

# FA320 Studio Methods Portfolio 1

Zach Muir

Week 1 Classwork

WEEK 1.

FA 320: Creative practice research methodologies  
15-Point course

20% annotated bibliography on selected research methodologies  
30% research Seminars on relevant methodologies  
to own practices

20% (GROUP) group report on research seminars  
30% writing journal/portfolio.

aim is to enable us to create our own generative methodologies  
foundation for postgrad study/own practice.

**MFA** locate your work within a <sup>field of</sup> practice through research +  
critical thinking. demonstrate advanced  
knowledge of a field.

methodologies - a known procedure

Western knowledge

- rejects spiritual
- individual as source of knowledge
- universalises theories, abstracts out of context, neutralises.
- prioritises knowing over being.

(generalised) indigenous knowledge

- both physical + spiritual
- not just facts, way of life.
- participation over instruction

whakaaaro vs. thought rangahau vs. research.

See printout 4 more notes.

Whakaaro and Rangahau (via Carl Mika)

Whakaaro

philosophy / thought / a regard

ancestral, in whakapapa - beyond human.  
matter/material.

gut reaction first. emotion over intellectualisation.

↳ for decision making in terms of thinking/making.

thought as a faculty in western ideas vs bodily experience.

Rangahau

vs. research

finding system makes that translation.

to seek, to quest, heart of life.

↳ influence of the divine, non-human.

research - to "intensely search" (western etymology)

↳ the non-human allows you to do this.

Human is non-central to it.

Not a point where it is complete - it's always a journey.

be receptive - on the lookout

there is always something that is not available to us + you don't know when there will be revealed to you.

discourse  
relationality  
interconnectedness



WEEK 1.  
understanding how methods can create agency in or practice  
develop clarity around values that underpin your practice

take shortcuts. Naeem Mohdemen  
methods? → memory – how u remember + what actually happened  
→ history, reliving, material of it, time  
→ observing from the edge  
→ experiments from accidents  
→ small, interesting, marginal people/stories, ~~the~~ outtakes, rejects, little narratives.  
→ roles of masculinity, failing at it tragically  
→ taking notes + coming back to them later

good place for inspo/ research

values? relational  
- family/history  
- the underdog; care for them.  
- curiosity/collaboration with others' stories.  
- presentation rather than authorship.  
- responding to materials/context.  
- decentralisation of history/storytelling.

after this, following the technical process for the material idea. of choice to execute the

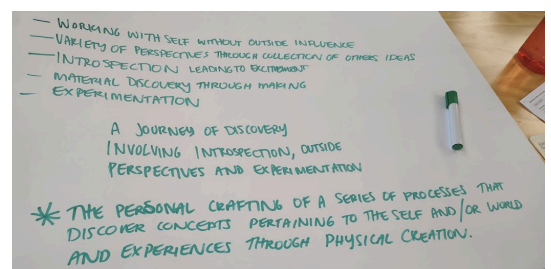
Definitions Defining creative practice methodology.  
A creative method i have used was coming up with an idea from what interests me (lived experience), done some reading around it by people more eloquent + experienced, then applied those ideas to the concept + material of choice. it can be repeated, as well as adapted. it helped me achieve a greater conceptual understanding than i could try to convey through my work.

Wk 2-6 guest lectures  
Homework in T PDA = 1st assignment + classwork + research/artist models.

Wk 7 → Workshops from same lecturers. Pick 1. relevant to ASS2.

Group definition of 'Creative Practice Methodology':

"The personal crafting of a series of processes that discover concepts pertaining to the self/world/experiences through physical creation."



Examples:

- ★ Working with the self (physically/mentally/spiritually)
- ★ Using a variety of perspectives through the collection of others' ideas
- ★ Introspection leading to finding a passion
- ★ Material discovery through making/experimentation

Other relevant findings:

the day, including scientific theories. We know that science is created by humans so it is bound to have human limitations, human error, human ignorance. Such realizations made us think about how knowledge is created and challenge the idea that western ways of thinking are the only source of truth. Early climate predictions were available in Peru before the arrival of European

From Chapter 13 of [Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology](#) (2nd Edition) by Nina Brown, Thomas McIlwraith, Laura Tubelle de González. I was doing a reading for Anthro110 and thought this snippet was relevant to what we covered in class.

Week 1 Reading: [Whakaaro As Method](#), Carl Mika and Kim Southey.

Excerpts I found important:

- ★ 'Whakaaro' signals a concomitant determined/vulnerable approach to the utterance of another and compels a simultaneously independent but world-related response to what another has said.
- ★ Whakaaro, in its form as method, challenges the self to remain open to the influence of things in the world whilst recognising that any resulting thought is owed to those things.
- ★ One's thinking is entirely at the bidding of various phenomena ... In a Maori worldview, it pays to keep those other entities in mind as one declares one's responsive thoughts because they have actively contributed to that thinking.

Response to text:

I really enjoy the concept of whakaaro as it speaks to one of my favourite methods of making/creating things (both art and writing). I completely agree that everything is inter-connected; nothing can be made or thought of in a vacuum. My way of making includes a step of looking into what people have put out there on the subject, from other artists' work to academic research. It's important to me to see what others are thinking, what approach they are taking, in order to see if there's a better way that hadn't occurred to me, or if there is a gap that no-one has explored lately that I have an interesting take on. It's also important to me to acknowledge these sources as inspiring my work. When I share some of my zines online, I make sure to link/cite where I have got images and quotes from. This also links into the idea of originality, something I don't believe is a thing. No idea is original, just the spin we put on it when we take our own approach to it. Every artwork is influenced by everything the artist is absorbing, as well as the way in which they are absorbing it via their positionality.

Positionality: Positionality is the social and political context that creates your identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status. Positionality also describes how your identity influences, and potentially biases, your understanding of and outlook on the world.

From [Dictionary.com](#).



## Week 2 Classwork.

JIM: LIMITS AS METHODOLOGY.

trained scriptor, worked in film.

methodologies

body of rules, procedure/set of procedures.

Postulate: premise, suggests a problem, precedes experimentation

helps analyse: to bring the outside world in, to connect  
relationship w self, self as part of the outside.

idea within a project within a context.

Socialise idea w self, then with others.

What we observe is contingent on what we are observing.  
account of translation rather than fidelity of truth.

Limits

we choose what to deal with. Agency over what you're doing.

Self critical relationship with your own practice.

Sheila Heti - Alphabetic Diaries

Simple procedure:  
Complicated  
outcomes.

↳ re ordered sentences from diary by alphabetised.

↳ find new meanings, revelations abt the self  
(patterns, subjectivity).

↳ more of an event than a response when  
reading the work post-process.

↳ distance one from oneself (borrows psychoanalysis)

Naomi Sekine - mother earth 1968

process as  
plan of  
action

↳ digs hole, removes tube of dirt, then replaces it.

↳ Mono-ha movement: what do things tell  
us, rather than what we tell it to be.

(Postwar Japanese art movement)

mother earth, cont.

↳ place informs action.

↳ single action/gesture (extraction) - can be remade + has been

Kate Newby: Cold Water, 2025

↳ selective physical response to site. (ice factory, UAE)

↳ glass + rope: material of shipping.

↳ no purity, both new + old. specifically not important

↳ site, practice + Material (relationships between)

↳ lived on site. captures the particular light of site

↳ draws attention to what might be unseen

limits  
condenses  
the ideas.

limit: brings material without picturing anything by.

a limit that provides an openness for interpretation.

↳ limited colour, limited material, limited action.

Lee Ufan: With Winds, 1989

↳ experiment valued over outcome

↳ acting, possibilities of action. Painting as procedure for recording that.

unicept: no-one has the same concept of anything. the world keeps our concepts in registration with each other.

relatum-momentum, 2019

↳ response to <sup>phase</sup> mother earth (prev. page)

↳ rock dropped on piece of glass. simple action.

action is where  
the art happens

↳ reveals material nature of materials.

↳ experiencing nature of the materials,

not just knowing glass will break.

↳ method: what happens if ...



**HARUN FAROCKI**: Indistinguishable Fire 1969 <sup>Film</sup> (~~video~~)

- ↳ critique of the Vietnam war + the production of chemical weapons.
- ↳ abstraction of labour makes complexity invisible.

**View**: ~~closed~~ against effects of images of media, chosen to re-represent it, providing a closer view.

- ↳ panned back, more "real", ~~was~~ forced to imagine b/c of the lack of images (initially). no theatre.
- ↳ authority of language: does it mean different spoken in German than Cambodian? What if others' owned the mechanism of media?

**Wang Bing**: Man with no name, 2009

documentarian: ↳ life of 40yo cave-dwelling man over 1y.

limit: engaging w/ subject by simply capturing their life.

- ↳ what is your relationship with a human subject? how does what you do effect that relationship?
- ↳ here, you could pretend you're not watching a film.

★ **Wear of the tracks**, 2002 (9th work, 3 parts)

- ↳ selection principle: follows railway line. Spent a year in-community. doesn't speak on camera.
- ↳ digital means he can work alone, record more.
- ↳ no attempt to guide conversation etc. narrative is formed in the editing process.

**The walking eye**, 2021

- ↳ display choice: differences between cinema + gallery.

*anthropological ethnographic fieldwork*

**Field recordings (group)**: let the water flow, 2023

knowledge as a limit.

artifact of building boom.

- ↳ had to change it, decide what to keep b/c of american accent - don't need an American philosophising.

**Luke Willis Thompson**: Whakamoemoea, 2025

translation + subtitles. Perfect translation X be honest.

- ↳ many different writing processes.
- predictive fiction type thing set 2040 ~~the future~~.

**limits**: a method that has action, that you can communicate + be critical of, and that an audience has space to interpret.

organising/classifying what it is you're doing.

an ethic. Countering consumption of general society.

methods contribute to meaning.

↳ process of coming to values knowledge w/ collaborators.

## Other/Further Research

Works I particularly liked from this talk were *The Inextinguishable Fire* and 铁西区 (*West of The Tracks*).

*The Inextinguishable Fire*, Harun Farocki, 1969.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CK5OwfTUZI>

<https://www.harunfarocki.de/films/1960s/1969/inextinguishable-fire.html>

I enjoy how the limits on images used affect how the piece works, as well as the general format and sound of it. It is unlike other film works I have studied to date. The politics/questions it raises also interest me.

“Agitprop” - political (originally communist) propaganda, especially in art or literature. (Oxford Languages definition). I had not heard of this before. It reminds me of *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), which also deals with image in new ways; namely the introduction of soviet montage, a far more direct and confrontational image than presented here. This speaks to a development of how society deals with image, we had (by the 70s) become immune to confrontational images. Likely due to the photographic reporting on the many wars since the 1920s, especially the Vietnam War, where shocking images were *not* few and far between.

*“When we show you pictures of napalm victims, you'll shut your eyes. You'll close your eyes to the pictures. Then you'll close them to the memory. And then you'll close your eyes to the facts.”*

It carries a certain care for victims, care for justice, but also a contempt for the average person. I find this personally appealing, though I do not know to what extent the work was effective, as it carries a shade of disdain for the audience. The reading of another person's words is unemotional, straightforward in its message. It has the air of authority of a parent saying something to their child: “I'm going to say this loud and clear, do you hear me?”

铁西区 (*West of The Tracks*), Wang Bing, 2002.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tie\\_Xi\\_Qu:\\_West\\_of\\_the\\_Tracks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tie_Xi_Qu:_West_of_the_Tracks)

This work reminds me of Sarah Morris' work in silently capturing the everyday. For example her 2000 work [Capital](#). The camera becomes barely a presence, just documenting the everyday. Though, I think, Morris takes a more involved approach to composition; her shots all look beautiful. I don't think Bing was as preoccupied with aesthetics as he was with recording the mundane.

This is a very anthropological approach to work. The digital medium allows Bing to be an unobtrusive lone observer embedded within the community, where he stayed over the course of two years. This is a version of anthropological ethnographic fieldwork. The resulting ethnography is simply a 9-hour 3-part work instead of the traditional book format. It does not engage with theoretical anthropological aspects, simply observes, but this is the main aspect of anthropology.

I appreciate the method for the work too: only making narrative decisions at the point of editing. It's simple and effective.



## Week 2 Homework Task



Artwork selected: *Dilecto Meo (My Beloved)*, 2024

What processes were used to conceive it and test it?

- ★ Conceive - for identity class, his identity as a gay man
- ★ Test - tried different combinations of subject and material while within the confines of the general idea. A lot of drawing beforehand, testing the colours and mediums on the offcuts to make sure they all worked. Looks better w/ three people. "queer utopia" as existing outside the bounds of normative hetero structures.

Describe its formal, material and conceptual parts and how they relate to each other (formal means how it was presented, material means what it was made out of, conceptual means the ideas behind it)

- ★ Formal - presented on a wall at eye height, nothing else on the wall. In the shape of altar piece
- ★ Material - watercolour pencils on midtone board and actual watercolours in the background
- ★ Conceptual - queer utopia, remove the authority of god, centering your own lived experiences. You are your own saviour, with the two angels on either side. Latin writing about devotion to your partner over god.
- ★ Relation - shape of the board as religious iconography

How do its materials also exist in the world outside of art?

- ★ Specific type of wood which is used for art pieces, in a wider context wood is used for friggins, everything.
- ★ Altarpiece typically use a specific type of wood coated in gesso, here the wood has been left to show through.
- ★ Jesus was a carpenter
- ★ Watercolour as a more childish media, used by children and old people
- ★ Nails keeping it in the wall which have been left exposed which speaks to the unfiltered nature of human experience

what interested your partner as the maker of this artwork, and, what were they less concerned with? (it can be helpful to also ask them why they were interested in what they were interested!)

- ★ Interested in drawing people - more interesting than still life, contain multitudes, you can express a lot in how you draw someone vs how they come off in real life
- ★ Less concerned w/ the background
- ★ Would've gone further w/ the religion if given more time - personal experiences w/ religion integral and easy to draw on, fit with the broader themes of devotion (god as total devotion but what is u could be more devoted to someone)

Did anything surprise you about what they said? if so, let them know this.

- ★ I've seen the work before but wasn't aware of the context of the altarpiece or how it is traditionally prepared/made

Using the notes you have been given as a reference point develop a **methodological limit** that you might employ on a future creative project - designed by you to experiment with your process of thinking.

Limits based on how I did this work:

- ★ A limit of experience: "write what you know" (Mark Twain).
- ★ Limit artistic engagement to one subject or relationship. For example, here it would be limited to the relationship between queer utopia and christian religious practice.
- ★ An interesting limit to experiment with in the context of this work; limiting the explicit symbolism; how can you get the same message across to people who aren't going to look at the work. Like *The Inextinguishable Fire* (1969), as mentioned in Jim's talk.



Week 2 Reading: [Follow This Man Out of the New Museum](#), Ryan Wong, 2015

*Eventually they introduced me to the people i immediately recognised as the people who would take me out anyway*, Luke Willis Thompson, 2015

List some of the limits or choices he made arriving at the particular form of this art work. Can you imagine ways these limits extended the artwork's meaning or served to give it a particular focus? How would the artwork have been different if he'd made different choices?

There is a limit in action. The work is made up of the single, drawn out action of leading the audience/followers/pursuers through the city. The simplicity of this allows for a greater variety of interpretations from the audience; they have the time/space to notice where they are, to contemplate who they're following, why they're following, etc. The lack of information apart from the title makes the audience work for it, to come up with their own meanings or guesses as to what was intended.

There is a definite choice in having the work take place outside the museum, to lead the audience off museum premises, into the largely less safe, less explicitly art exhibition setting. This challenges the audience to stay with the performer, makes them try to make the most of the experience especially in grasping the meaning of the piece as detailed above.

A definite limit Willis Thompson had was his own knowledge of the city due to being an outsider. To 'fix' this, he consulted Tobi Haslett, as well as the rest of the performers in creating the best routes for the conceptual background of the piece. This in turn limited Luke's ownership of the work, but also makes the work more accurate to local's experiences of NYC.

The creators specifically chose to use black performers, as their decided concept/theoretical implications: the work is an "agonizingly visible, black, male body being subjugated to something strange". This choice feeds into my first comment about the audience being told very little. It's a challenge/mind game for audiences to decide what to think: overthink the use of race, or obliquely ignore it. The evocation of the city also furthers this choice/context to the work, as they walk to/through places specifically chosen for their relation to race within NYC. Aside from this, as the audience you also ponder the experience of black people simply living in the city; from your strange following of a black man that would be insane outside of an art context, to the police presence that carries a heavy history.

Any changes to the artwork would change interpretation by audiences. Being served meanings on a platter may reduce the effectiveness of their points. However, I do not think you could change this to be more vague without it losing meaning. The limits here balance out the ideas that would otherwise potentially come across as heavy-handed.

## Week 2 Reflection

I really resonated with limits as methodology. Having rules as deeming what content/processes are fixed allows for greater creativity in the parts that are changeable; you're not worrying about every part of the work.

I also think this is a really good method for creating series', as it gives works a continuous look or theme whilst still experimenting and getting different outcomes. This relates to the zines I've made recently. I had a set process in how I curated all the elements (text, image), and how I processed them (scanning, thresholding), allowing me to simply play around with these simplified elements within software to create something. (See examples below.)



These more experimental outcomes are something I need to create opportunities for in my practice. Currently (apart from these zines), I generally have an idea and work to execute it.

I agree that the methods used contribute to meaning, and therefore the selection of methods/processes is an integral part to making work that conveys your chosen message. Limits help clarify these meanings/concepts to make sure the message is conveyed as best as possible. It is for these reasons, as well as the ability to condense my creativity into certain parts of the process, that I think this methodology would work well for me and my practice.



# JAMES COUSINS:

relationship:

self-referentiality  
self-criticality  
positionality  
medium as conceptual practice

operate together

external references/context

political/cultural space that a medium exists in.

eg. landscape of Music in NYC.

reading:

- Painting as Conceptual practice.

- assumed doctrine of universalism

- canonisation of Western art production

art as life

v.

art as art

based:

revolutionary  
participatory

apolitical  
socially distant

Conceptual  
vs. Formal.

socially immersed  
conceptual-ethical

aesthetic/non-ethical  
medium based

creating effects.

dematerialised.

truth to materials, <sup>removal</sup> ~~presence~~ of the hand → using processes.  
minimalism/post minimalism: now a passive act.

Stencils: abstraction.

non compositional strategies. the grid.  
non agency of the artist

Tomma Abts: Fewe (2006)

residual effects/defects when removed. Outside of process.

stencil, painting, removal of the stencil to make the work.

ready made: gesso on canvas. for the gallery space.

vision as object of the work. illusion of depth when up close vice versa

symbolic grammar: Robert Ryman: Sketched drawing  
activating effects through the process. (1963)

JAMES COUSINS.

painting as model: way of activating/understanding  
paradigm. Something we can't access.

sigmar polke

experimental with materiality + Symbolic grammar.

restlessness, not embracing a single ideology

↳ east german thought (?)

Painting as a tool

mapping the canvas

using rules to create work - taking yourself out of it.  
self making/self generating.

tension between precision + imprecision (paradigm) oscillation.

↳ stencil allows for this to occur.

Stencil insists on itself within the work.

Patterns as rationale for putting down paint

both repels + attracts the eye

R.H. Quaytman

Paintings as poetry, group presented as a book.

RH& Lamb, Chapter 12 (2008).

Painting itself or not is the medium

Constructing models + photography for the image.

transmission

Apparatus as Phenomena.

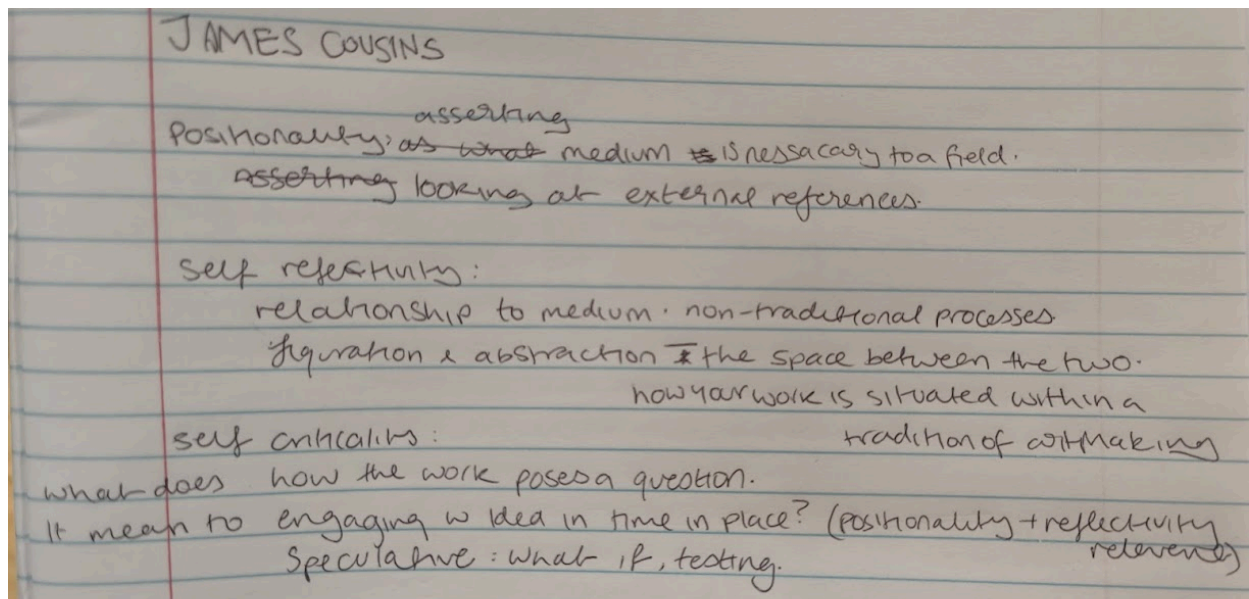
Symbolic grammar:

how the artwork  
is interpreted

(language of how  
it's read).

Self criticality.





### Week 3 Reading

"The only thing that counts is the artist's conceptual project. The choice of a particular medium only has meaning inasmuch as it relates to a strategic gain within the overall project." OR "The enormous potential of what art can do as *art* only emerges when art deals with the laws, limits and history of a specific medium."

"Any art that defines itself solely in terms of content, and not in terms of its medium-specific form, becomes the kind of issue-related specialty art that critics and curators love, because it always comes with ready-made categories to file it under."

Joseph Kosuth: "Conceptual Art dismisses the relevance of medium-specific art practice in favour of a general and fundamental inquiry into the nature of art - in whatever medium."

"After Conceptual Art, the practical basis and the historical horizon for the production of all art is set by the 'post-medium-condition'."

"If an object ... no longer qualifies as art on the basis of recognisable material properties, then in the end it is the museums or the market that determine whether it is art or not."  
 [subjugation within that]

"Only a form of art that through conceptual gestures articulates a critical position with regard to the institution of art is capable of resisting the historical devaluation of artistic media and the subjugation of production to the laws of the art-system."

"O'Doherty ... [describes] the staging of the conceptual gesture as a material practice that opens up history as a dynamic field for action."

Painting as a practice can take strength precisely from the fact that by way of immanent dialogue with its own history and conditions as a medium it arrives at a (situative strategic) self justification within a more widely-spread conceptual horizon.

More relevant to understanding the classwork:

"Bois describes the 'strategic model' in painting as the well-considered location of a work within a network of references." [aka within a field]

"For Bois painting is essentially conceptual when it self-referentially and self-critically addresses its material qualities as well as the symbolic grammar of its own formal language."

### Week 3 Homework Task

Jenny Holzer PROTECT ME FROM WHAT I WANT



Influential to my practice:

- ★ Use of words within other works
- ★ Types of statements/tones in my own written works
- ★ Themes interest and influence me
- ★ Have used some of her statements in collage/other works.

Definitions/aspects to help analysis:

SELF-REFERENTIALITY:

- ★ Medium is the message/the work's relationship with the medium.
- ★ The work only works/conveys its message because of the choice of medium.
- ★ Refers to itself as a work of in specific medium: "well-considered location of a work within a network of [external] references."

SELF-CRITICALITY:

- ★ Critiques the work's place within historical context/traditions through medium.
- ★ What does it mean for the work to be engaging with an idea in a certain time and place?
- ★ What question does the work pose?
- ★ What 'what-if' is the work testing?

MATERIAL QUALITIES:

- ★ Distinctive aspects of how the medium is used/works.

FORMAL LANGUAGE:

- ★ Symbolic grammar.
- ★ The language through which the audience reads the work.



*How does the self-referentiality employed in the artist's work address the work's material qualities? How does the self-referentiality employed in the artist's work address its own formal language? How does the self-criticality in the artist's work address its material qualities? How does the self-criticality employed in the artist's work address its own formal language?*

Jenny Holzer's work above is one of her [cast bronze plaques](#) (1980-82). A variety of the plaques in this series are installed across many places (clubs, universities, etc.), locating them in an environment where they can be encountered naturally.

The medium chosen is bronze, traditionally used in public sculpture due to its comparatively cheap cost and durability. The form that the bronze takes is a plaque, also traditionally used publicly, though more widely so than for sculptures. They can advertise businesses/services, commemorate people or events, inform the public about locations/buildings, or be used as awards. The bronze plaque has been used for generations and so invoke a sense of authority and tradition. The clear-to-read often serif fonts (as seen in Holzer's work here) further emphasise this.

The medium is the message here: plaques are functional and Holzer uses them for their function of presenting a message. Through their use, she brings an authoritative, traditionally respected voice to an incredibly personal statement. Bringing the personal into the public sphere is jarring to the viewer. The effect of the work would be mostly negated if presented in other ways, which is evident in Holzer's other experimentations with the same statements.

The informative nature of the plaque draws attention to the work's nature as a message 'spoken' directly to the viewer, exemplified and unsettled in the use of personal pronouns: the message is coming from *someone* to you. There is no longer a detachment, it draws the audience in, prompting a personal contemplation of what they are being asked to do. Who put this here? What do they want? Is that worth being protected from? How would I help? This contemplation is *not* what most first think when they encounter a 'normal' plaque outside, but the who and the why are always important to critically engaging in our world.

Holzer operates in the same oversaturated world that Barbra Kruger did, one filled with messages from all sides; advertisements, news, etc. Instead of Kruger's appropriation of the aggressive look of the advertisement, Holzer uses the small, unassuming plaque to surprise the viewer into disrupting their usual blocking-out of the constant barrage of messages in order to be heard.

On the other hand, the work also critiques the nature of the plaque. The most basic use of a plaque I can think of is to describe a statue (also often made of bronze) - something that is most often of a white man who died at least a century ago. By using this form, Holzer questions what we're commemorating and who decided what we should be commemorating. It draws our attention to the authority we lend to things, simply because they have been a convention for a long time. She then subverts the expectation by using these conventions for her own not-man, not-dead, not-last-century means.

### Week 3 Reflection

This was quite possibly the least interesting or relevant talks to my practice overall. It was incredibly specific to a specific type of art making, and I do not see how it could be applied to other practices. It could be slightly helpful if the message were presented clearer, with greater specificity to definitions. Everyone else I discussed with agreed on this last point.

I also believe I am at odds with the beliefs James presented.

In terms of formal vs. concept; I believe the formal aspects of art are there to communicate the conceptual. The focus on either or is boring to me. Art as art is boring. Art to me is life, and life is art; which is one of the things that makes it interesting/makes me want to engage further with it.

I do also believe art has a responsibility to society, either to contribute to it, reflect on it, etc. (this probably comes from my belief that art as life is inherently more interesting). Works that delve solely into themselves like those presented here mean almost nothing to me, and come across self-absorbed, selfish, and inaccessible to all who have not learnt specific art history/theory. Not that all art needs to be accessible to everyone, but these seem to be solely based on that inaccessibility, which I can't fully respect.



## PLACE - BASED ARTISTIC PRACTICE

Alex Monteith

who am I in a place? Who are others in a place?  
aim to get people out into place to recognise  
significance in their work


personal connection to land: Castlederg - most bombed  
town in Northern Ireland. left in the 1980s.  
emotionally invested + impacted.

- work: chapter & verse (video work) 2012 (?)  
returned to place & changes from  
trouble to peace + how that's told.
- questions of who has power, state power,

ethics of being in place. what does it mean to be  
in NZ / from NZ.

Contextual engagement: artistic intervention directly  
explores the social/cultural/historical contexts of a  
specific location. Creates meaningful dialogues  
with local environments & communities.

relational aesthetics + spatial practice art that  
promises humans' experiences with a place. how  
people perceive + interact w a place.



Participatory + Collaborative methodology:  
Collaboration w local processes/contexts,  
working alongside communities.

## PLACE-BASED PRACTICE

antwo relevant  
again.

local empowerment: amplifying local experiences.  
Spatial consciousness: challenging dominant narratives  
collaborative knowledge production

Processes:

Situated research: in-depth, immersive engagement  
ethnographic methods, archival investigation  
Spatial intervention: expanding experience through  
artistic intervention.

Dialogical Engagement: platforming dialogue +  
collaborative meaning-making,  
bridging art with community.

that video  
part piece is  
family history.

②

Bridget Riewert: like a rock against the tide (2021)  
(on circuit) Journey of Takimu Waka

He Kapunga Oneone - further relevant work + research

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Decolonising methodologies (2012)

reclaiming geographical narratives.

Challenges colonial cartographical representations.

embodied spatial relationships.

her broader practice.

knowledge's connection with territories + cultural  
experiences.

knowledge as  
inter-relational  
ancient.

challenging representational hegemonies

research as a site of struggle, thanks to colonial  
historical practice.



## PLACE-BASED PRACTICE

AWA - artists for water action

continuous project/engagement w subject

giving a voice & stage to the river using traditional practices. Comparison to show impact on environment + local knowledges. (fishing)

Paramnua men - abua of sediment 2020.  
Upper catchment

Challenges w water as a medium when it's full of sediment  
can't see the weaving or anything

Challenges working in the field: weather, too.  
have to adapt approaches + even genres.

Storytelling  
Power of  
audio.

Pacing, emotion, etc

Dr. Marie Sheehan (hydrophone)  
- Audio recording + mixing/making/composing.  
- Audio portraits PhD.

Care for audience in writing your positionality, what has affected how you're approaching this.  
how your background shapes your knowledge, not just your identity.

Relevant Anthropological ideas/topics written in the margins on the second photo above:  
(info from Anthro 110)

Different types of knowledge production

- ★ There are a variety of types of knowledge/ways of knowing: Intellectual (facts), learned (taught to us), inherited (things like recipes), physical (tangible things), embodied and intuited knowledge.
- ★ Knowledge is built on the validated knowledge of previous generations. However, what is validated depends on culture and values, and discipline. Eg. traditional, inherited knowledges may not be deemed valid by institutions such as a university.



### Ethnographic methods

- ★ Ethnographic fieldwork has been a key aspect of modern anthropological research since Bronislaw Malinowski set this standard in 1914 with his studies in New Guinea.
- ★ This involves engaging with the everyday lives of participants and taking into account their perspectives rather than simply your own.

### Knowledge as an inter-relational concept (people & land)

- ★ Marilyn Strathern states that what someone knows “is a matter of how they know it in relationship to another person.”
- ★ Arguing with anthropology: a skeptical introduction to theories of gift exchange by Karen Sykes: “anthropologists recognise that knowledge is relative to social relationships that contribute and concentrate social facts.” This is to say our knowledge is a collection of agreed-upon ideas as a community/culture. What we agree upon changes depending on culture & history & values.

*Album* (2020) by Gavin Hipkins <https://www.circuit.org.nz/work/album-excerpt>



This work is relevant to the mentioned process of situated research, specifically archival investigation, as well as the importance of place. In previous study I made work based on the concept of the archive/family history.

*Album* follows the letter of a NZ soldier in England sent home during WW1, alternating footage between London's Royal Parks and of images taken by the soldier during wartime. The importance of place can be seen through on-site filming from the place the letter was sent. It also prompts thoughts of how and why people come to be in different places, how the war affected people even as far away as New Zealand. It is a simple intervention between the archive and place and is powerful in its simplicity.

### Week 4 Readings

I actually mentioned positionality in my writing for week 1, see above.

1 (Clint Smith, NYU Reads, *How the Word Is Passed*, 2023-24)

- ★ Important as it has an effect on how research is conducted and the conclusions reached
- ★ Important to inform others so they can understand where you're coming from
- ★ Understanding how your social locations interact with history and the power dynamics present as a result of that

- ★ Provides a frame of critical thinking for both researcher and reader

Could lead people to validate/discard peoples research based on their own biases? It has the potential to be misused by bigots potentially reading.

This is leaning towards intersectionality, a critical theory used in anthropology.

- ★ Critical theories are things that anthropologists use to “denormalise the routine” of what is thought (universal truths), and allows understanding of the processes of power in our own societies via acknowledging the historical & cultural contexts surrounding issues.
- ★ Intersectionality itself is a contemporary critical theory. The term describes how the multiple aspects of an individual’s identity affect their experiences in a variety of different situations. Eg. a white man and a black woman will have different experiences if put in the exact same situation, due to the power structures of society.
- ★ It reveals the ideologies that underpin society through who is put into categories of inclusion/privilege and exclusion/oppression.

## 2 (Sarah Homan, 2023)

- ★ Your positionality can be what prompts your research/views you bring to work
- ★ Positionality statements are an aspect of a decolonising approach to work
- ★ Your combined identities [intersectionality] shape how we engage with society and the world
- ★ It is sharing what shapes your work
- ★ It is sharing your values: simply having a positionality statement is indicative of ethical research practices
- ★ It is decentering yourself as the ‘normal’ and acknowledging privilege.
  - Examining cultural assumptions is also an anthropological idea. Good anthropological research can only be done once ethnocentric notions have been put aside (as much as possible).
- ★ “if scholars do not position themselves, I must somehow position them myself. By ignoring the difference their positionality makes, these scholars become complicit in colonising mainstream knowledges” - Yvonne Te Ruki-Rangi-o-Tangaroa Underhill-Sem
- ★ “What are my different social identities and how significant is each identity to my work? What experiences do I have? How have they shaped who I am professionally? In what discipline did I train? What role did my discipline play in establishing dominant worldviews? What role do I play in this work? In what ways do I challenge or divest from some of these practices? Why or why not? What are my values and what do I hope to achieve through my work?”

## 3 (Alcoff)

No new relevant information

## 4 (Robyn Byers)

- ★ Showing others you are aware of the influences on you from your experiences
- ★ Identifying parts of your positionality that are relevant to your work

## Week 4 Homework Task

Brainstorming the aspects of positionality you might like to bring to bear, and that influence your perspective.

- ★ transgender
- ★ gay/bisexual
- ★ Pretty upper-middle class, recent/my parents' effort
- ★ Catholic
- ★ Recent-ish history of immigration may have impacted family & my upbringing
- ★ Good quality schooling, good uni grades, doing a conjoint degree
- ★ Slightly disabled- genetic chronic pain condition
- ★ Never had a job
- ★ Have been doing history, etc. at school & uni: more experience writing and researching in comparison to some Elam students

## My positionality statement

I, Zach (he/him) come to my work as a Pakeha of Irish immigrant descent, raised catholic in an upper middle class household and maintain both those aspects today. I have had a high quality education, and am working towards finishing a BA/BFA conjoint degree. With this, I have a history of excellence in writing heavy subjects, which affects my approach to research and general approach to art making. I am a transgender, bisexual guy and have been out about it for six years now, and so have experiences as such, including being out as transgender at an all girls high school. I bring this aspect of my identity, and my lived experience from it to inform much of my work. I am also very minorly disabled with fibromyalgia, but acknowledge that it does not affect my quality of life at the moment as much as other disabled people may be. All of these identities have no doubt affected my experiences, and therefore also my approach in both life and art making. I recognise the privileges afforded to me and the systems that allow them. I guide my research and art-making with an intersectional approach, and always value listening to the lived experiences of others, especially if different to my own.



## Week 4 Reflection

I loved Alex's lecture, and how she outlined the process she used in her practice. While I don't think place itself is completely relevant to how I want to shape my practice, some of the methods she uses within that framework are definitely relevant. For example, contextual engagement is already a big part of what I base my artmaking off. Situated research, and dialogical engagement are not currently parts of my methods but I believe would be very cool to work towards using in the future.

The idea of challenging representational hegemonies, especially within research, is an important idea, one that has been coming up in the past year or so of my studies (History 107, Anthropology 101, now FA320). I have become incredibly aware of the colonial, western institution that academics and research is embedded in.

In terms of positionality statements, I think it's always nice to learn a bit about the artist whose work you're engaging with. However, I don't think the excessive size of the ones we wrote are particularly applicable to an art context. I feel like about three lines relevant to the work or exhibition and context does the job more concisely, allowing more opacity to the personal life of the artist, as well as allowing more focus to be left on what the work itself is doing, rather than simply who made it.

## QUOTATION AS METHODOLOGY: GAVIN HIPKINS RE/QUOTATION

quotation in analysis enables agency.  
(producing self critical) § 2

methodology = process.  
process can help with  
analysis (examination  
for explanation &  
interpretation).

### Appropriation:

act of appropriating, borrowing  
without citation.

eg. Photos generation

contextualisation:  
socialise an idea  
to self & others.

### Quotation

group of words taken & repeated by  
someone other than the original author.

often properly cited.

there are different degrees of  
quotation or reference, how  
over they are.

### Requotation

quoting again & again.

Richard Prince Jeff Coons

Copyright: artists sue artists over

Perceived appropriation: often thrown out

Headlands exhibition: Thinking through NZ Art (1992)

Contemporary art at the time.

Where do Māori & Pakeha culture intersect

10%  
shifting intent  
or look =  
original.

A view in Dusky Bay, NZ (1773)

William Hodges - Cook's official artist. Maps, sketches.  
Picturesque, romantic sublime, pictorial/painting conventions  
first western iconography

Rangihoua Panaho: "borrowings have become part of our  
culture" history of pakeha colonisation, control.



art history blog - quoted other modernists.  
Forfeather of NZ modernist painting. Chastised his way. believed in painting to communicate truth.

## QUOTATION AS METHODOLOGY

Race Relations (1986) Emily  
references, influences. In work: written, canon, etc.  
citing sources.

Here I give thanks to Mondrian (1961) Colin McCahon  
explicit mention of prev. artists.

Gordon Walters Te Whiti (1964)

denial of cultural dimension to koru paintings  
to Walters, it's just a motif. to Maori it has  
deeper meanings & significance.  
"cultural ~~responsibility~~ sensitivity is required in it's appropriation"  
- Panaho.

Reputation: koro the baby good-bye (the  
marquette) (1997) Michael Parekowhai  
context of 1990s, 'cultural safety'  
practice of reworking known things as art  
response to Walters' appropriation, reclaiming.

The indefinite article (1990) Parekowhai  
refers to McCahon Gate III (1970)  
sculptural, akorua letters made real.  
he/she shifting the context when you  
understand the Maori definition.  
you have to know things to get references.

Scared McCahon → Boyam I scared eh! (1997)  
Peter Robinson  
Koru fingerprint



## QUOTATION AS METHODOLOGY

Wairu Bridge Pillar ki Uta (2020) Natile Robinson

~~823/221~~ The prophets (Ngā poropiri) (2001)

Te Waihi Road (1998)

Te Kōwhiri Road (1998) - multiple accidental exposures.

Waterfall in Dusky Bay with Maori canoe 1976

William Hodges

↳ Mnetathoms passage, Tamaka Dusky sound (2014)  
finding the places Hodges painted <sup>mark</sup>  
less literal negotiation <sup>adams</sup>  
reflecting on colonial history.

from POV of water taking photos.

City of Tomorrow (2017) Gavin Hipkins.

↳ title from text of architect (same title).

borrowing from the past, mapping text onto present (landscapes)  
quoting architect's work, quoting an aesthetic.  
writings <sup>contrast</sup> vs. realisation of project (brutalist)  
coming together into this 2017 work.

↳ recontextualising to suit self.

The Precinct (2018) Hipkins. for APT.

site specific - both specific building & colonial history  
research relevant literature both fiction & non-fiction.

The Deep (2022) Hipkins.

rephotography of others' images.  
(Nat. geo. collections).

mesminism / contemporary capitalism.

## Week 5 Homework Task

### 1. Text quotation

Selection from Richard Siken's *A Primer For The Small Weird Loves*:

1

The blond boy in the red trunks is holding your head underwater  
because he is trying to kill you,  
and you deserve it, you do, and you know this,  
and you are ready to die in this swimming pool  
because you wanted to touch his hands and lips and this means  
your life is over anyway.  
You're in the eighth grade. You know these things.

Why select this part of this text?

This, and many of Siken's other works are important to me as they embody a certain melancholic, detached vibe that appeals to me in terms of my own experiences. I also picked this because Siken is such a skilled poet in what he chooses to portray and how he portrays it. I enjoy this text because it deals with aspects of sexuality whose feelings I can relate to as a gay man, despite not having had the specific experiences detailed in it. My interest in the writing reflects my interest in queer literature/poetry, and by extension how I value the queer community for both community reasons, as well as a place that I can always find inspiration.

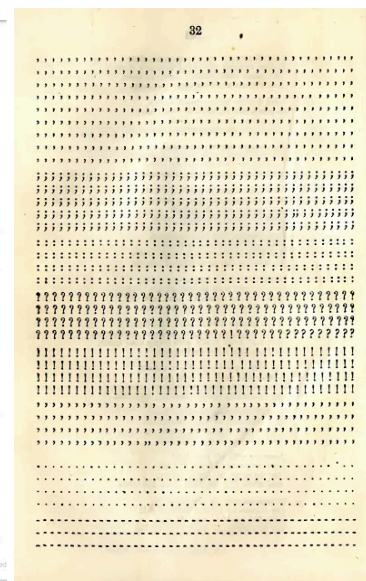
I picked this section of Siken's poem as it feels liminal, it exists in the peace of floating in a swimming pool and the danger of being held under. The quick acceptance of fate is also a peaceful in-between of experience that interesting feelings can emerge from.

Reshaping attempt 1: Alphabetizing.

Alphabetise and putting all the punctuation at the end. This is a method inspired by a combination of *A Pickle for the Knowing Ones* by Timothy Dexter and Sheila Heti's *Alphabetic Diaries* (from Jim's lecture). *Alphabetic Diaries* (over page, left), is a book made up of alphabetized sentences from Heti's diaries. Dexter's book was originally published in 1802 with no punctuation, written incredibly strangely, even for the time. People complained about the lack of punctuation (blaming that for difficulty in parsing the text), in response he put pages of punctuation at the end and told readers to "peper and solt it as they plese". See page without punctuation (over page, middle) and with punctuation (over page, right).

not dating. A man must part company with the inferior and the superficial. A man of discretion. A man to love. A man who could physically kill me in under a minute is a man who is easy to sleep beside. A man who goes out in the world and gets what he wants for himself. A man who I could have in the centre of my life, even a child, and my family could fit themselves into the healthiness and happiness of that. A man who would be mine. A manic feeling yesterday made me almost rent out that apartment in New York, but I won't—it's not yet time for that. A mild form of hysteria, always. A moment after seeing him, a big lurch went through my stomach, and I tried not to look at him as we talked. A new relation to life. A new relationship, born from the ashes of the old and dead one. A new tone, a new ringtone. A nice kind of animal impulse to want to sit near a tree, just because it's a tree, and we continued to drink, from the blue goblet, the vodka and orange juice that Tom had squeezed with his bare hands. A person's life should not be so filled up that a surprise friend can't come in, but that doesn't mean they have to become your new best friend. A person's loyalty should always be to their partner, but I talked more than I wanted to or intended to about Pavel. A phone call from him yesterday—a surprise. A place I partly crave to settle into, but don't. A playfulness, a sense of life being without consequence, that voracious sexuality that wants to eat things

Frinds hear me 2 granadears goss up in 20 days fourder frinds I will tell the A tipe of man kind what is that 35 or 30 years gone A town caled Noubry all won the Yomited states Noubry peopel kept to gether quiet till the Larned groed strong the farmers was 12 out of 20 they wanted to have the officers in the Contry the Eaned in the see port wanted to have them there geering A Rose groued warme fite thay wood in Law thay went the Jarel Cort to be sot of finely thay go there Eands Answered the see port caled Newbury Port 600 Bakers of Land out of thirty thousand Bakers of good Land so much for mad peopel of Larning makes them mad if thay had kept to gether they wood have bin the sekent town in this stat A bout halfe of boston Now men mad to be in offess it hurts the peopel of Large Like Caring the Innegent Lam to the slarter Now it would done to dewide the North from the south all won what I have Leade down but now keep to gether it is Like man and wifs in trone Love Now gaving death in the grander you will sous the glory I say keep to gether dont brak the Chane Renoue brotherle Love Never fade Like my box in my garding be one grat family give way to one A Nother thous changes is the tide his warter & Loue warte hie tids & Loue tids for my part I have Liked all the kings all three all our broken marchants cant have beaths of proffett gone and till the ground gone to work is all that has bin to Coleage gone with slippers and promis to pay and Never pay only with A Lye I gess 4 fiths is Coleage Lant or devel Lant or pretended to be onnest free mmissions but are to the Contry for give me for gossing I hope it is Not so the Leaned is for Leovs & Lidel fishes moses was but A man and Aaron thay had sum devel like my selfe man is the same give him power I say the Cloak Cukement msters the worst of cheats we hant got ony N Port wee are Noted to be the first in the North sabel Day is Not halfe A Nuf Night meateus it maks work for the Docters and Nusos Caaching Could but them Lives breed fast to mak up for them that dies poor creators I pittey them so preast Riden it is wickard to leave poor sols in to the grave all our minesters are imported Very good men foul of Love of Crist I keep them A mit Amen at present.



and and and and and anyway are because because blond boy deserve die  
do hands he head his holding in in is is it kill know life lips means over  
pool ready red swimming the the this this this to to to touch trunks trying  
underwater wanted you you you you you your your ,,, , .

Alongside the above processes, I changed the font from Arial pt. 11 to Times New Roman pt. 15. This was just to give the work a more traditional, booklike feeling that the actual words of the text would contrast with. The size of the font differentiates it from the rest of the writing on this page.

In *Alphabetic Diaries* the deprioritisation of narrative presents straightforward images/statements, giving a montage effect in the reader's mind. Here, as I alphabetized by word and not sentence, the whole text becomes one new image/scenario. Like with *Alphabetic Diaries*, applying this process also provides a distance from the source material that can reveal patterns of thought. The amount of repetition shows a fixation on using words, such as 'you', 'this', and 'and'.

I was entertained by how semi-logical sentences can be picked out: 'because blond boy deserve die', 'hands he head his holding in', and 'wanted you you you'. This last sentence is very apt I feel. The repetition and trailing off is desperate in the way that the original is accepting; two different feelings over the same idea, expressed by the same words.



The blond boy  
in the red trunks is  
holding your head under  
water  
because he is trying  
to kill you  
and you deserve it      you do      and you know this  
and you are ready  
to die in  
this swimming pool  
because you wanted to  
touch his hands      and lips  
and this  
means  
your life is over  
anyway.

I chose to emphasise the two 'and' statements, pushing them furthest out to the right, as I feel like these are sort of the epitome of this selection from the poem: acceptance of painful things. I think the 'your life is over / anyway.' is also powerful. Putting the 'anyway' on its own line means that it can be read with everything else, or as its own statement, implying that the reader should move on.

Reshaping attempt 3:  
Experimenting with font type and size, see over page.

INFLAMMATORY ESSAYS 3

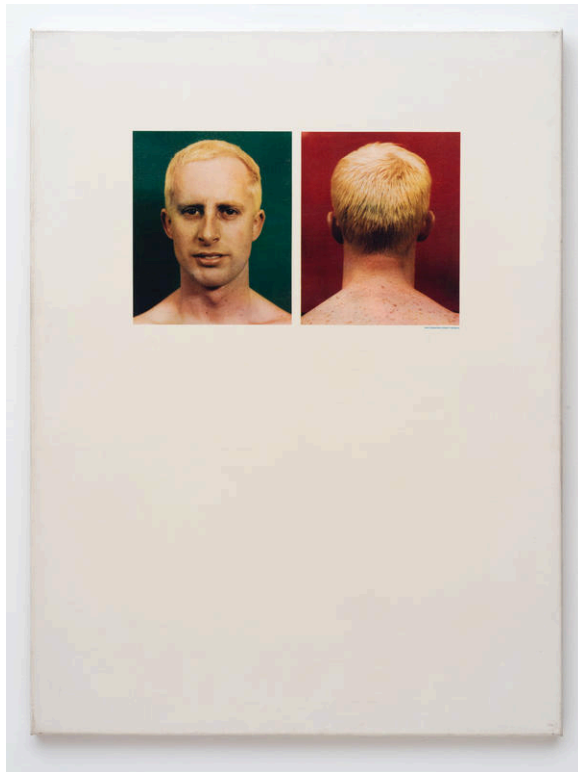
MONDAY, SOMEONE DIED BECAUSE HE HURT ME AND I CUT HIM WITHOUT THINKING. TUESDAY, SOME ANIMAL DIED BECAUSE HE WAS TOO DANGEROUS TO BE FREE. WEDNESDAY, A THIEF DIED SO EVERYONE WILL KNOW TO RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY. THURSDAY, SOME POLITICO DIED BECAUSE HIS IDEAS WERE CRAZY AND TOO CONTAGIOUS. FRIDAY, SOME RAPIST DIED BECAUSE HE LEFT HIS VICTIM WISHING SHE WAS DEAD. HE HAD TO DIE WISHING HE WAS ALIVE. SATURDAY, I KILLED A CONDEMNED MAN SO NO ONE ELSE WOULD GET BLOOD ON HIS HANDS. SUNDAY, I RESTED. MONDAY, SIX PEOPLE JUMPED ME SO I CUT THEM WITHOUT THINKING.

**1 THE BLOND BOY IN THE RED TRUNKS IS HOLDING YOUR HEAD UNDERWATER BECAUSE HE IS TRYING TO KILL YOU, AND YOU DESERVE IT, YOU DO, AND YOU KNOW THIS, AND YOU ARE READY TO DIE IN THIS SWIMMING POOL BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO TOUCH HIS HANDS AND LIPS AND THIS MEANS YOUR LIFE IS OVER ANYWAY.**

The bold uppercase gives the words an intense, almost grating weight/attention to them. It negates the peaceful feeling the original text had, imbuing it with a sense of urgency. The violence of the action previously not thought about in much detail is brought to the forefront. The bold makes the letters run together in some places, but the 28 pt. font size makes it so the text is big enough to be legible. It takes over the reader's vision: reading this document at 100% zoom, if you have the text in front of you, nothing else on the doc can be seen. It's overwhelming, which can recreate the effect of drowning as described in the text. I also changed the paragraph layout to meet at both sides, instead of being set to the right. I like this look for creating a brutalistic block of text, which further emphasises the violence present in the text.

Overall I like this attempt best, the alphabetized attempt second best and the changed line breaks attempt least. This is judged both in terms of how well each transmits themes, as well as my own personal preference.

## 2. Art quotation.



*Self Portraits (Apple Sees Red on Green)*  
(1962) Billy Apple.

“[The work] exemplifies the artist's individual manifestation of Pop Art that drew on the language of advertising to convey his own rebranding. Apple was blurring the distinctions between art and life, as much as people and products or commodities. The work is from a series of 12 near-identical canvases that incorporate colour photographs of Apple that had been taken by Robert Freeman. With this work Apple portrays himself as mug-shot, pin-up and product - heralding a new commodity brand straight off the production line. This was one of a number of works conveying his re-invented self-identity, the new Billy Apple brand that was included in the same exhibition.” From [Contemporary Art Society](#).

I chose this work because of how visually/graphically striking it is. The ideas behind it also appeal to me: identity as something produced, and the artist as a product. First looking at it, I didn't get these themes, though I did understand the context of them being Billy Apple works, and what that could no doubt entail; something about commercialisation, identity, etc. The colour choice and saturation of the images draws the eye in, and the emptiness of the canvas makes you curious/want to investigate further. The white empty canvas made me think of an A4 piece of paper- which goes along with the mugshot front/back nature of the photographs. The mugshot gives the viewer information to identify Apple. Though it provokes little identifiable emotional response, it makes me want to keep looking at it, really inspect the images presented.

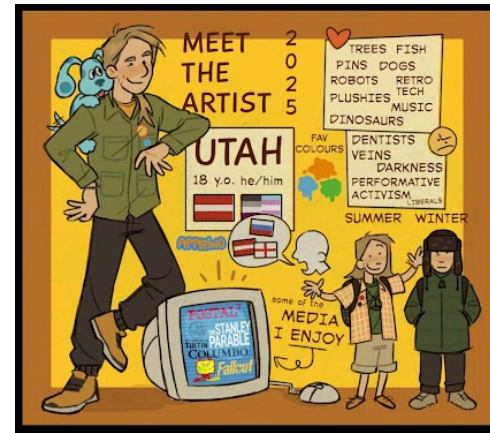
My proposed quotation of the artwork would be a recreation of it with myself as the photographed subject, using this format to respond to the pressures on artists in today's day and age. Though presenting yourself as an artist has no doubt always been a thing, today there is incredible pressure to have a brand identity as an artist: a distinct art style, a constantly-updating social media presence, an online shop, etc. As [Starkwhite Gallery](#) states, Apple's work “draw[s] attention to the art system and highlight[s] the artist's social networks.” I wish to draw upon that precedent for this proposed work.

The canvas shape would have to be changed to a square or elongated rectangle to mimic either an instagram post or the shape of a phone, though no symbols relating to either thing would be used. The shape would do the work in provoking that thought.



The image displays three hand-drawn posters for a series called "MEET THE ARTIST".

- Poster 1 (Left):** Features a man with blue hair and a black jacket. Text includes: "MEET THE ARTIST", "they/them", "24y/o RADIOGRAPHER", "AUSTRALIAN + VIET", "bffs: ED, LUCY", "CHELSEA", "red the SONIC THE HEROES TRINITY", "MILO", and a list of avatars at the bottom.
- Poster 2 (Middle):** Features a woman with green hair sitting on a couch. Text includes: "MEET THE ARTIST", "SUNĖICA", "25.9.2004", "she/her", "1979", "I LOVE: MY FRIENDS, RETRO MUSIC, CAMPY OLD MOVIES, LAGUNA BUTTER, CLOWNS, LAUNCH, FADING, COLLECTED JUNK", "I RATE: THRU BEAUTY SPARKS, PHONE CALLS, LALAK, TITTIES, SPICY FOOD, MESSY BRAIDS, CRYING BOYS, SCUMMER", "CURRENTLY: CONSPIRACY, CHALLENGE", "SUNĖICA", "PREFERS: MUSIC, JUST STAY", "MY FAVES: FOOD: LAGUNA, PIZZA, JAFFA (OHO), BROWNIE, VLOARZ: @ @ @ @ @, MOVIES: THERE'S TOO MANY, JUST COME AT MY LETTERBOY LIST, VIDEOGAMES: SILENCE, CRYSTALWING, JUST DANCE, LIFE IN PRINCE, MINECRAFT, BOATY GAMES: LARRY, DAD, DED, SERIES: THE END OF THE FARKIN' WORLD, HOW NOT TO LIVE, THE MENTALIST, LARRY WELLS, GRANNY PALMS, DOWNS, BLAKE, EYE, SUNDAY, BELANCE, SPAN, ANIMAS (D)", "MADE THESE MYSELF", "DAD PRO", "EPIK SHIRT", "MOON SUMM BANGS", "SQUATE, BY PLATLIST", "POSTAL STANLEY COWENEVER TALKING FALLOUT", "FOME OF MED I EN".
- Poster 3 (Right):** Features a man in a green jacket. Text includes: "MEET THE ARTIST", "UTAH", "18 yo. he/him", and flags for Austria, Czech Republic, and England.



Names have been something I have been interested in since I was young and read *Skullduggery Pleasant*, where names have power in the books' magic system, and they use different ones for different purposes. I also have a vested interest in names as a transgender person who has changed their name. Historically I have used the screen name Arno for my art instagram account, though I am moving towards using Zach for it now as I move towards associating my actual self and my exhibited work there. However there are questions as to whether I want everyone on the internet knowing my actual name, do they have the right to know me as a person or solely as an artist. I hope this proposed work would prompt these or similar ideas with the placement of my actual name in the title (as well as the other elements).

This would be a re-quotation, I believe? Similarly to Micheal Parekowhai using the visual language of Gordon Walters' *Te Whiti* (1964) in his *Kiss the Baby Good-bye (The Marquette)* (1997), I am using the same visuals, with my own spin on it to fit the work into a more contemporary context.

My approach to re-quoting the artwork was a positive one. I picked it because I liked the artwork. I feel like my outcome could have been more passionate, for lack of a better word, if the work I was re-quoting was something I hated where I could make something that was a direct 'screw you' sort of thing. What I proposed here is simply a re-iteration of something that's already been stated but rewritten for a contemporary audience.

I do find that I feel more of an affinity for the text quotation in task 1. Task 2 feels like it should be something that happens when it happens. Eg. finding a work in a gallery and having a reaction to it, rather than scrolling through works to find one you might want to make another work about. I am already a collector of text/quotes/poems/etc. and use them in my zinemaking practice. This is something I would like to grow in other aspects/mediums I practice in, namely video.

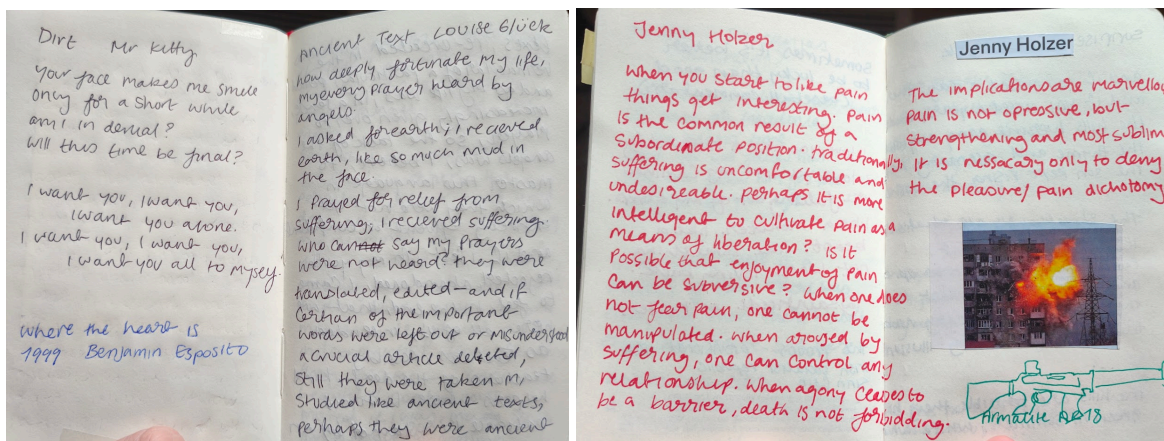
## Week 5 Reflection

I was very excited for this week's lecture & homework as appropriation/quotation is very important to my practice. While I do my own writing, I also love using other peoples'. I always try to cite my sources (quotation), however, sometimes this just makes the whole thing ugly and overall worse conceptually so they get left out (appropriation). I am aware, however, of the connotation of borrowing things from others, especially in terms of colonial history, and how me and my practice fit into that history.

Observing and reproducing the classics is a time tested way artists have been learning and practicing skills for decades- re-quotation has always been a part of art. The wealth of art history that is there to reference or be referred back to is brilliant. Though, it takes a smart idea to really make this work, especially when not using text elements. This brings to mind Jeff Koons' repaintings of classic paintings with blue orbs in them (see below). I hate these, and don't think they do anything. I bring these up because he really hasn't made any commentary on the original paintings in connection with the orb other than contrasting them with each other. He doesn't even paint these himself.



Anyway. I had Gavin for FA242 (Image, Object, and Materiality) last year, which I believe greatly shaped my practice. Before that, I had been collecting quotes (with citations, so I can find the full versions again later) and images (though less so), however, this became of greater importance to me after focusing on the archive and found elements in that class. I have filled two moleskine journals and am still collecting quotes in a third (see spreads from book two (left) and book one (right)). These have been of use in my own writing and zinemaking practice as well as for providing a starting point for other works. This collection I feel is adjacent to my research, though I keep those words in a separate book.





## Week 6 Classwork

PETER ROBINSON : KA MUA, KA MURI  
TO WALK BACKWARDS INTO THE FUTURE

art methodology is looking back at existing art practices to save time + be efficient with your own art-making.

C.D charcoal drawing (2024)

Minimalism as methodology

eg. Anne Truitt

→ art superpower  
American movement.

1960s - Present

Rory Smith

Jackie Windsor

- Presence, vitality
- logic, organisation of it is self-evident.
- clarity, clear clean forms.
- radical, challenge audience ideas of art
- socialist / democratic ~~politic~~ polemic, non-hierarchical

non-referentiality. Things are just themselves.  
anti-illusionism. You do not get lost in a non-reality -  
you "what you see is what you see" Judd.

geometric monolithic forms. awareness of self & space  
made way for installation art (art, viewer, space).

C.D. activating space, integrated with space (black ceiling)  
not exactly parallel, causality to industrial objects.  
forced perspective when walking between  
doorway seemed to be a mirror (5 objects in each space)

viewer's encounter with the work & traveling through space

Logic: opposed the suffering artist. Seriality &  
mathematics over intuitive decision making.



clarity: making intentions of the artist  
simple & clear. "less is more"

radicality: rejecting all forms of prior art, esp.  
painting. proposed "specific objects" to  
replace it (against reference, biography,  
& self-expression).  
upprecedented in the 1960s.  
same space as the viewer: equal to us  
no plinths etc.

socialist/democratic: no compositional sub/dom  
elements as seen in european art -  
'American' minimalism embodied non-  
hierarchy through symmetry, equal  
elements. blue-collar materials  
(plywood, steel, bricks, etc).

C.D logic of formal language of spiral forms. geometric.  
no plinths/bases. relatively even parts.  
aluminium material.

very masculine movement - "boys club".  
materials could be complicit w capitalism rather  
than socialist  
authoritarian rules to the movement. monolithic.

C.D biography expressed, major symbols/art stuff.  
breaking existing construction

pushing boundaries:

Michael Parekowiak

Anish Kapoor

Ana H

David Hammons

Am ONeal

obscuring identity, appropriating

a western visual language:

subversion, dismating.

embracing referentiality

expanding beyond historical

restrictionism of minimalism.

discussion

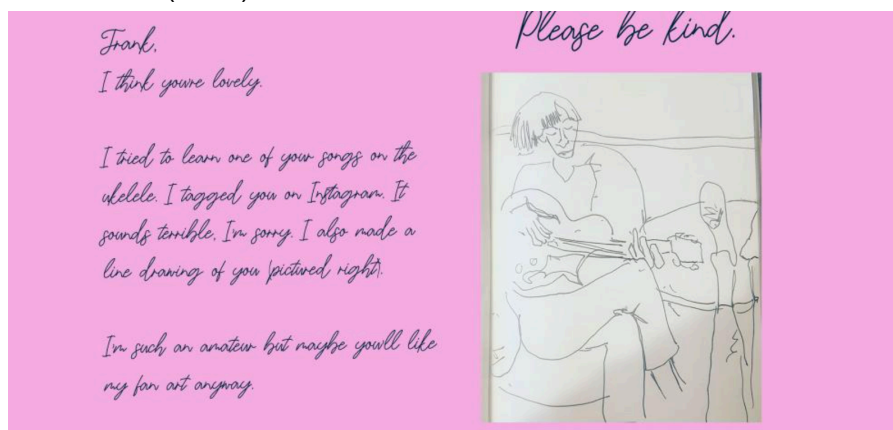
always referring to art-history, not just minimalism  
you can't be totally original, need a foundation to work on.

what you are against also provides opportunity for work.

Week 6 Homework Task  
Step A. Natasha Matila-Smith



*In the Flesh* (2017)



*Frank, Love and the apocalypse* (2020)



*Between You and Me* (2018)





*I Think You Like Me But I've Been Wrong About These Things Before* (2021)



*A List of Things That Quicken The Heart* ([2021](#))

There is very little on youtube about Natasha Matila-Smith, so I have sourced my research from articles about her work instead. Links are provided next to the titles below.

*A List of Things That Quicken The Heart* - [Video](#) description provides information.

- ★ Matila-Smith continues her exploration of the bedroom as a place of both romance and artistic production, playing with our modern ideas of intimacy & voyeurism.
- ★ The video plays with the perceived power dynamics: the subject is being filmed but is also filming back, there is participation and performance. The gaze is gazed upon; the voyeur's satisfaction denied.
- ★ The title is from French filmmaker Chris Marker's 1983 documentary *Sans Soleil*.
- ★ 'Quickening of the heart': romance of soundtrack, thrill of being watched.
- ★ "confessional text-based works that explore her personal experiences of loneliness and discomfort in the world, and at the same time how they relate to larger socio-political structures."

*In The Flesh* - [Article](#)

- ★ Obsessive quality to work. The feeling of longing to belong is more important than the character being obsessed over.
- ★ Societal expectations of intimacy, lust, romance & how one puts these expectations on oneself.

*Innermost desires expressed in art at Hagley Park* - [Article](#)

- ★ Confessional: casual revelations to innermost desires
- ★ Diary, conversation, advertisement
- ★ Against the prevalent self-improvement movements
- ★ Voices anxiety; despite mental health awareness it is not directly articulated
- ★ “Cacophony of self-doubt”
- ★ Matila-Smith: “addresses themes such as unrequited love, limerence, modern intimacy and online identities; it’s also littered with pop culture references and nostalgia for things that may not have ever been real”

*Bad Education* - [Article](#)

- ★ Articulating commonalities and differences between women artists of colour
- ★ Autobiographical: “themes of loneliness, romantic rejection, the search for happiness, low self-esteem, body shape anxiety”
- ★ Confessional prose
- ★ Materiality of stenciled letters on velvet-y material.

*I Think You Like Me, But I’ve Been Wrong About These Things Before* - [Article](#)

- ★ The gallery as a metaphorical/parallel bedroom space. A manifestation of experienced reality of romance, intimacy, anxiety.
- ★ Short-form prose, audiovisual, romantic iconography
- ★ Seems personal, but there is only “ambivalent declarations and anonymous imagery”
- ★ Informed by the artist's doomscrolling in bed. Restlessness & this generation’s “hedonistic condition”
- ★ Online spaces as ways of externalising the private self
- ★ Failure of self-fulfillment & resulting melancholy
- ★ “my work arises from a sincere desire to connect with people and a frustration that I often can’t achieve this”
- ★ “contemporary condition of second guessing oneself whilst acknowledging the wider societal influences that cause us to doubt our own decision making.”

*Method for making**Reason for method*

Diaristic reflection of the self	Provides the basis of her work: short prose. Personal experiences can be related to by the audience.
Use of/reflection on space	Engages the gallery space, makes the exhibition more visually engaging, and prevents the viewer from stagnating in one place.
Filming from POV	Reflects themes of intimacy, closeness, personal experience, romance, etc.
Reflection on society's perception of themes	Gets the audience to keep thinking about themes in a wider way than simply personal experience. Enables reflection for others.
Hand-created elements	Further emphasises the personal elements of her work; there is obviously someone behind the work in both content and material.

*Potential problematic aspect**Way of resolution*

Romanticises bad mental health	<p>I think some work should be allowed to be problematic in this sense. There is a push for sanitising everything as of recently, sometimes things just are bad or graphic, and that has to be accepted.</p> <p>This could be addressed by a footnote in exhibition pamphlets giving a disclaimer and helplines.</p>
Reduction of a woman to her romantic desire	Overall, her work also deals with some other themes, such as social anxiety & melancholy. Women are still allowed to have romantic desires.
Expectation of showing the world everything—no opacity	<p>There is space in the art world for both opaque and transparent work. Not everything has to be one or the other.</p> <p>A superficial reading of the work gives this impression, however, very little of her work gives away anything remotely personal. There are no names or details mentioned apart from feelings.</p>



## Step B

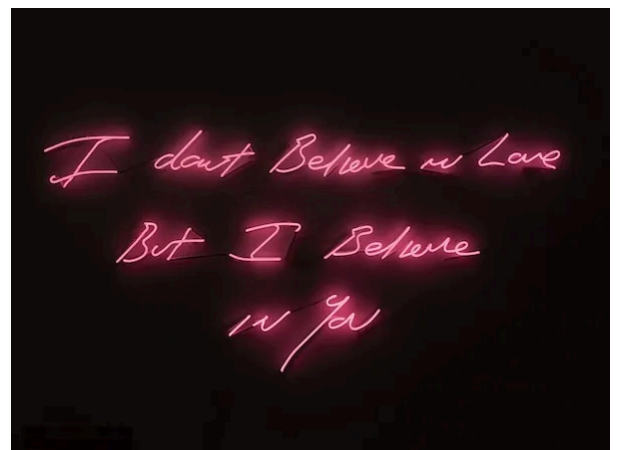
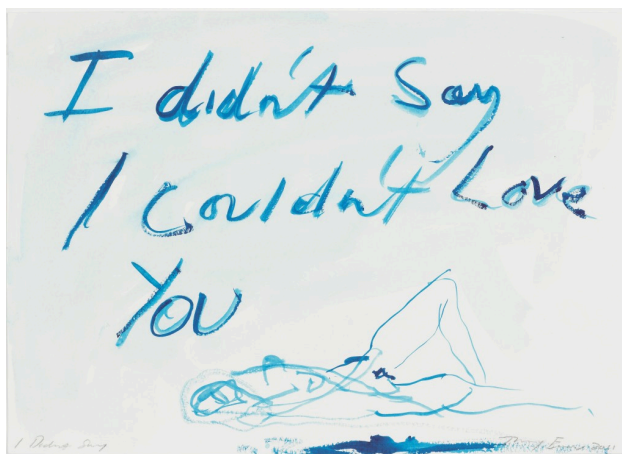
While I couldn't find any direct references to artists that have influenced Matila-Smith apart from Chris Marker with one video of hers, I would guess that Jenny Holzer in the prose style to an extent, but that's probably because she's what I know. On further research into previous text based artists, Tracey Emin looks like a definite influence. She has both the text element, bedroom, and similar romance themes. Examples over page.

Tim Fishlock also looked like a potential influence, but I will not be doing this section on him. Relevant works I found are below. The text element is there, the word choice also alludes to common themes.

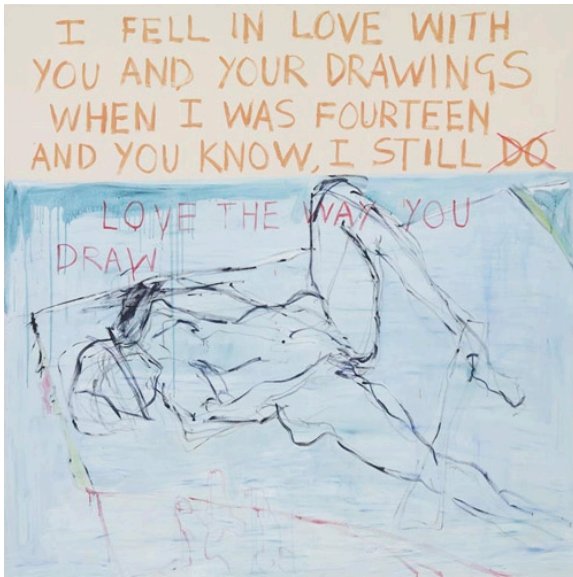


*Bless Me* (2019), *Welcome Me* (2019)

## Tracey Emin



Tracey Emin *I didn't say I couldn't love you* (2011), *I Don't Believe in Love but I Believe in You* (2012)



*Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever Made* (1996), *My Bed* (1998)

## Research

Artist: Tracey Emin - [Article](#)

- ★ Using the personal as the universal
- ★ Genuine expression of human emotion
- ★ “Femme tragique” portrayed, despite her actual self being more well adjusted now
- ★ “Homemade offering of herself”
- ★ Autobiographical: hopes, fears, failures, etc.
- ★ Therapeutic/transformative

Tracey Emin: *Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever Made* at Faurschou New - [Article](#)

- ★ Reconciling anxieties and guilt with painting
- ★ Process focused
- ★ Appropriate male artist works (Egon Schiele, Yves Klein, Edvard Munch, Pablo Picasso).
- ★ Reclaiming female identity & sexuality
- ★ “uses her own life, trauma, and emotions as a means of expression”
- ★ Challenges the idea that women are objects of the male gaze

*The Empty Bed: Tracey Emin and the Persistent Self* - [Article](#)

- ★ Work is a result of actual bad feelings/experiences
- ★ Traces/recording the impressions of someone who is evident despite their absence.  
As seen in her work, *My Bed*
- ★ The bed as a concentration of experience, always coming back to it with her art
- ★ “Some declared the work a sign of feminism’s demise, or art’s demise, or civilization’s demise.”
- ★ Personal art from personal experiences
- ★ Crossing public/private boundary
- ★ *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With* sleeping not sex
- ★ Confessional, acknowledging, sentimental, genuine
- ★ Words on fabric, pillows
- ★ Suffering in the bedroom, sex as a source of suffering, complicated relationship with intimacy because of her personal history
- ★ Sleeping, being in bed as a fundamental part of being human. Surrendering control to sleep and dreaming.
- ★ Being in someones’s bedroom is entering beyond the veil of their privacy. The elusive true self, the self that is gone when asleep
- ★ “Ruminations on the self”

*Method for making*

*Reason for method*

Using personal experience	An easy well to draw on. The audience can more easily engage with the work in relation to themselves.
Using traces	Helps communicate the personal experiences. When shown traces, the person or the action/experience is evoked.
Handmaking elements	Again, this evokes the person behind the artworks: this object was made by someone, and that is evident in the details of it, the human errors.
Provocative themes	Provokes response in the audience, emotionally, conversationally. Any reaction, particularly outrage, prompts discussion around a work.
Focus on process in creating	The experience in creating a work is central to many of Emin’s works, as well as the themes within them. Eg. locking herself in a room to paint for a week, a days long bender spent in bed. Lived experience is the process by which her art is made, it is central to her practice.



*Potential problematic aspect**Way of resolution*

Using art as therapy/trauma as art	There is no replacement for therapy, though art can be an outlet. Who are we to dictate what people can and cannot make art about? Emin no longer uses art as therapy in the same extreme way. Her work is reflective of different time periods of her life.
Anti-feminist, femme tragique	This aspect is by far the more problematic one. The suffering tragic woman is not a particularly progressive portrayal. However, there is always going to be someone feeling the same way. One has to acknowledge these things do happen in real life, and are not always shoehorned in by someone with an agenda.
Showing too much, some things should be kept to oneself	Confrontation with things in places you're not used to seeing them can be good for keeping an open mind.

Link to my powerpoint: [Natasha Matila-Smith & Tracey Emin Powerpoint](#).

Powerpoint is also included at the end of this PDF, though in landscape formatting.

## Week 6 Reflection

The idea of drawing on a past practice to improve your own current one is an appealing methodology, though minimalism itself does not. I have not thought about minimalism a single time in terms of my own practice once, even thinking back to doing highschool painting. The examples of people innovating the genre/movement is appreciated, and maybe could have been lingered on a little more in the lecture. This radicality has always been present in the art world, even as far back as when women were looked down on for doing figure studies rather than flower paintings in the 17th century.

The analysis of the parts that make up a minimalist practice was good, though I feel it may have been more applicable to teach us how to figure out the parts of past movements/practices more relevant to our own practices. Apart from the statement of using others work to improve your own, this lecture did not have a lot that I can take away from it.

Natasha Matila-Smith  
& Tracey Emin

Natasha Matila-Smith





*Frank, Love and the apocalypse*  
(2020)



ING

YOU  
H ME

HIS LIPS  
PINK +  
SWOLLEN  
DON'T BELONG  
TO ME  
FOR NOW  
I STEAL HIS  
GAZE  
AND THAT'S GOOD  
ENOUGH  
FOR ME

I TALKED ONLY  
TO OTHERS  
FEARING YOU  
WOULDN'T  
LIKE ME  
BUT YOU WENT  
BACK TO YOUR  
ROOM TO  
EAT SPAGHETTI,  
ALONE



*A List of Things That Quicken The Heart* (2021)



Some common themes throughout Matila-Smith's work:

The bedroom as a place of romance, intimacy (& the social expectations round it), anxiety, melancholy, a place of art production.

The impersonal personal: “ambivalent declarations and anonymous imagery”.

This generation's relationship with intimacy, presentations/performance of the self, as affected by the online space: “my work arises from a sincere desire to connect with people and a frustration that I often can't achieve this”.

Unrequited love, obsession, limmerence, and “nostalgia for things that may not have ever been real”. The feeling of longing to belong is more important than the character being obsessed over.

These are manifested through use of short-form autobiographical/diaristic/confessional prose, audiovisual, romantic iconography, hand made tapestries, and gallery space.



## *Method for making*

## *Reason for method*

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<i>Potential problematic aspect</i>	<i>Way of resolution</i>
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Tracey Emin



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I didn't say I couldn't love you (2011)

I didn't Say  
I Couldn't Love  
You



*I Don't Believe in Love but I Believe  
in You (2012)*

*I don't Believe in Love  
But I Believe  
in you*



*Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever  
Made (1996)*

I FELL IN LOVE WITH  
YOU AND YOUR DRAWINGS  
WHEN I WAS FOURTEEN  
AND YOU KNOW, I STILL ~~DO~~

LOVE THE WAY YOU  
DRAW

An abstract drawing in black ink on a light blue background. It depicts a figure, possibly a person or a creature, with long, flowing, and somewhat chaotic lines. The figure appears to be in a dynamic, perhaps dancing or falling, pose. The lines are thick and expressive, with some areas of dark, dense shading. The overall style is gestural and emotional, consistent with the title 'Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever Made'.

*My Bed* (1998)



Some common themes in Emin's work:

Using the personal as the universal. A genuine expression of human emotion via a confessional, acknowledging, sentimental, tone. "Homemade offering of herself".

The bed as a concentration of experience: Suffering in the bedroom, sex as a source of suffering, complicated relationship with intimacy because of her personal history. This, along with sleeping, as a fundamental part of being human.

Surrendering control to sleep and dreaming, to another person you are sleeping with.

The "femme tragique": "Some declared the work a sign of feminism's demise, or art's demise, or civilization's demise." Reclaiming female identity & sexuality.

Challenges the idea that women are objects of the male gaze.

Therapeutic/transformative via being autobiographical: working through trauma, hopes, fears, failures, etc. Crossing public/private boundary because of this and the sleeping element.



These are communicated through a process focused method, recording traces, the impressions of someone who is evident despite their absence. Also through, words made of neon, on fabric, on pillows; painting, drawing.

## *Method for making*

## *Reason for method*

Using personal experience	An easy well to draw on. The audience can more easily engage with the work in relation to themselves.
Using traces	Helps communicate the personal experiences. When shown traces, the person or the action/experience is evoked.
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Focus on process in creating	The experience in creating a work is central to many of Emin's works, as well as the themes within them. Eg. locking herself in a room to paint for a week, a days long bender spent in bed. Lived experience is the process central to her practice.

*Potential problematic aspect*

*Way of resolution*

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Anti-feminist, femme tragique	This aspect is by far the more problematic one. The suffering tragic woman is not a particularly progressive portrayal. However, there is always going to be someone feeling the same way. One has to acknowledge these things do happen in real life, and are not always shoehorned in by someone with an agenda.
Showing too much, some things should be kept to oneself	Confrontation with things in places you're not used to seeing them can be good for keeping an open mind.



Fin