 x 46 cm	2013		Domesticity/interiors; women's work or labour; presence/absence; gendered symbolism	Pattern and decoration; self-imaging/self-definition
Hicks, Petrina 1972 -	*Venus* Pigment inkjet print 100 x 100 cm	2013		Venus or mythological reference; female sexuality or eroticism; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Body core/vaginal iconography; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Lane, Cal 1968 -	*Pantie Can* Plasma-cut steel can c. 24 x 16 x 10cm	2013		Presence/absence; gendered symbolism; woman/nature nexus; representational stereotypes/clichés	Evocation of bodies; pattern and decoration; meaning embodied in materials; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Hotham Street Ladies	*You Beaut!* Sugar installation dimensions variable	2013		Women's work or labour; gendered symbolism	Inversion of scale; collaboration; exaggeration; meaning embodied in materials; previously taboo topics/motifs; parody/humorous critique
Nat & Ali	*Na & Ali Do Fragonard's The Swing* Acrylic on canvas 58 x 63 cm	2013		Objectification/idealization; representational stereotypes/clichés; woman/nature nexus	Quotation/appropriation; gender performed; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
Catherine or Kate (Catherine Sagin and Kate Woodcroft) 1980s -	*Comedy in a Vacuum ii* Still from video recording of performance with robotic vacuum cleaners, photographic images	2013		Fragmentation; gender roles in popular culture	Collage/photomontage/assemblage; gender performed; parody/humorous critique
Brown Council (Frances Barrett, Kate Blackmore, Kelly Doley and Diana Smith) 1980s -	*This is Barbara Cleveland* Still from single channel video 16:42 min	2013		The body as site of resistance; invisibility/erasure; the body/nude; life events/passage of time	gender performed; repetition/exaggeration; masquerade/role play; historical documentation

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Jenkins, Casey 1979 -	*Casting Off My Womb* 28-day performance (first performed at Darwin Visual Arts Association)	2013		Life events/passage of time; surface/interiority; the abject body; integrity of the body/physical boundaries; transformation/immanence	Previously taboo topics/motifs; femininity transformed; femmage; repetition; artist as subject and object
The Guerrilla Girls	*Do Women Have to Get Naked to Get Into Music Videos?* Poster print size variable	2014		Intersection of gender and race; Venus or mythological reference; the body/nude; representational stereotypes/clichés; gender roles in popular culture	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; text as image; parody/humorous critique
Foley, Fiona 1964 -	*Black Velvet* Timber, aluminium, enamel, acrylic paint 120 x 850 x 80 cm	2014		Intersection of gender and race; deconstructing verbal language; invisibility/erasure; exposing political structures	Text as image; evocation of bodies; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Rumando, Tokyo 1980 -	*Orphee* Silver gelatin print 27.9 x 35.6 cm	2014		Gender roles in popular culture; female sexuality or eroticism; voyeurism/politics of spectatorship	Gender performed; masquerade/role play; self-imaging/self-definition

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Wilson, Martha 1947 -	*New Wrinkles On the Subject* Pigmented ink print on Canson rag photographique 61 x 41 cm	2014		The body as site of resistance; representational stereotypes/clichés; social norms and expectations; life events/passage of time	Gender performed; self-imaging/self-definition; historical documentation; text as image; parody/humorous critique
Browne, Sarah 1981 -	*Hand to Mouth* (from series of the same title) Woven laser prints framed 40 x 30 cm	2014		Women's work or labour; intersection of gender and class; invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Quotation/appropriation; collage/photomontage; historical documentation
Yong Soon Min 1953 -	*Wearing History* Printed clothing (installation view, ongoing project), dimensions variable	2014		Intersection of gender and race; violence/brutality against women; invisibility/erasure; life events/passage of time	Evocation of bodies; femmage/assemblage; meaning embodied in materials; text as image; historical documentation; repetition
Lin Tianmiao 1961 -	*Badges* (installation view) White silk, coloured silk thread, painted stainless steel embroidery frames, sound dimensions variable	2014		Deconstructing verbal language; women's work or labour; invisibility/erasure	Text as image; femmage; seduction and subversion; evocation of bodies

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Roberts, Fiona unknown	*The Chair*, (detail from *Intimate Vestiges* installation) Chair, hair, ceramic	2015		Domesticity/interiors; women's work or labour; female sexuality or eroticism; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Femmage/assemblage; the familiar made strange; repetition/exaggeration; parody/humorous critique
Lim, Eugenia 1981 -	*New Australian (Welcome Stranger), 1869/2015 (*detail from *Yellow Peril* installation) Digital print on mylar emergency blanket 210 x 160 cm	2015		Intersection of gender and race; social norms and expectations; life events/passage of time	Meaning embodied in materials; quotation/appropriation; repetition; historical documentation; parody/humorous critique
Tompkins, Betty 1945 -	*Total Babe*, detail from *Women Words, Phrases, and Stories* series of c. 1000 panels Acrylic on canvas 10.2 x 10.2 cm	2011-15		Deconstructing verbal language; gender roles in popular culture	Text as image; audience interaction/collaboration
Kelly, Deborah 1962 -	*Lying Women* Still from animation (detail) 3:05 min	2015		Fragmentation; the body/nude; Venus or mythological reference; transformation/immanence	Collage/photomontage; remix or animation; quotation/appropriation; femininity transformed; repetition; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Carolyn Craig unknown	*Angles of Incidence #2* Etching mounted on aluminium 25.5 x 34 x 21 cm	2016		The body as site of resistance; Intersection of gender and sexuality/class/race; assertion of autonomy/subjectivity	Gender performed; repetition/exaggeration; self-imaging/self-definition; mediated imagery
Munson, Portia 1961 -	*Her Coffin* (installation view) from *Pink Project* Glass case, discarded objects 55.88 x 35.56 x 177.8 cm	2016		Gendered symbolism; representational stereotypes/clichés; social construction of identity	Assemblage; the familiar made strange; evocation of bodies
Serisier, Camille 1982 -	*Serene 2* Giclee photographic print, from *Venus of Brisbane* series 120 x 200 cm	2016		The body/nude; Venus or mythological reference; woman/nature nexus	Gender performed; artist as subject and object; masquerade/role play; parody/humorous critique
Contos, Sarah 1978 -	*The Long Kiss Goodbye* Screen print on linen, digital printed fabrics, found materials, PVC, glass, ceramic, thread 610 x 330 x 25 cm	2016		Women's work or labour; gender roles in popular culture; transformation/immanence	Femmage/assemblage; inversion of scale; gender performed; quotation/appropriation; historical documentation; parody/humorous critique

Name	Title of artwork and details	Year	Image	Issues, ideas, motifs	Visual strategy
Chandler, Celeste 1977 -	*Heroic Painting* Oil on linen 330 x 220 cm	2016		Gendered symbolism; transformation/immanence; invisibility/erasure	Performance of gender; historical documentation; artist as subject and object; repetition; discordance/ambiguity/contradiction
Wells, Caroline 1985 -	*Strange Attractor for Agnes Martin* Hand crocheted wool 178 x 185 cm	2017		Gender roles in popular culture; the body/nude; integrity of the body/physical boundaries	Femmage; parody/humorous critique
Buckman, Zoe 1985 -	*Let Her Rave* Neon, wedding veils dimensions variable	2017		Gendered symbolism; invisibility/erasure; deconstructing verbal language	Text as image: seduction and subversion; meaning embodied in materials; parody/humorous critique

Appendix 2.A

International Feminist Curatorial and Critical Projects

The following list of international projects that reflect and contribute to a renewed interest in feminist art from the 1990s to the present is expansive and inclusive, and it is not definitive.

Year	Title and Location	Project
1990	*Feminine Presence: Israeli Women Artists in the 1970's and 1980's,* Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel.	Exhibition
1990	*Dangerous Goods: Feminist Visual Art Practices,* Edmonton Art Gallery, Canada; curated by Bridget Elliott and Janice Williamson.	Exhibition
1990	*Instabili: La Question du Sujet/The Question of Subject,* Galerie Powerhouse, La Centrale, Montreal, Canada.	Exhibition, publication
1991	*Women Artists of India: A Celebration of Independence,* Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California; curated by Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker.	Exhibition
1991	*Exploring the Unknown Self: Self-Portraits of Contemporary Women Artists,* Museum of Photography, Tokyo; curated by Michiko Kasahara.	Exhibition
1991	*The Politics of Difference: Artists Explore Issues of Identity,* Chandler Art Museum, University of California, Riverside; curated by Amelia Jones.	Exhibition
1991	*Immersion/Exposure,* Tate Gallery, Liverpool/Henry Moore Studio, Halifax, UK; curated by Alison Wilding.	Exhibition
1991-92	*Parler Femme,* Museum Fodor/Stedelijk, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.	Exhibition, publication
1993	*Contemporary Women Artists,* Ministry of Culture General Directorate of Monuments and Museums, Istanbul, Turkey; curated by Tomur Atagok.	Exhibition, publication
1993	*Relocating History: An Exhibition of Work by 7 Irish Women Artists,* Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast and Orchard Gallery, Derry, Ireland.	Exhibition, publication
1993	*The Subject of Rape,* Whitney Museum, New York; curated by Pamela Gruininger Perkins and S. Schwartz.	Exhibition

1993	*Territories of Difference,* Walter Philips Gallery, Banff, Canada; curated by Renee Baert.	Exhibition
1993	*Alter/Image: Feminism and Representation in New Zealand Art, 1973-1993,* City Gallery, Wellington; curated by Christina Barton and Deborah Lawler-Dormer.	Exhibition
1993	*Mediatrix: New Works by Seven Women Artists,* Artspace, New Zealand.	Exhibition
1993	*After Perestroika: Kitchenmaids or Stateswomen,* Independent Curators International, USA and Canada; curated by Margarita Tupitsyn.	Touring exhibition, publication
1993	*Intimate Lives: Work by Ten Contemporary Women Latina Artists,* Austin, Texas, USA; curated by Kathy Vargas and Connie Arismendi.	Exhibition, publication
1993	*Regards de Femmes,* Musee d'Art Moderne, Liege, Belgium.	Exhibition, publication
1993	*Bad Girls,* Institute of Contemporary Arts, London and Contemporary Arts Centre, Glasgow; curated by Kate Bush and Emma Dexter.	Exhibition
1993	*Empty Dress: Clothing as Surrogate in Recent Art,* Neuberger Museum, Sate University, New York; curated by Nina Felshin.	Exhibition, publication
1994	*Bad Girls (part i),* New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles; curated by Marcia Tucker.	Exhibition
1994	*Bad Girls (Part ii),* New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; curated by Marcia Tucker.	Exhibition, publication
1994	*Bad Girls West,* Wright Art Centre, University of California, Los Angeles; curated by Marcia Tanner.	Exhibition, publication
1994	*An Intelligent Rebellion: Women Artists of Pakistan,* City of Bradford Metropolitan Council, UK; curated by Salima Hashmi and Nima Poovaya-Smith.	Exhibition
1994	*Favoritka ... : [vystavka],* Proshedsheya, Saint Petersburg, Russia (part of Festival of Women's Art *Not a Muse, But a Creator*); curated by Katie Baldwin and Olga Lipovskaya.	Exhibition
1994	*Forces of Change: Artists of the Arab World,* Lafayette, USA; curated by Salwa Mikdadi Nashashibi et al.	Exhibition, publication

1994	*Woman, The Difference and the Power: Feminine Art and Feminist Art,* Hankuk Museum, Seoul; curated by Hong Hee Kim.	Exhibition
1994	*Fantasy. An Exhibition of the Work of 15 Contemporary British Women Artists;* Women's Art Library, London; curated by Pauline Barrie, Fran Lloyd.	Exhibition
1994	*Our Bodies, Ourselves: An Exhibition By Women Photographers,* Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery, UK; curated by Kit Anderson et al.	Exhibition
1994	*Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties,* Museum of Modern Art, New York; organised by Lynn Zelevansky	Exhibition, publication
1994-95	*Oh Boy! It's a Girl! Feminismen in der Kunst,* Munchen Kunstverein, Germany.	Exhibition
1994-95	*The Female Imaginary,* Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, Canada.	Exhibition
1994-97	*Inside the Visible: An Elliptical Traverse of Twentieth-Century Art in, of, and from the Feminine,* Beguinage of Saint Elizabeth, Kortrijk, Belgium; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; curated by Catherine de Zegher.	Travelling exhibition, publication
1995	*Division of Labor: "Women's Work" in Contemporary Art,* Bronx Museum, New York.	Exhibition
1995	*Leiblicher Logos: 14 Kunstlerinnen aus Deustschland,* Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Germany; curated by Gudrun Inboden and Birgit Sonna.	Exhibition
1995	*Bad Girls,* MIT, Boston, USA; curated by Marcia Tucker.	Exhibition
1995	*Estfem: Eesti Feministliku Kunsti Nitus,* Vaal Galerii, Linnagalerii, Mustpeade Galerii, Tallinn, Estonia; curated by Mare Tralla.	Exhibition
1995	*Women's Approach to Chinese Contemporary Art,* Zongguo Zishu Bowuguan, Beijing, China; curated by Liao Wen.	Exhibition
1995	*Stereo-Tip,* Mestna Galerija, Ljubljana, Slovenia; curated by Alexander Bassin.	Exhibition, publication
1995	*Cherchez la Femme,* Kunsthaus, Hamburg, Germany; curated by Ursula Panhams-Buhler.	Exhibition

1995	*Heresies: A Critique of Mechanism*: Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno, Grand Canaries; curated by Jack Ben-Levi and Amelia Jones, Jorge Luis Marzo.	Exhibition
1995-96	*Inside Out: Contemporary Women Artists of India,* Middlesborough Art Gallery, UK; curated by Alison Lloyd, Kamala Kapoor, Sutapa Biswas.	Exhibition
1995-96	*Laughter Ten Years After,* Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York; Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University; curated by Jo Anna Isaak.	Exhibition, publication
1996	*Incandescent,* for *NowHere,* Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark; curated by Laura Cottingham.	Exhibition section
1996	*Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist History,* University of California Los Angeles/Hammer Museum of Art; organised by Amelia Jones.	Exhibition, publication
1996	*Image & Imagination: Five Contemporary Artists in India,* Mapin Publishing PVT, Ahmedabad, India; curated by Geeta Sen.	Exhibition, publication
1996	*More Than Minimal: Feminism and Abstraction in the '70's,* Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, USA; curated by Susan Stoops, Lynda Benglis, Whitney Chadwick.	Exhibition
1996	*An Unexpected Journey - Women and Art,* Gynaika, Antwerp, Belgium; curated by Monique Darge, Leen Huet, Wim Neetens, Marijke Seresia.	Exhibition
1996	*Kroppen Som Membran / Body as Membrane,* Odense, Kunsthallen Brandts Klaedefabrik, Denmark; curated by Kirsten Justesen, VALIE EXPORT.	Exhibition
1996	*Dialogue With the Other,* Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense, Denmark; curated by Lene Burkhardt.	Exhibition
1996	*Gender Beyond Memory: The Works of Contemporary Women Artists,* Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Japan.	Exhibition
1996	*Virgin Territory: Women, Gender and History in Contemporary Brazilian Art,* National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC.	Exhibition
1996	*In the Looking Glass: An Exhibition of Contemporary Self-Portraits by Women Artists,* Usher Gallery, Lincoln, UK; curated by S. Wilson.	Exhibition

1997	*Vraiment feminisme et art*, Le Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France; curated by Laura Cottingham.	Exhibition
1997	*Between the Acts*, Art in General, New York*;* curated by Juana Valdes; panel moderated by Faith Wilding.	Exhibition, panel
1997	*Old Boys Network - First CyberFeminist International*, Documenta X, Kassel, Germany.	Event, 'anti-manifesto'
1997	*Floating Images of Women in Art History From the Birth of Feminism Toward the Dissolution of Gender*, Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, Utsunomiya-shi, Japan; curated by Tokiko Suzuki.	Exhibition, publication
1997	*Re/Dressing Cathleen: Contemporary Works From Irish Women Artists*, McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, USA.	Exhibition
1997	*Kultur: in Gender Projekt aus Istanbul*, Shedhalle, Zurich, Switzerland.	Exhibition
1997	*The Future's Mirror*, Locus +, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK; curated by Cornelia Honiger Hesse.	Touring exhibition
1997	*Rebecca Horn: The Glance of Infinity*, Scalo, USA; Kestner Gessellschaft, Germany; curated by Carl Haenlein.	Exhibition
1997	*Gendered Visions: the Art of Contemporary Africana Women Artists*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, USA; curated by Salah Hassan.	Exhibition, publication
1997	*Social Process - Collaborative Action: Mary Kelly 1970-75*, Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver, Canada; curated by Mary Kelly, Judith Mastai.	Exhibition
1997	*Virtue and Vulgarity: A Feminist Conference on Art, Science and the Body*, University of Reading, England.	Conference
1997	*First Cyberfeminist International*, part of Documenta X, Kassel, Germany.	Conference
1997-2000	*Cindy Sherman: A Retrospective*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles*;* curated by Amanda Cruz and Elizabeth A.T. Smith.	Exhibition, publication
1998	*Mind and Spirit: Women's Art in Taiwan*, Taipei Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan; curated by Ying Ying Lai.	Exhibition
1998	*How to Use Women's Body: Transfiguration of Sex, Gender, Nationality*, Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo; curated by Yoshika Shimada, Ai Mori.	Exhibition

1998	*Meret Oppenheim: A Different Retrospective,* Edition Stemmle, Switzerland; curated by Jacqueline Burkhardt, Bice Curiger, et al.	Exhibition
1998	*Feminism. Video. Art,* Ja-ewon, Seoul, Korea; curated by Hong Hee Kim.	Exhibition
1998	*Vice-Versa-Vice,* Jan Eyck Akademie, Maastricht, The Netherlands.	Exhibition
1999	*Figure, Sculpture, Female - Forms of Representation of the Female Body,* Kunstsammlungen, Chemnitz, Germany.	Exhibition, publication
1999	*Body Inscribed: Challenging Tradition,* George Frazer Gallery, CYSSY, New Zealand; curated by Carole Shepheard and Sandra Chesterman.	Exhibition
1999	*Looking At Ourselves: Works by Women Artists From the Logan Collection,* Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; curated by Daniela Salvioni, Vicki Logan and Kent Logan.	Exhibition
1999	*Woman/Goddess: An Exhibition of Photographs,* Multiple Action Research Group, New Delhi, India; curated by Gayatri Sinha.	Exhibition
1999	*Kathy Prendergast*: *The End and the Beginning,* Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin.	Exhibition, publication
1999	*Patjis on Parade: Women's Art Festival '99,* Seoul Arts Centre, Korea; curated by Hong Hee Kim.	Exhibition, publication
2000	*Women's Art in Hungary 1960-2000,* Ernst Museum, Budapest, Hungary; curated by Katalin Keseru.	Exhibition
2000	*Private Views: Spaces and Gender in Contemporary Art from Britain and Estonia,* Women's Art Library, London; curated by Pam Skelton, Angela Dimitrakaki and Mare Tralla.	Exhibition
2000	*Hers: Video as Female Terrain,* Sterischer Herbst, Graz, Austria and Galerie Barbara Gross, Munich, Germany; curated by Stella Rollig.	Exhibition
2000	*Combien de 'sales' feministes faut-il pour changer une ampoule?: antifeminisme et art contemporain,* (*How many 'bad' feminists does it take to change a lightbulb?*) Lyon, France; curated by Laura Cottingham.	Exhibition, publication
2000	*Text and Sub-Text,* Lasalle-SIA University, Singapore; curated by Binghui Huangfu.	Exhibition
2001	*SMIRK: Women, Art and Humour,* Firehouse Plaza Gallery, Nassau Community College, Garden City, New York; curated by Debra Wacks.	Exhibition

2001	*Faces of Laughter – Female Strategies in Art,* Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.	Exhibition
2001	*Journey of the Spirit: Taiwanese Women Artists and Contemporary Representations,* Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan; curated by Ying Ying Chien.	Exhibition
2001	*Women Breaking Boundaries 21,* Toki Art Space, Osaka, Japan; Curated by Women's Art Network.	Exhibition
2001	*Who Owns Women's Bodies?* Creative Collective Center, Quezon City, Philippines; curated by Imelda Cajipe-Endaya.	Exhibition
2001	*Wo....man - Arte no Feminino? Feminine Art,* Old Ladies' House Art Space, The Provisional Municipal Council of Macau, China.	Exhibition
2001	*Threads of Vision: Toward a New Feminine Poetics,* Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Ohio; curated by Nicole Eisenman, Kristin Chambers, Ghada Amer, Shahzia Sikander, Lin Tianmiao, Fatimah Tuggar.	Exhibition
2001	*Ostatnia Kobieta: Maskarady / The Last Woman: Masquerades,* IX Festival: Inner Spaces, Posnan, Poland; curated by Agata Jakubowska.	Exhibition
2001	*Capital and Gender: International Project for Art and Theory,* Museum of City of Skopje, Macedonia; curated by Suzana Milevska.	Exhibition
2001	*After the Revolution, Women Artists at the Millenium,* Princeton University, USA.	Conference
2002	*Femme Art: Women Painting in Russia XV-XX Centuries,* INO & State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow; curated by N. Kamenetskaya and L. Lovleva.	Exhibition, publication
2002	*Art/Women/California: Parallels and Intersections, 1950-2000,* San Jose Museum of Art, California; curated by Diana Burgess Fuller and Daniela Salvioni.	Exhibition
2002	*East Asian Women and Herstories, The Second Women's Art Festival,* Seoul, Korea.	Exhibition
2002	*Gender Game: Korper-Median-Blicke-Mannlichkeiten Go Drag!,* Tubingen, Konkursbuch, Germany; curated by Marion Strunk.	Exhibition
2002	*Gloria: Another Look at Feminist Art of the 1970s,* White Columns, New York; curated by Catherine Morris and Ingrid Schaffner.	Exhibition

2002	*Personal and Political: The Women's Art Movement, 1969-1975,* Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton, New York; curated by Simon Taylor and Nathalie Ng.	Exhibition, publication
2003	*Through the Looking Glass: Women and Self-Representation in Contemporary Art,* Palmer Museum of Art Collection, Pennsylvania State University; curated by Sarah Rich and Joyce Henri Robinson.	Exhibition
2003	*Just Love Me: Post/feminist Positions of the 1990s from the Goetz Collection,* Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Netherlands; Bergen Kunstmuseum, Sammlung Goetz; Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany; curated by Rainald Schumacher and Matthias Winzen.	Exhibition
2003	*Procreation/ Postcreation,* Bangkok, Thailand; curated by Womanifesto.	Exhibition
2003	*Architectures of Gender: Contemporary Women's Art in Poland,* National Museum of Warsaw and Sculpture Center, New York; curated by Aneta Szylak.	Exhibition
2004	*First International Women's Art Festival in Taiwan: Women, Art and Technology,* curated by Elsa Hsiang-chun Chen.	Exhibition, publication
2004	*That Bodies Speak Has Been Known For a Long Time,* Generali Foundation, Köln, Austria; curated by Sabine Breitwiese, Hemma Schmutz and Tanja Widmann.	Exhibition
2005	*Venice Biennale,* feminist focus and two women directors appointed for the first time.	Biennale
2005	*Woman Project (MWP)* initiated, Museum of Modern Art, New York, leading to education program and events.	Symposia, publication, exhibitions, acquisitions
2005	*Life Actually: The Works of Contemporary Japanese Women,* Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; curated by Michiko Kasahara.	Exhibition
2005	*VALIE EXPORT: eine Werkschau,* Kunst der Gegenwart, Vienna.	Exhibition
2005	*Loft of Language: 8 Female Artists in China,* Shen Na, He Chengyao, Chen Qiulin, Chen Lingyang, Chen Qingqing, Yu Hong, Cui Xiuwen, Yang Fan, Three Quarters Art Gallery, Beijing; curated by Qi Zhu.	Exhibition
2005	*La Costilla Maldita/The Accursed Rib,* Centro Atlantica de Arte Moderno, Grand Canaries; curated by Margarita Aizpuru, Christina Padura and Omar Pascual.	Exhibition

2005	*Tendencias: Perspectivas feministas en el arte actual,* Ensayos 6, Murcia, Spain; curated by Ana Martinez-Collado.	Exhibition
2005	*Japanese Women Artists in Avantgarde Movements, 1950-1975,* Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Japan; curated by Reiko Kokatsu.	Exhibition
2005	*The Feminist Art Project (TFAP)* initiated to promote feminist art events, education, publications, College Art Association, Rutgers University, New Jersey.	Museological project, web calendar
2005-06	*Love and Democracy*, Poznan and Gdansk, Poland; organised by Pawel Leszkowicz.	Exhibitions, publication
2006	*Feminisms in Four Generations,* City University of New York Graduate Centre.	Panel
2006	*Konstfeminism (Art Feminism: Strategies and Consequences in Sweden from the 1970s to the Present),* Dunkers Kulturhaus and Lilevalch Konsthall, Helsingborg, Sweden; curated by L. Anderson, et al.	Exhibition
2006	*Cooling Out – On the Paradox of Feminism,* Kunsthaus Baselland, Muttenz/Basel, Switzerland; Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg, Germany and University College, Cork, Ireland*;* curated by Sabine Schaschl-Cooper, Bettina Steinbrügge and René Zechlin.	Exhibition, publication
2006	*Difference Reframed: Reflections on Art and Feminism,* University of Sussex, UK; organised by Alexandra M. Kokoli.	Conference
2006-07	*It's Time for Action (There's No Option)*: *About Feminism,* Migros Museum and JRP Ringier, Zurich; curated by Heike Munder.	Exhibition
2006-07	*How American Women Artists Invented Postmodernism 1970-1975*, Rutgers University, New Jersey; curated by Judith K. Brodsky and Ferris Olin	Exhibition
2007	*One True Thing,* A.I.R. Gallery, Putney School, Vermont; curated by Dena Muller	Exhibition
2007	Elizabeth A. Sackler Centre for Feminist Art opened at the Brooklyn Museum, New York.	Permanent exhibition space, collection
2007	*Kiss Kiss Bang Bang: 45 Years of Art and Feminism*, Museum of Fine Arts, Fine Arts Museum, Bilbao, Spain; curated by Xavier Arakistan.	Exhibition, publication

2007	*Gender Battle: The Impact of Feminism in the 1970s;* Contemporary Art Centre of Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, Spain; curated by Juan Vicente Aliaga.	Exhibition, lectures, debate, conference
2007	*The Furious Gaze*, Montehermoso Cultural Cente, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain; curated by Xabier Arakistain and Maura Reilly.	Exhibition
2007	*If I Can't Dance I Don't Want To Be Part of Your Revolution: Feminist Legacies and Potentials in Contemporary Art Practic*e, Utrecht and other locations, The Netherlands.	Symposium, exhibition, publication
2007	*The Feminist Future: Theory and Practice in the Visual Arts*, Museum of Modern Art, New York.	Symposium
2007	*Role Play: Feminist Art Revisited 1960-1980* Galerie LeLong, New York.	Exhibition
2007	*Frieze*, Issue 105, March 2007: *Feminism* (special issue).	Focus on feminist art
2007	*Art News*, February 2007: *Feminist Art: The Next Wave* (special issue).	Focus on feminist art
2007	*Taking a Hard Look: Feminism and Visual Culture*, The University of Pretoria, Johannesburg.	Conference
2007	*Acqui no Hay Virgenes: Queer Latina Visibility*, Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Centre Gallery; organised by Jennifer Doyle and Raquel Gutierrez.	Exhibition
2007	*Shared Women*, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.	Exhibition
2007	*Off-Centre Femininities: Regards from Serbia and Montenegro*, New York University; organised by Jovana Stokic.	Exhibition
2007	*Is Feminism Still Relevant?: Race, and Globalisation in the Twenty-First Century*, Museum of Contemporary Art and University of Southern California.	Symposium
2007	*Girl on Guy: The Object of My Desire*, A+D Gallery, Columnia College, Chicago; curated by Marci Rae McDade.	Exhibition
2007	*The International Incheon Women Artists' Biennale* established in Incheon, Korea.	Biennale
2007	*Kønsspektakler / Gender Furore*, Kvindemuseet, Denmark; curated by Marianne Jørgensen and Sine Bang Nielsen.	Exhibition

2007	*Gender: Aspects of the Visual Arts of Northern and Central Russia*, Museum Center, Russian State University for the Humanities; curated by Irina Bakanova and Natalya Kamenetskaya.	Exhibition
2007	*Cheers to Muses: Contemporary Works by Asian American Women*, Chinese Culture Center, San Francisco, USA, curated by American Asian Women Artists Association.	Exhibition, publication, panel
2007	*Performance, Politik, Gender: Materialienband zum Internationalen Künstlerinnenfestival "Her Position in Transition"*, Vienna; curated by Margit Niederhuber.	Exhibition
2007	*From the Inside Out: Feminist Art Then and Now*, Dr M.T. Geoffrey Yeh Gallery, St John's University, Queens, New York; curated by Claudia Sbrissa.	Exhibition
2007	*Re:Generation: Emerging Women Artists*, Douglass College, Smack Mellon Galleries, Brooklyn and The Kentler International Drawing Center, Brooklyn, New York; curated by Joan Snyder and Molly Snyder-Fink.	Exhibition
2007	*Agents of Change: Women, Art, and Intellect*, Ceres Gallery, New York: curated by Leslie King-Hammond.	Exhibition
2007	*Girly Show: Pin-ups, Zines and the So-called Third Wave*, Wignall Museum at Chaffey College, California; organised by Elana Mann and Anna Mayer.	Exhibition, publication, program of events
2007	*Exquisite Acts & Everyday Rebellions*, Feminist Art Project, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia.	Exhibition, symposium, program of events
2007-08	*Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York and Davis Museum and Cultural Centre, Wellesley, Massachusetts; curated by Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin.	Exhibition, publication,
2007-09	*Wack! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia; curated by Cornelia Butler.	Exhibitions, publication
2008	*Matrix: Gender | Relations | Revisions*, Springer and MUSA Museum auf Abruf, Vienna, Austria; curated by Sabine Mostegl and Gudrun Ratzinger.	Exhibition

2008	*Feminisms, Historiography and Curatorial Practices*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm.	Conference
2008	*Making it Together: Collaboration and Contemporary Feminist Practice*, The Bronx Museum, New York.	Exhibition, performances, panel, publication
2008	*Feminisms, Historiography and Curatorial Practices*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm.	Conference
2008	*Cooling Out: On the Paradox of Feminism*, JRP Ringier, Zurich, Switzerland; curated by Rene Zechlin et al.	Exhibition
2008	*HACK.fem.EAST*, Kunstraum Kreuzberg / Kunstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany; curated by Tatiana Bazzichelli and Gaia Novati.	Exhibition
2008	*We are Unsuitable for Framing*, Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand.	Exhibition
2008-09	*Manon - A Person: A Swiss Pioneer of Body and Performance Art*, Scheidegger & Spiess, Zürich and SI Swiss Institute, Contemporary Art, New York; curated by Jean-Christophe Ammann, Sabine Kronenberg and Thomas Kramer.	Exhibition
2008-09	*Nancy Spero: Dissidances*, Museu d' Art Contemporani de Barcelona; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía; Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville.	Traveling retrospective exhibition
2009	*Back to the Future: An Experimental Discussion on Contemporary Feminist Practice*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.	Public discussion
2009	*Once More With Feeling: Performing the WAL/Make Archive*, Women's Art Library, Tate Gallery, London; organised by Oriana Fox.	Exhibition
2009	*REBELLE. Art and Feminism 1969-2009* Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnheim (MMKA), The Netherlands; curated by Mirjam Westen.	Exhibition
2009	*Women Look at Women;* Chiem & Read Gallery, New York.	Exhibition
2009	*Let's Take Back Our Space*, Marianne Wex, Robert Morris and Cerith Wyn Evans, Focal Point Gallery, London; curated by Mike Sperlinger.	Exhibition
2009	*A Studio of Their Own: The Legacy of the Fresno Feminist Experiment*, Phebe Conley Art Gallery, California State University.	Exhibition, performance

2009	*Rebelle: Kunst en Feminisme 1969-2009*, Gemeentemuseum, Arnhem, The Netherlands; curated by Mirjam Westen.	Exhibition
2009-10	*Gender Check: Femininity and Masculinity in the Art of Eastern Europe* Museum of Modern Art, Vienna; Zachęta, Warsaw; curated by Bojana Pejić.	Exhibition, symposium
2009-11	*Photo/ Femmes/ Féminisme: 1860-2010: Collection de la bibliothèque Marguerite Durand*, Galerie des bibliothèques, Ville de Paris.	Exhibition, publication
2009-13	*elles@centrepompidou*, Centre Pompidou, Paris; Seattle Art Museum; curated by Camille Morineau (travelled to Seattle Art Museum in reduced form, 2012-13).	Exhibitions, publication
2010	*Shifting the Gaze: Painting and Feminism*, Jewish Museum, New York.	Exhibition
2010	*No More Bad Girls?* Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna; Curated by Kathrin Becker and Claudia Marion Stemberger.	Exhibition
2010	*Griot Girlz - Feminist Art and the Black Atlantic*, Buchsenhausen, Austria; Curated by Ina Wudtke.	Exhibition
2010	*Idila/Idyll*, Atelier 030202, Bucharest, Romania; curated by Olivia Nitis.	Exhibition
2010	*Show of Hands: Northwest Women Artists 1880-2010*, Whatcom Museum, Bellingham, USA; curated by Barbara Matilsky.	Exhibition
2010	*Marina Abramović: The Artist is Present*, Museum of Modern Art, New York.	Retrospective performance, exhibition
2010	*Crossing Boundaries: A Symposium on Feminism & the Arts*, IDEA, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, USA.	Symposium
2010-11	*Modern Women*, Museum of Modern Art, New York; curated by Cornelia Butler and Alexandra Schwartz.	Exhibitions, film screenings, gallery talks, publication, symposium
2011	*Women, Art, Revolution – A Secret History*, by Lynn Hershman Leeson.	Documentary film
2011	*Advocate Feminism!*, Galeria Art Point, Kulturkontakt, Vienna; curated by Olivia Nitis.	Exhibition

2011	*Women Artists in Singapore,* Select Books and Singapore Art Museum; curated by Bridget Tracy Tan.	Exhibition
2011	*Whatever Happened to Sex in Scandinavia?* Office for Contemporary Art, Oslo; curated by Marta Kuzma and Pablo Lafuente.	Exhibition, public events, publication
2011-12	*The Deconstructive Impulse: Women Artists Reconfigure the Signs of Power, 1973-1991,* The Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, New York; Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, North Carolina.	Survey exhibition, publication
2012	*Judy Chicago and Louise Bourgeois, Helen Chadwick, Tracey Emin: A Transatlantic Dialogue,* Ben Uri Gallery, London.	Survey exhibition
2012	*Matronita: Jewish Feminist Art,* Ein Harod Museum of Art, Israel; curated by Dvora Liss and David Sperber.	Exhibition
2012	*Woman + Body,* Gwangju Cultural Foundation, Korea; curated by Hye-Seong Tak Lee and Sherri Cornett.	Exhibition
2012	*Re-Picturing the Feminine: New and Hybrid Realities in the Artworld - A Survey of Indian and Australian Contemporary Female Artists,* Gallery OED, Cochin, India; curated by Marnie Dean.	Exhibition
2012	*Doing it in Public: Feminism and Art at the Woman's Building,* Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles; curated by Meg Linton and Sue Maberry.	Exhibition, publication
2012	*Archi-feministes: Archiver le corps/ Archiving the Body,* Optica, Montreal, Canada; curated by Marie-Ève Charron, Marie-Josée Lafortune and Thérèse St-Gelais, France.	Exhibition
2012-13	*The Female Gaze: Women Artists Making Their World,* Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; curated by Robert Cozzolino.	Exhibition
2012-13	*Feminist Genealogies in Spanish Art: 1960-2010,* Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Castilla y Leon; curated by Patricia Mayayo and Juan Vicente Aliaga.	Exhibition
2012-13	*Women In-Between: Asian Women Artists 1984-2012,* Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan; curated by Reiko Kokatsu.	Exhibition
2013	*The Nature of Women,* Mayor Gallery, London.	Exhibition
2013	*Bad Girls,* Collection Frac Lorraine, France.	Exhibition

2013	*The Subversive Stitch Revisited: The Politics of Cloth*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.	Conference
2013	*A Room With a View: 200 years of Danish Women Artists*, Næstved, Rønnebæksholm, Denmark.	Exhibition
2013	*GOOD GIRLS: Memory, Desire, Power, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest, Romania;* Curated by Bojana Pejic and Olivia Nitis.	Exhibition
2013	*The Beginning is Always Today: Contemporary Feminist Art in Scandinavia*, Saarlandets Kunstmuseum, Norway; curated by Karen Hindsbo.	Exhibition
2013	*International Women's Day: An Exhibition of Feminist Art*, Manezh Museum and The Worker and Kolkhoz Woman Museum, Moscow; curated by Nataliya Kamenetskaya, Olesya Turkina and Marina Loshak.	Exhibition
2013	*Norwegian Art and Feminism 1968-89*, Konsthall, Oslo; curated by Jorunn Veiteberg.	Exhibition
2013	*Female Power: Matriarchy, Spirituality & Utopia*, Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Arnhem, The Netherlands; curated by Mirjam Weston.	Exhibition
2013	*Women's Museum: Curatorial Politics in Feminism, Education, History, and Art*, Frauenmuseum, Hittisau, Austria; curated by Elke Krasny.	Exhibition
2013	*Embodiment and the Medical Gaze*, CAS Gallery, University of Miami.	Exhibition
2013-14	*To Be a Lady: An International Celebration of Women in the Arts*, Tagore Gallery, Singapore; curated by Jason Andrew.	Exhibition
2013-14	*Re.Act.Feminism: A Performing Archive*, Academie der Kunste, Berlin; Live Art Development Agency, London;Verlag fuer Moderne Kunst, Nuremberg; curated by Bettina Knaup and Beatrice Ellen Stammer.	Exhibition
2014	*The Future is History: Feminist Legacies in Contemporary Art*, Elizabeth A Sackler Centre for Feminist Art.	Panel
2014	*Hold Stenhårdt Fast På Greia Di - Norwegian Art and Feminism 1968-89*, Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway.	Exhibition, lectures
2014	*The Fearsome BMI: Women Artists and the Body*, Mabel Smith Douglass Library, Rutgers University, New Jersey.	Exhibition, publication

2014-15	*Queensize - Female Artists from the Olbricht Collection*, Germany; curated by Nicola Graef and Wolfgang Schoppmann.	Exhibition
2015	*Them*, Schinkel Pavillion, Berlin. The work of Polish artist, Alina Szapocznikow (1926-1973) and younger feminist artists.	Exhibition
2015	*Carolee Schneeman: Kinetic Painting*, Museum der Moderne, Salzberg.	Retrospective exhibition, symposium
2015	*Public Works: Artists' Interventions 1970s – Now*, Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California; curated by Christian L. Frock and Tanya Zimbardo.	Exhibition, publication
2015	*Covered in Time and History: The Films of Ana Mendieta*, Katherine E. Nash Gallery, University of Minnesota; NSU Art Museum, Fort Lauderdale; University of California.	Traveling exhibition, publication
2015	*Mona Hartoum*, Centre Pompidou, Paris.	Retrospective exhibition
2015	*Printing Women: Three Centuries of Female Printmakers, 1570-1900*, New York Public Library.	Exhibition
2015	*Yoko Ono: One Woman Show, 1960-1971*, Museum of Modern Art, New York.	Exhibition
2015	*No Man's Land*, one hundred works by women artists from a private collection, shown as part of Art Basel, Miami.	Exhibition
2015	ARTnews, Issue June 2015: *Women in the Art World* (special issue).	Focus on feminist art
2015	*Now You Can Go*, four venues in London, focus on Italian feminisms from the 1970s and 1980s and intergenerational feminism; coordinated by Helena Reckitt and others.	Panel, film screenings, performances, workshops
2015	*What in Me is Feminine?*, Visual Culture Research Center, Kiev; curated by Oksana Briukhovetska.	Exhibition
2015	*Not Ready to Make Nice: Guerrilla Girls in the Artworld and Beyond*, Abrons Arts Center, New York.	Exhibition
2015	*Feminismen 2015*, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Gelsenkirchen; curated by Marius Babias and Kathrin Becker.	Exhibition

2015	*Motherhood,* Visual Culture Research Centre, Kiev and Palace of Art, Lviv; curated by Oksana Briukhovetska.	Exhibition, film screenings, panel
2015	*Women Forward! - A Meeting Between Two Generations of Voices in Art,* Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde, Denmark; curated by Birgitte Ejdrup Kristensen and Ulla Angkjær Jørgensen.	Exhibition
2015	*Alien She (Riot Grrrl Movement),* Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Newport Beach and Portland; curated by Astria Suparak and Ceci Moss.	Travelling exhibition, program of public events
2015	*What's Happening? Danish Avant-Garde and Feminism 1965-*, Statens Museum fur Kunst, Copenhagen; curated by Birgitte Anderberg.	Exhibition
2015	*Momentum: Women/Art/Technology,* Mabel Smith Douglass Library, Rutgers University, New Jersey.	Exhibition, publication
2016	*Women of Abstract Expressionism,* Denver Art Museum; women artists involved with the movement from the 1950s.	Exhibition
2016	*She: Deconstructing Female Identity,* ArtsWestchester Gallery, White Plains, New York.	Exhibition, performances, workshops, panels
2016	*Feminism and the Moving Image,* Chelsea College of Art and Design, London.	Symposium
2016	*Women Modernists in New York,* Portland Museum of Art, USA.	Exhibition
2016	*The Female Gaze, Part Two: Women Look at Men;* Chiem & Read Gallery, New York.	Exhibition
2016	*No Play: Feminist Training Camp,* nGbK, Berlin.	Exhibition
2016	*Whose Feminism is it Anyway?* Andrew Creps Gallery, New York.	Exhibition
2016	*She: Women as Creators,* Long Museum, Shanghai; curated by Wang Wei.	Exhibition, forum
2016	*Untitled (Gender and Representation),* School of Visual Arts Theatre, New York.	Symposium

2016	*Bureau of Feminism,* Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.	Program of events, lectures, screenings
2016	*Feminism is Politics!* Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York; curated by Olga Kopenkina.	Exhibition, panel, performance
2016	*Feminist Pedagogies,* Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg.	Public program, seminar
2016	*Black Sheep Feminism: The Art of Sexual Politics,* and *"Bad" Feminisms,* Dallas Contemporary, Texas; curated by Alison Gingeras.	Exhibition, panel
2016	*WARM Guerrillas: Feminist Visions,* The Grain Belt Bottling House Gallery, Minneapolis, USA; curated by Jo-Anne Reske Kirkman and Laura Mayo.	Exhibition
2016	*Material Girls,* Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina and Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto, Canada.	Exhibition
2016	*Ruth Buchanan, Judith Hopf, Marianne Wex: Bad Visual Systems,* Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand.	Exhibition
2016	*Girls Girls Girls: A Feminist Art Show,* Northern Contemporary, Toronto, Canada.	Exhibition
2016	*Further Evidence - Exhibit A* and *Further Evidence - Exhibit B,* P.P.O.W. and Galerie Lelong, New York; Carolee Schneemann survey exhibitions.	Exhibitions
2016	*Lynn Hershman Leeson,* Moss Arts Centre and Armory Gallery, Blacksburg, Virginia; survey exhibitions.	Exhibitions, lecture, film screening
2016	*Year of Yes: Reimagining Feminism,* Brooklyn Museum, New York; focus on past and current contributions of women artists.	Series of exhibitions
2016	*A Woman's Afterlife: Gender Transformation in Ancient Egypt,* Brooklyn Museum, New York.	Exhibition
2016	*Pipilotti Rist: Pixel Forest,* New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.	Retrospective Exhibition

2016	Tate Modern, London, expansion and relaunch with greater representation of women artists and program of solo exhibitions by women artists; curated by Frances Morris.	Museum re-hang
2016	*Nicole Eisenman: Al-urg-ories*, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; curated by Helga Christoffersen and Massimiliano Gioni.	Retrospective exhibition
2016	*Women, Words, Phrases and Stories: 1000 Paintings, Betty Tompkin*, FLAG Art Foundation, New York.	Exhibition
2016	*The Sister Chapel* (recreation of 1978 installation by 12 artists), Rowan University Art Gallery West, Westby Hall, Glassboro, New Jersey.	Exhibition
2016	*Girl on Girl: Investigating the Politics of Nudity with Maisie Willoughby*, Mother/London, UK.	Exhibition, publication
2016-17	*Eau de Cologne*, Sprüth Magers Gallery, Los Angeles; restaging of 1980s and 90s exhibitions of the same name at Monika Sprüth Galerie, Cologne; works by Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Rosemarie Trockel, Jenny Holzer and Louise Lawler.	Exhibition
2016-17	*Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947-2016*, Hauser, Wirth & Schimmel Gallery, Los Angeles; curated by Paul Schimmel and Jenni Sorkin.	Exhibition
2016-17	*Carmen Herrera: Lines of Sight*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; curated by Dana Miller.	Retrospective exhibition
2016-17	*Pretty/Dirty: Marilyn Minter*, Brooklyn Museum, New York; organized by Catherine Morris and Carmen Hermo.	Retrospective exhibition
2016-17	*Guerrilla Girls: Is it even worse in Europe?*, Whitechapel Gallery, London; curated by Nayia Yiakoumaki.	Exhibition, lecture
2016-17	*1970's: 9 Women and Abstraction*, Zürcher Gallery, New York; curated by Barbara Stehle.	Exhibition, panel
2016-17	*Mierle Laderman Ukeles: Maintenance Art*, Queens Museum, curated by Larissa Harris and Patricia C. Phillips.	Retrospective exhibition
2016-17	*Roslyn Drexler: Who does She Think She Is?* Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University then travelling; organised by Katy Siegel and Caitlin Julia Rubin	Retrospective travelling exhibition
2017	*Traumata: Bourgeois / Kusama*, S/2, London.	Retrospective exhibition

2017	*Rejoice! Our Times are Intolerable: Jenny Holzer's Street Posters, 1977-82,* Alden Projects, Manhattan.	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors,* Hirshhorn Museum, Washington (travelling to five other museums in USA and Canada).	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*Revolution at Point Zero: Feminist Social Practice,* Glass Curtain Gallery, Chicago (then traveling in USA); curated by Neysa Page-Lieberman and Melissa Hilliard Potter.	Exhibition, publication, performances, symposium
2017	*Soft Skills,* The James Gallery, CUNY Graduate Centre, New York; curated by Kaegan Sparks.	Exhibition, program of events
2017	*Making Space: Women Artists and Postwar Abstraction,* Museum of Modern Art, New York; curated by Sarah Meister and Starr Figura.	Exhibition
2017	*We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85,* 35 year anniversary of *Where We At? Black Women Artists Inc,* Brooklyn Museum, New York and California African American Museum, Los Angeles; curated by Catherine Morris and Rujeko Hockley.	Exhibition
2017	*Antibodies, Carol Rama,* The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; curated by Helga Christoffersen and Massimiliano Gioni.	Retrospective Exhibition
2017	*Period,* Rojas + Rubenstein Projects, Miami.	Exhibition
2017	*Claw, Project for Empty Space,* Newark, USA (part of PES Feminist Incubator Space series).	Exhibition
2017	*Woman. Feminist Avant-Garde of the 1970s,* Museum Moderna Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (part of a ten-city European tour); curated by Gabriele Schor and Eva Badura-Triska.	Exhibition, symposium
2017	*The Future is Female,* 21C Museum Hotel, Louisville, USA; curated by Alice Gray Stites.	Exhibition
2017	*Louise Bourgeois Prints,* Glasgow Print Studio First Floor Gallery, UK.	Exhibition
2017	*Prince Street Girls (1976-1979: Susan Meiselas,* Higher Pictures, New York.	Exhibition
2017	*Dreamers Awake,* White Cube Gallery, London (all-female show of surrealist and surrealist-influenced artists); curated by Susanna Greeves.	Exhibition

2017	*Annette Messager: Avec et sans raisons,* Marian Goodman Gallery, London.	Exhibition
2017	*Geta Brătescu: The Studio: A Tireless Ongoing Space,* Cambden Arts Centre, London.	Exhibition
2017	*No Man's Land: Women Artists From the Rubell Family Collection,* Contemporary Arts Foundation, Miami and National Museum of Women and the Arts, Washington.	Exhibition
2017	*Marlene Dumas: The Image as Burden*, Tate Modern, London; Fondation Beyeler, Basel; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*Secret Garden: The Female Gaze on Erotica,* The Untitled Space, New York; curated by Indira Cesarine.	Exhibition
2017	*ORLAN: This is My Body … This is My Software,* La Plaque Tournante, Berlin.	Retrospective exhibition, performance
2017	*Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960-1985,* Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; curated by Cecilia Fajardo-Hill and Andrea Giunta.	Exhibition
2017	*O'Keefe, Stettheimer, Torr, Zorach: Women Modernists in New York,* Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, USA.	Exhibition
2017	*Women of Abstract Expressionism,* Denver Art Museum; curated by Gwen Chanzit.	Exhibition
2017	*The Female Gaze, Part Two: Women Look at Men,* Chiem & Read Gallery, New York.	Exhibition
2017	*Sex Work: Feminist Art & Radical Politics,* Frieze London; curated by Alison Gingeras.	Exhibition
2017	*Griselda Pollock* presents First Annual Public Lecture, Association for Art History, University of Leeds, UK.	Public lecture
2017	*In Rebellion: Female Narratives in the Arab World,* Institut Valencia d'Art Modern, Spain.	
2017	*The Fence and the Shadow,* Sally Payen (works about the Greenham Common and women's peace camps of the 1980s), First Floor Gallery, Birmingham, UK.	Exhibition, talk
2017	*Triggers: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon,* New Museum, New York.	Exhibition

2017	*Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today* (abstraction by women artists of colour), Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas, USA.	Exhibition
2017	*Carolee Schneeman*, MoMA PS1, Long Island City, New York.	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*An Incomplete History of Protest: Selections from the Whitney's Collection, 1940-2017*, (Mierle Laderman-Ukeles, Guerrilla Girls, Martha Rosler and Howardina Pindell), Whitney Museum, New York.	Exhibition
2017	*Ruth Asawa*, David Zwirna Gallery, New York.	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*Cathy Wilkes*, MoMA PS1, New York.	Retrospective exhibition
2017	*Making/Breaking the Binary: Women, Art & Technology*, Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, University of the Arts, Philadelphia; curated by Kelsey Halliday Johnson.	Exhibition
2017	*Decorating Dissidence: Feminism, Modernism & the Arts*, University of London.	Conference
2017	*Women and Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry 1973-75* (Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt and Mary Kelly), Tate, London.	Exhibition
2017	*Unbound Feminism & Territorialities*, Queens Museum, New York.	Performance
2017	*Local/Global Dynamics in Feminism and Contemporary Art*, Middlesex University, London.	Conference
2017	*CUNT*, Judith Bernstein, VALIE EXPORT, Dorothy Iannone, Marilyn Minter, Carolee Schneemann and Betty Tompkins, Venus, Los Angeles	Exhibition
2017	*Post-Cyber Feminist International 2017*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London.	Conference
2017	*A Feminist Space at Leeds: Looking Back to Think Forward*, School of Fine Art, History and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds.	Symposium
2017	*Unsettling Feminist Curating*, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.	Lectures, performances
2017-18	*Beyond Boundaries: Feminine Forms*, Women at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, PAFA Historic Landmark Buiding and Canaday	Exhibition

	Library, Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania.	
2017-18	*Woman House*, La Monnaie de Paris and National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; curated by Camille Morineau.	Exhibitions
2017-18	*Louise Bourgeois: An Unfolding Portrait*, Museum of Modern Art, New York.	Exhibition
2017-18	*Womanhood: Eros, Power, Morality, and Death Around 1500*, Kunstmuseum, Bassel.	Exhibition
2017-18	*The Arrival of New Women*, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Deoksugung, South Korea.	Exhibition
2018	*Making Women's Art Matter: New Approaches to the Careers and Legacies of Women Artists*, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London.	Conference
2018	*Feminism and the State: Art, Politics, and Resistance*, College Art Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.	Conference
2018	*Women Look at Women*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, London; curated by Paola Ugolini.	Exhibition
2018	*Zoe Leonard: Survey*, Whitney Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.	Exhibition
2018	*Genders Engender*, Taikang Space, Beijing.	Exhibition
2018	*The Stories That We Tell: Art and Identity*, University Art Gallery, San Diego	Exhibition
2018	*Women Make Art History*, Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong Exhibition and Convention Centre.	Exhibition, public talks
2018	*Surface/Depth: The Decorative After Miriam Schapiro*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York; curated by Elissa Auther.	Exhibition
2018	*Faith Ringgold: Paintings and Story Quilts, 1964-2017*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London.	Exhibition
2018	*Barbara Hanmmer: Evidentiary Bodies*, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, New York	Retrospective exhibition
2018	*Dangerous women: Selections from the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art*, Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, Florida International Art Museum, Miami.	Exhibition

Appendix 2.B

Australian Feminist Curatorial and Critical Projects

The following list of projects in Australia that reflect and contribute to a renewed interest in feminist art from the 1990s to the present is expansive and inclusive, and it is not definitive.

Year	Title and Location	Project
1991	*Frames of Reference: Aspects of Feminism and Art,* Artspace, Sydney; curated by Sally Couacaud.	Exhibition, publication
1991	*Aboriginal Women's Exhibition,* Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney; curated by Hetti Perkins.	Exhibition
1991	*Dissonance: Feminism and the Arts,* 70 projects including *At Least It's Gone to a Good Home: Women Collecting and Producing Art at the University of Sydney 1910 – 1991* exhibition.	Event, exhibition
1991	*Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century,* VNS Matrix (Virginia Barratt, Francesca da Rimini, Julianne Pierce, Josephine Starrs), Adelaide (then exhibited around Australia).	Publication, billboard poster
1992	*Feminisms: An Exhibition of 27 Women Artists,* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art; curated by Nikki Miller.	Exhibition
1993	*Creators & Inventors: Australian Women's Art in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne;* curated by Jennifer Phipps.	Exhibition
1994	*Artlink,* Vol 14, No. 1, Special Issue: *Art & the Feminist Project.*	Focus on feminist art
1994	*Raising the Spirits***,** Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne; curated by Anne Marsh and Jill Orr.	Exhibition, publication
1994	*Performing Sexualities: Knowing the Sensorium,* Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; curated by Michelle Boulous-Walker.	Exhibition
1994	*The Women's Show,* Sutton Gallery, Melbourne.	Exhibition

1995	*The National Women's Art Exhibition*, 147 venues around Australia; coordinated by Joan Kerr.	Exhibition program
1995	*Heritage: The National Women's Art Book: 500 Works by 500 Women Artists from Colonial Times to 1995;* celebration of twentieth anniversary of International Women's Year, edited by Joan Kerr.	Publication
1995	*Art and Australia*, Vol 33, No. 3, Special Issue.	Focus on feminist art
1995	*Evolution: An Exhibition of Australian Women's Art*, Newcastle Regional Gallery.	Exhibition
1995	*In the Company of Women: 100 Years of Australian Women's Art from the Cruthers Collection*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts; curated by Sarah Miller.	Exhibition
1995	*WWWO: Wollongong Worlds Women Online*, first national online women's group exhibition, 30 artists working in digital media; curated by Melinda Rackham, Louise Manner, et al.	Online exhibition
1995	*Out of the Void: Mad and Bad Women,* Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, and other venues in Queensland.	Touring exhibition
1995	*Girls, Girls, Girls,* Annandale Galleries. Sydney and Orange Regional Gallery.	Exhibition
1995	*Beyond the Picket Fence: Australian Women's Art in the National Library of Australia*, National Library of Australia, ACT.	Exhibition
1995	*Bur-ran-gur Ang (Court Out): Women and the Law*, Lawrence Wilson Gallery, Perth; curated by Annette Pederson.	Exhibition
1996	*Women Hold Up Half the Sky: The Orientation of Art in the Post-War Pacific*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne; curated by Roger Butler.	Exhibition
1995	*VNS Matrix: All New Gen,* Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.	Exhibition
1996	*Inside the Visible*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, (after USA and UK); curated by Catherine de Zegher.	Exhibition
1997	*Difficult Territory: A Postfeminist Project,* Artspace, Sydney; curated by Kristin Elsby.	Exhibition

1997	*Kiss Kiss (XX): An Exhibition of Collaborative Feminist Art,* Robert Hughes Gallery, Brisbane; curated by Linda Caroli.	Exhibition
1997	*Anne Newmarch: The Personal is Political,* Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.	Retrospective exhibition
1999	*Art: Feminist Art, Art About Women,* First Site Gallery, The Queen Victoria Women's Centre and Artspace, RMIT Central Library; curated by Debbie Qadri.	Exhibition
1999	*Past Present: The National Women's Art Anthology,* Craftsman House; by Joan Kerr and Jo Holder.	Publication
1999	*Guerrilla Girls in Melbourne* with Red Planet screenprinting poster collective.	Workshops, lectures
2004	*Visual Pleasures: Wendy Beatie,* Four Cats Gallery, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2005	*Girls, Girls, Girls: Images of Femininity from the Banyule Art Collection,* Banyule Art Gallery; Bendigo Art Gallery; McLelland Gallery and Sculpture Park; Benalla Art Gallery.	Travelling exhibition
2006	*Feminist Actions,* Spacement, Melbourne; curated by Veronica Tello.	Exhibition
2007	*Feminism Never Happened,* Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne.	Forum
2007	*Bad Girls,* Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne; curated by Kate Daw and Vikki McInnes.	Exhibition
2007-08	*Julie Rrap: Body Double,* Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; curated by Victoria Lyn.	Exhibition
2008	*Girls, Girls, Girls,* Carlton Hotel, Melbourne, curated by Lyndal Walker and Nat Thomas.	Exhibition
2008	*A Time Like This,* Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne; curated by Meredith Turnball, Samantha Comte, et al.	Exhibition
2008	*When You Think About Art: The Ewing and George Paton Galleries 1971-2008*; edited by Helen Vivian.	Publication
2008	*Emily Floyd: Temple of the Female Eunuch,* Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.	Exhibition

2008-ongoing	*CoUNTess* launched, Melbourne; charting women's representation in visual art courses, galleries, museums and biennials.	Blog launch
2010	*Feminism Never Happened*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; curated by Robert Leonard.	Exhibition
2010	*The View From Here: 19 Perspectives on Feminism*, West Space, Melbourne; curated by Victoria Bennett and Clare Rae.	Exhibition, forum, publication
2010	*LEVEL* (artist-run feminist collective and gallery) established, Brisbane.	Exhibition program
2010	*Slow Burn: A Century of Australian Women Artists from a Private Collection*, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney.	Exhibition
2010	*The Feminist Salon Group, The Envelope Residency*, West Space Project Site, Melbourne; coordinated by Caroline Phillips and Sarah Lynch.	Residency for artists and writers
2010	*Re/Gendered*, Platform Artist Group, Melbourne; curated by Laura Castagnini.	Exhibition, performance
2011	*A Different Temporality: Aspects of Australian Feminist Art Practice 1975-198*5, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; curated by Kyla McFarlane.	Exhibition, publication
2011	*Venus Was Her Name*, Kate Just, Daine Singer Gallery, Melbourne (after Kunsthalle Krems, Austria).	
2012	*Feminage: The Logic of Feminist Collage*, The Cross Art Projects, Sydney.	Exhibition, series of panel events
2012	*Contemporary Australia: Women*, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; curated by Julie Ewington.	Exhibition
2012	*SEXES*, month-long feminist and queer inspired program, Performance Space, Carriageworks, Sydney.	Exhibition, dance, performance, lectures, film
2012	*A Dinner Party: Setting the Table*, collaborative series of events concerning feminist art, Westspace, Melbourne.	Residency, workshops, film screenings, exhibition, forum
2012	*Look, Look Again*, works from the Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth and *Are We There Yet?* symposium on the contribution of women artists.	Exhibition, symposium

2012	*Current: An Exhibition About Feminism*, POP Gallery, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane.	Exhibition
2012	*Art and Australia*, Vol 49, No. 3; Special Issue.	Focus on feminist art
2012	*The Baker's Dozen*, UTS Gallery, University of Technology Sydney; curated by Lorna Grear.	Exhibition
2012	*No Added Sugar: Engagement and Self-Determination/Australian Muslim Women Artists*, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney.	Exhibition
2012	*Imagining and Imaging*, Laurel McKenzie, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, Townsville.	Exhibition
2012	*Essential Women*, Donna Benningfield, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Art, Townsville.	Exhibition
2012-15	*The F Word - Regional Feminist Art Forum*, Westspace, Melbourne; La Trobe Visual Art Centre; University of Melbourne; Bendigo Regional Gallery; Ararat Regional Gallery (three-year project).	Workshops, seminars, panels, exhibitions, residencies
2013	*13 Rooms*, thirteen performance works, some re-staged from the past, in thirteen rooms, Pier 2/3, Sydney.	Performances
2013	*Chicks on Speed: SCREAM*, Artspace, Sydney.	Performance, symposium
2013	*BACKFLIP: Feminism and Humour in Contemporary Art*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne; curated by Laura Castagnini.	Exhibition, performances, panel, publication
2013	*Contemporary Art and Feminism (CAF)* launched, Sydney College of the Arts; initiated by Catriona Moore, Jacqueline Millner and Jo Holder.	Platform for art, scholarship and activism
2013	*Janus i and ii*, The Commercial and MCLEMOI Gallery, Sydney; curated by Kelly Doley and Amanda Rowell.	Exhibition
2013	*Feminism and the Museum*, National Library of Australia, Canberra.	Symposium
2014	*Curating Feminism*, Sydney College of the Arts and The Power Institute, University of Sydney, presented by Contemporary Art and Feminism, curators, artists and collectives.	Exhibition, masterclass, conference

2014	*Feminism in Contemporary Art: If Not Why Not?*, Artspace, Sydney.	Panel
2014	*Topologies of Sexual Difference*, Luce Irigaray Circle, Melbourne.	Conference
2014	*Anarchist Feminist Poster Collective Works (1979-85)*, from collection of Flinders University Art Museum, City Gallery, Adelaide.	Exhibition
2014-16	*Photography Meets Feminism: Australian Women Photographers 1970s-80s*, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne followed by other venues.	Travelling exhibition
2015	*Girls At the Tin Sheds: Sydney Feminist Posters 1975-9*0, Sydney University Art Gallery and Verge Gallery, Sydney; posters by women artists who worked at the Tin Sheds.	Exhibition
2014	*Kelley Doley: Yes and No: Things Learnt About Feminism*, Boxcopy, Brisbane.	Poster project, exhibition, forum
2014	*Mierle Laderman Ukeles: Maintenance Artworks 1969-1980*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane.	Survey exhibition
2014	*Art and Change: Art and Feminism*, Wheeler Centre, Melbourne, with Juliana Engberg, Emily Floyd, Atlanta Eke and Mish Grigorand.	Panel
2014	*Common Woman*, Level Project Space, Brisbane, curated by Lisa Bryan-Brown; 16 Australian artists and artist-collaborations.	Exhibition series
2015	*Future Feminist Archive*, Sydney College of the Arts and Art Gallery of NSW; and launch of year-long project by Contemporary Art and Feminism.	Symposium, artist's talks, exhibitions
2015	*Women's Gaze and the Feminist Film Archive*, Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.	Exhibition
2015	*Marina Abramovic: Private Archaeology*, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart.	Exhibition
2015	*Marina Abramovic: In Residence*, Pier 2/3, Walsh Bay, Sydney.	Exhibition, performance
2015	*Dear Minister for Women*, The Cross Art Projects, Sydney; work by Tricky Walsh and Mish Meijers.	Collaborative exhibition
2015	*Solidarity*, Brunswick Street Gallery, Melbourne; curated by Sleepover Club.	Exhibition
2015	*Progression: Women in Australian Art*, Day Fine Art, Blackheath, NSW; celebrating 150 years of work by women artists.	Exhibition

2015	*F Generation: Feminism, Art, Progressions,* George Paton Gallery, University of Melbourne; curated by Veronica Caven Aldous, Juliette Peers and Caroline Phillips.	Exhibition
2015	*AS IF: 40 Years and Beyond;* multi-venue curated event celebrating the Women's Art Register.	Festival of feminist visual art
2015	*AS IF: Echoing Workshop - Art+Feminism,* State Library of Victoria; communal updating of Wikipedia entries on subjects related to contemporary art and feminism.	Edit-a-thon
2015	Year-long program of women-only exhibitions in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of International Women's Year, University Art Gallery, University of Sydney,.	Exhibition program
2015	*See You at the Barricades,* (including *Portfolio Compleat* by the Guerrilla Girls), Art Gallery of New South Wales.	Exhibition
2015	*A New Feminine?* Airspace Projects, Sydney; curated by Rafaela Pandolfini.	Exhibition
2015	*Taking Up Space,* Articulate Gallery, Sydney.	Exhibition
2015-16	*Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 286, Summer 2015/16, (special issue celebrating the fortieth anniversary of International Women's Day).	Focus on feminist art
2015-16	*Women in Power*, women artists from the Power Collection selected by influential women, University Art Gallery, The University of Sydney; curated by Ann Stephen.	Exhibition
2015-16	*Re-representation,* Laurel McKenzie, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns.	Exhibition
2016	*Returning to The Field #2,* SNO Contemporary Art Projects, Sydney; revisiting women artists in *The Field* exhibition (1968) at National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2016	*Food for Thought,* project by LEVEL artist-run-initiative for Next Wave Festival, Footscray Community Art Centre, Melbourne.	Exhibition, series of public talks
2016	*On Destroying the Joint: Debating Feminism, Politics and the Media in Australia,* Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane.	Public event
2016	*Women in the Arts IRL,* Verge Gallery, University of Sydney.	Series of panels
2016	*Trailblazing Women of Herstory,* Neospace, Melbourne.	Exhibition

2016	*We Need to Care*, The Glasshouse, Queensland University of Technology Creative Industries Precinct, Brisbane.	Forum
2016	*Journal of Australian Studies*, Vol 40, Issue 2: *Feminism and the Museum* (special issue).	Focus on feminist art and curation
2017	*Against the Odds*, cross-disciplinary arts platform, Women's Art Register, City of Yarra, Melbourne.	Conference
2017	*Abstraction: Celebrating Australian Women Abstract Artists*, Geelong Gallery.	Exhibition
2017	*Ladies First!: An All-girl Graffiti Exhibition*, BSIDE Gallery, Fitzroy.	Exhibition
2017	*Her Place: Women in the West*, Victoria University, Melbourne and City of Melbourne Town Hall.	Exhibition, public program
2017	*Wikipedia edit-a-thon*, part of international program for Women's History Month, including The University of Sydney Library and Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane.	Edit-a-thon
2017	*The Lines In Between, Triple F Collective*, Seventh Gallery, Melbourne	Exhibition
2017	*The Women Behind the Women's*, Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2017	*No Woman is an Island*, Blindside Gallery, Melbourne; curated by Sophie Cai.	Exhibition, panel
2017	*This Woman is Not a Car: Margaret Dodd*, The Cross Arts Projects, Kings Cross; curated by Susan Charlton.	Exhibition, publication
2017	*Humanising the Abject: Metaphors for the Female Body*, Jo D'Hage, QCA Galleries, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane.	Exhibition
2017	*Identity Intersection*, Triple F Collective, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne; curated by Tassia Joannides.	Exhibition
2017	*Mother Holding Something Horrific: Claire Lambe*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.	Exhibition, performance
2017	*The Eternal Protagonist: Stephanie Leigh*, The Lyric Emerging Artist Gallery, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2017	*Recentre: Sisters* (eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women), City Gallery, Melbourne; curated by Kimberley Moulton.	Exhibition

2017	*Deanne Wilson: In Between the Object and the Gaze*, Post Office Gallery, Federation University, Ballarat.	Exhibition
2017	*FRAN Fest*, 50-event festival celebrating *The Women's Show* of 1977, South Australia; curated by Loene Furler, Jude Adams, Brigid Noone and Mia van den Bos.	Exhibitions, events, symposia
2017	*Against the Odds: Women in Art Forum*, Richmond Theatrette, Victoria.	Forum
2017	*Abstraction: Celebrating Australian Women Abstract Artists*, National Gallery of Australia, ACT and Cairns Regional Gallery.	Touring exhibition
2017	*The Deviant Woman: Mechanisms for Leaning*, Carolyn McKenzie-Craig, POP Gallery, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane.	Exhibition
2017	*Sally Smart: Staging the Studio (The Choreography of Cutting)*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2017	*Water 2: Kathryn Blumke*, Webb Gallery, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane.	Exhibition
2017-18	*Pipilotti Rist: Sip My Ocean*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.	Exhibition
2017-18	*Unfinished Business: Perspectives on Art and Feminism*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne; curated by Annika Christensen, Max Delany, et al.	Exhibition, publication, events
2017-18	*Doing Feminism/Sharing the World*, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne; three-month program curated and managed by Anne Marsh.	Artists in Residence, symposium
2018	*Women, Art and Feminism in Australia Since 1970*, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne.	Symposium
2018	*Isms: Feminist Art and Editorial Histories*, part of *Unfinished Conversations* series, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.	Symposium
2018	*Rainbow Bois and Magical Gurls*, Blindside Gallery, Melbourne.	Exhibition
2018	*Needleman, Feminist Fan*, Robert Brain and Kate Just, Chapter House Lane, Melbourne; curated by Louise Klerks.	Exhibition
2018	*Pure Power*, celebrating women in the arts, Ventana Fiesta, Frankston Arts Centre, Victoria.	Exhibition series
2018	*Travelling the Alpha Layer*, Counihan Gallery, Brunswick, Victoria.	Exhibition

Appendix 3

A Step Back: Venus in the Prehistoric World

In comparative mythology, while possible connections are made between Aphrodite/Venus and other, earlier deities – Etruscan Turan, Egyptian Hathor, Phoenician Ishtar/Astarte and the Indo-European dawn goddess, Hausos/Eos/Aurora, – who are likely to have evolved from earlier prehistoric deities, there is no known actual link between the cult of Aphrodite and the so-called Venus figurines of prehistory. There is nonetheless a plausible connection with notions of fertility and the generative powers of nature pertaining to both Aphrodite and the prehistoric figurines. When the (predominantly) female figurines, dated from about 36,000 BCE, began to be found over a century ago, some male archaeologists assumed these figures to be fetish objects; that they were made by men, for use by men (Bailey 2005 p. 12)[76]. Many theories are now advanced about the purpose of the figurines, carved from stone or bone and modelled from clay. Some feminist archaeologists interpret the figurines as portable female deities and evidence of geographically widespread worship of fertility-goddesses. Marija Gimbutas (1989) interpreted markings on pre-historic surfaces (such as concentric circles, whorls, parallel wavy lines, and nets of intersecting lines) as references to water and fecundity. The fact that some figurines, like the *Vinca Venus* (Plate 74), bore the same markings on their bodies supported her conclusion that the figures were fertility symbols and objects of worship. This supposition contributed to the idea held by some second wave eco-feminists of a widespread matriarchal, goddess-worshiping culture (Eisler 1990 p. 30).

Gimbutas's understanding of the Venus figurines has been dismissed by other archaeologists (Bailey 2005 p. 12) as simplistic and unsubstantiated, while others suggest that the context of the particular societies that produced the figures might offer specific explanations. In general, however, the figures are seen as early expressions of human self awareness (McDermott 1996). The status of the figurines

[76] Some figurines appear to have male or ambiguous shapes, but the number of female-shaped figures found to date vastly exceeds those that are not female-shaped.

remains a subject of ongoing debate. McDermott (1996 pp. 245-248), for example, hypothesises that the female figurines might have been self-referential – images crafted by women in their own image, for some purpose of their own, or to represent biological processes such as pregnancy, birth and lactation. This idea is supported by contemporary photographs taken by pregnant women of their own bodies, looking down at their breasts and bellies, and over their shoulders towards their buttocks; such images suggest a perspective similar to the exaggerated physical features of some figurines. If so, the figurines are a form of self-portrait executed millennia before the invention of mirrors. This interpretation, where women are both the *subject* (creator) and *object* of observation allows for the possibility that women were exerting 'self-conscious control over the material conditions of their reproductive lives' (McDermott 1996 p. 227), and it does not preclude the possibility that the figurines also fulfilled some other symbolic function.

The pre-historic figurines furnished a thesis regarding Platonic aesthetics for Kenneth Clark in *The Nude* (1956 pp. 64-65), based on Plato's assertion (in the *Symposium*), that there are two Venuses: *Venus Coelestis* (Celestial Venus) and *Venus Naturalis* (Vulgar Venus)[77]. The Celestial Venus is modelled by the smooth and slender Cycladic figurine (3,300-1,100 BCE) (Plate 75, Right), while the Vulgar Venus is represented by the lumpen, Palaeolithic *Willendorf* figurine (28,000-25,000 BCE) (Plate 75, Left). Clark claimed that Plato's distinction between symbolic types reflected deeply held feelings, and that, consequently, the dichotomy became fixed in human thinking about women's bodies in art as 'the justification of the female nude' (p. 64).

> Since the earliest times the obsessive, unreasonable nature of physical desire has sought relief in images, and to give these images a form by which Venus may cease to be vulgar and become celestial has been one of the recurring aims of European art. The means employed have been symmetry, measurement, and the principle of subordination […]. But perhaps this purification of Venus could not have taken place had not some abstract notion of the female body been present in the Mediterranean mind from the first. (Clark 1956 p. 64)

[77] Clark (pp. 64 - 65) also refers to the two types of Venus as 'Crystalline' and 'Vegetable'.

While in Clark's (1956 p. 64) opinion the *Willendorf Venus's* 'female attributes' are exaggerated to the point of symbolising only fertility, her 'unruly human body' was constrained by 'geometrical discipline' by the time of the marble Cycladic figurine. The Celestial Venus, according to Panofsky (1962 p. 143), being born without a mother, dwells in the 'immaterial sphere' or the 'zone of the Cosmic Mind', and her beauty symbolises a divine nature. The Vulgar Venus dwells in the 'realm of the Cosmic Soul', and the beauty that she denotes is 'realized in the corporeal world'. The two Venuses also represent two different forms of love – that of the mind or intellect, which impels contemplation of 'divine beauty' (Celestial Venus), and that of imagination and sensuality (Vulgar Venus) (pp. 142-143). Both forms of love, he suggests (p. 143) are concerned with the creation of beauty, but in different ways and with differences of value. 'Contemplative' love 'rises from the visible and particular to the intelligible and universal', whereas the 'active' form of love 'finds satisfaction within the visual sphere'. Nead (1997 p. 18), reflecting on the oppositional formulations set out by the earlier art historians, suggests that they explain the necessity for artists to convert the female form ('unformed matter', representing pure nature and physicality) into pure culture. The female nude thus demonstrates the transformative power of the artist, who gives 'integral form' to that matter (p. 19).

Plate 74. *Vinca Venus*, terracotta, c. 5000-4500 BCE, H 16.4 cm.

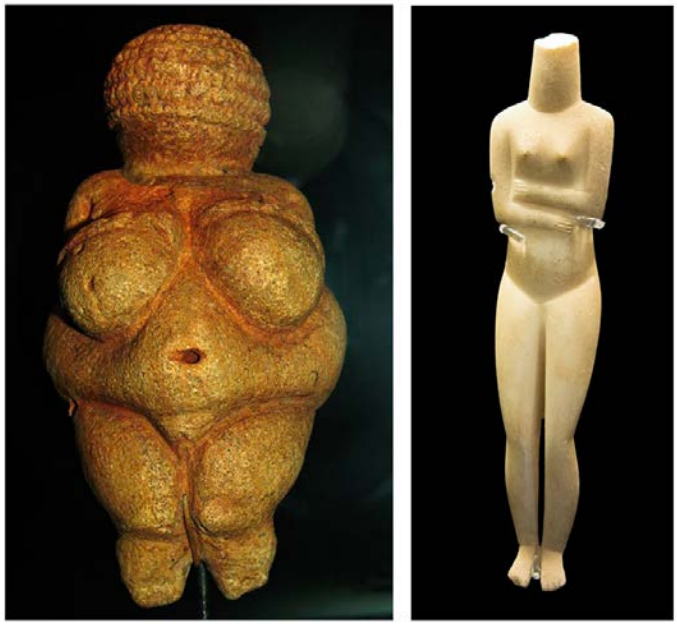


Plate 75. Left: Willendorf Venus, 25,000-22,000 BCE, Oolitic sandstone, H 11.1 cm; Right: Cycladic figure, 3,300-1,100 BCE, marble, H 39.8 cm.