

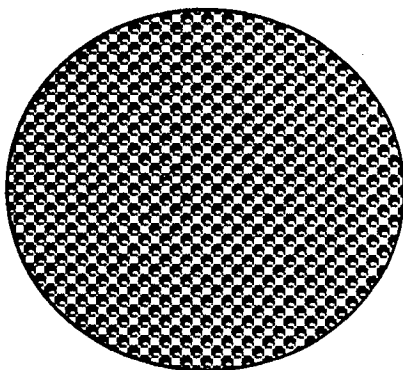
I would like to thank Fiona Jeffery, Ray Arnold, Jon Hemming, Tim Squires, Penny Wells, and Robert Kreshl for their help and encouragement during the course.

Documentation and Theory Papers

1993

Wayne Alty

MFA Submission



The Golden Dream

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Sea Mine, 1991.

First Proposal to enter MFA course.

September 29th, 1990.

Prior to coming to Tasmania I had been working mainly in the area of stoneware. My principal area of concern has been to attain what I would refer to as a classical balance. My influences have been primarily of Chinese and Japanese origin. Generally I have sought a ceramic expression that has emphasised form and decoration, and the quality we refer to as beauty. As an example; the pleasure to be found in the swelling form of a Sung vase. I have felt that the structure of the 'quietly beautiful' can be compromised by unrestrained imagination, and the loading of the object with content of a highly personal nature, therefore I have restricted the entry of these processes into the work.

I now wish to move into a new area of concern, I have for many years had an interest in primitive art and admired its freedom of expression. The work which I propose would draw directly on this element to encourage the free play of imagination and would be supported by the low fire techniques which I am currently developing.

As my medium of expression was originally painting, I intend to use painting in a documentative and imaginative manner to support and extend my ceramic work. As a starting point, I envisage the placing of painted images of my ceramic works into paintings of the Tasmanian landscape. I feel this could create an interesting dialogue, which would, where relevant, also allow the entry of other materials and processes, for instance; the use of wood, glass, printmaking etc.

In summary then, my proposal is to concentrate on an exploration of the humorous, the fantastic, the whimsical and the magical - elements my work has previously eschewed in its focus on classical form and structure.

Revised Proposal April 5th, 1991.

During the months since I submitted my initial proposal I have thought often on the question of the direction I outlined within that document. I have also made some work and I question how much the work fits within the initial proposal.

The primary reflection is that the MFA Course is a golden opportunity to proceed in a different direction to that which I had been following. It is realistic however that many of the inherent concerns of the past few years will continue to assert themselves and the aim now is to accommodate these in a more challenging format. In the initial proposal I stated that I wanted to pursue a path that set aside values such as classical beauty. I now feel that it would be more valid to explore what beauty is in a wider context, before attempting to reject it. Therefore I wish to extend my interest beyond the classical simplicity of the wheel thrown vessel to sculptural forms that are in their influences more reflective of the coming of the machine age and our contemporary milieu. I now find the original proposal to be restrictive in its emphasis on the primitive as a source of vitality and freedom of expression. Furthermore, the selection of " the humorous, the fantastic, the whimsical and the magical" is narrow and the expression available within does not contain the elements of *darker forces* that I also want to allude to in my course-work. The machine is often portrayed as the servant, one who contains the potential to be the master.

The work I envisage will reflect human relationships with the machine in many of its permutations. Within this I also include the political machine and the use of images of the mechanical machine as a metaphor for the machinations of the political. Also within this structure I am interested in the placement of allusions to thought, that process by which we determine the whole of our individual and collective consciousness, and which often holds us overly in its embrace.

As a sub plot I want at some stage to explore the relationship between 3D form and 2D representation in effectively communicating my ideas. By this I mean that my intention is to paint 2D works that will draw upon the images and icons of the sculptural forms I intend to make and to within this process to perhaps develop a synthesis, or at least, explore the possibility of some sort of mutually supportive relationship.

Proceeding on Course.

June 8th, 1991.

This week I have started to make some real progress in a direction that I feel could maintain itself through the term of the course.

Having settled on the theme of mechanisation and technology and their effects on civilisation, I have narrowed my interest to war. I awoke one morning to the realisation that war is the one thing that contains all the facets and dilemmas of human existence. Technology is often presented as our saviour. The fact is that it has the potential only to act in such a role. The reality being, that while it can act to make a better life for all, it also acts to expose the problems inherent in the human psyche. These are the problems that are bought to us in the name of nationality, religion and the territorial imperative

In the previous week I made a number of missile shapes on the wheel. Three thrown sections were joined together and the nose cone then completed with coils. I made three large ones of approximately a metre high and ended up with only one of these. The first I made did not have satisfactory proportions so I destroyed it, the second was accidentally destroyed by a friend at the moment of completion. As they take the best part of a day to make, I decided that I had spent enough time for the moment on the large ones and that it would probably be wise to go on with some smaller ones made up of two thrown sections. Having made a number of these forms I was able to study the interaction that they made as a group, I am pleased with their presence, they are an archetypal shape and have provoked considerable interest. One of the qualities that interests me is the beauty that is often contained in the forms of weapons. One reads of a 'terrible beauty'. Recently, when the United States battleship **Missouri** was in port, the official photographer for the ship showed some of his slides to a number of the MFA students. Most of these were shots, so to speak, of the sixteen inch main armament being fired. There was little doubt that here there was an 'awesome and terrible beauty' being captured. The billowing gouts of flame issuing from the barrels of the guns were sublime; one was brought into mind of

the biblical reference to the 'burning bush'. There was much excitement amongst the viewers who were in the main, males, two of the females were disapproving, holding as they made clear, strong feelings against weapons.

July 14th, 1991.

Today's work was absorbing, I was playing around with one of the square halves of the mold I had made to slipcast the sea mines. Placing the mine on top of the mold gave me an idea of what it would look like on a plinth, I also tried one of the missiles. It was interesting to see these units placed formally. I next placed a piece of broken plate glass (that has rhythmic curves down one side) in front of the missile. The glass served to act (dare I say it) as a signifier for a glass case. The use of a glass case to identify the object as a 'relic' was a course of action that I had been considering. The advantages of the broken plate glass are that it is more subtle than a glass case as it suggests rather than states, secondly the glass also interacts with the form as a sculptural element. I finished the smaller thrown mine and painted it flat black with underglaze. A number of people commented on how it looks very menacing. It's an effective foil for the missiles, as its more complex form contrasts nicely with their simplicity. I have also painted the missile that sits on top of the twisted steel plate, flat black. I was pleased with the menace this imparts to the form. Stencilled on one side in silver lustre is:

1 2 3
KANT

Later pieces added 'KANT'. The results are pleasing. The use of the stencils for the lettering calls up the military and the process of commodification; implying that this object may be one of a series. I will fire the lettering in platinum lustre and make it appear as if partially burnt off in flight, I like the imbalance that having it on the one side only imparts to the piece. Fellow student Jon Hemming and I have made up a craftwood model of a medium size artillery shell on the lathe. This will serve as the basis for a series of molds

enabling a reasonable production of standardised missile forms. I still have to seal this form and then I will be able to cast the first mold.

July 17th, 1991.

Yesterday I extracted the large half sphere out of the mold. It was OK apart from the bottom where I had pounded in a large ball of clay. This part had almost separated from the later coiling. Painted the 1 2 3 KANT piece with 'Elliot's Tar' and fired it to 1060°. Major effort of the day was pouring my first mold of the mine form. There were some problems with this. The slip had thickened a great deal and it was difficult to get it to a satisfactory state for pouring. Eventually it worked but it was on the thick side still. I will need to be more conscientious in keeping the slip container airtight. I made a mistake in shaping this mold as round as I could for lightness. The shape causes problems in placing the rubber-bands and also with handling. I feel considerable dissatisfaction with my work, I feel that it's too literal but that this is a stage I will have to work through regardless. There's little likelihood of developing a visual language of veracity if I do not at first feel frustrated. I'm satisfied that the raw material is there in the theme and the forms. However, I will need to push the concept a lot harder. It has to be made to work on more levels than it is presently attaining.

July 19th, 1991.

Early this morning I had the thought that the missile might be seen as the *male egg*. That it may be the male 'revenge' and curse on the fecundity of the female, who is the primary form in nature, in that the *Y chromosome* of the male is a derivative of the *X chromosome* of the female. A fact which man in his endless capacity to turn falsity into truth may have intuitively re-invented as the Christian myth; that woman was created from one of the ribs of the first man. The 'rib' could be seen as symbolising the missing bar of the X chromosome. Is this 'unconscious' knowledge something that man, in his supreme egocentricity finds impossible to accommodate? The certainty of women in

their task of child bearing may be unsettling to man's collective ego. War could be seen as the tantrum of the male species in the light of this uncertainty.

July 22nd, 1991.

Yesterday I learnt a new technique, and also came face to face with an exasperating personal trait that I rationalise has some value. In this instance I cast the mold for the large artillery shell Jon and I made out of craftwood and I knew.

- A. That the shell form probably wasn't sufficiently waterproofed.
- B. That it also did not have enough coats of separating agent on it.

A perfect example of being right in being wrong. The mold was my best yet. Unfortunately it wouldn't separate from the form. After many attempts I was driven to surgery with a hammer and old screwdriver, I had some interesting results from this failure. Breaking open the egg that contained my cherished 'wooden 'bomb' I was relieved to recover it intact, albeit with a minor dent. When the form was being unveiled in the breaking away of the plaster, there was a strong sense of discovery, and considerable beauty that was redolent of an archeological 'find'. With the form entirely released from the fragmented mold, reflection revealed the possibilities open in this act 'of unveiling'.... of giving birth. The empty mold containing as it does a "negative " impression of the missile, is in the form of a cathedral's nave: suggestive of the perfection of the form..... And of its loss.

August 21st, 1991.

I have cast the six plaster sensor nodes (Fig 1) for the mine shapes in a gang mold . They were slow to release at first. I have done my first cast and there is a fault in that the manner in which I have spaced the pieces makes the slip awkward to pour out. The mold will have to be cut into three parts as per Fig 2.

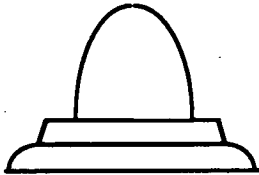


Fig 1

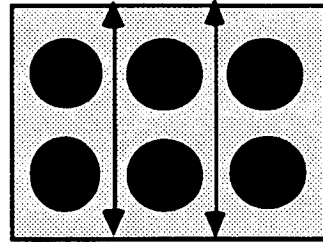


Fig 2

I have also cast the wooden missile form for the second time. There is some doubt once again that it will release. At least this time I can be sure that the form was properly soft soaped and sealed. It appears that such a large piece may require a two piece mold rather than the one piece currently employed. There is probably excessive surface area at present for an easy release.

Next time I shall cast it as a two piece mold, I think it would be wise also to cast a clay model. Then there can be some certainty of extracting the model. It eventuated that the 'Bondcrete' I used to seal the form was not suitable. The other development was in working up the fired surfaces of assorted missiles with oil paints. These give a far greater range of tonalities than under-glazes. I have discovered that if, when dry, one sands them with a fine paper, then they polish nicely and it is possible to build up exquisite surfaces, by laying down successive coats of different colours or tones. I have also thrown and turned a model for a stick grenade. The intention as with the other molds is to cast multiple copies and paint the names of different categories of cultural artifacts on them such as in the illustrations: HEGEL. There could be a series on philosophers, composers, scientists etc.

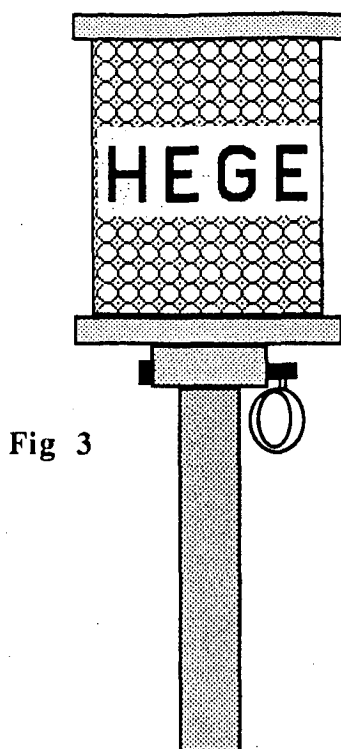


Fig 3

August 27th, 1991.

Well, as per usual I rushed right up to the last moment, in this instance to 1/2 hour before the start of my 'baptism'. I felt that I would gain the widest benefit by putting up as much work as possible. The pieces were as follows

1. Four 'Sea Mines'.

Medium size slipcast forms. Three plain bisque units forming triangular base on which sat a fourth unit painted with black bitumen.

2. 'Sea Mine'.

Large coil built form, underpainted with stains and lettered VIRGINIA WOOLF, GREER and KANT plus the number 6. Lettering painted in latex, then piece painted with 'Elliot's Tar' glaze, latex removed and Elliot's Tar brushed over to obscure lettering.

3. 'Sea Mine'.

Wheel-thrown and decorated with under-glaze stains, low-fire enamels and lustres.

4. Artillery Shell'

Large form decorated with coloured slips, underglaze, enamels and lustres displayed on a glossy grey plinth. A plate of broken glass placed to the front.

5. 'Artillery Shell'

large form displayed on a glossy grey plinth. Decorated with under-glaze stains, lustres and oil paint glazes. Primary motifs swastikas and falling bombs plus a large gear-wheel

6. Four 'Artillery Shells'.

Slip-cast and painted white. They resemble eggs in their fragility. Displayed in a square formation on a grey three tiered plinth.

7. Three 'Artillery Shells'.

Painted with oil paint glazes. Smallest one red, medium blue and the largest green. Placed on a grey gloss half epiloid (boat) form in order of red, green, blue.

8. Grey 'Boat' form with 'Missile'.

Placed on a frame similar to 'Everglades Mud Skimmer'. Decrepit red alarm clock behind missile with 'wiring'.

9. 'Plaster Form'

Pierced by medium size 'artillery shell' painted red, blue and black in a streaky fashion with enamel paints.

10. 'Helmet'.

Clay vessel with a large rent into one side.

11. Two Plaster Molds.

Remains from abortive casting of 'missiles.'

12. 'Artillery Shell'.

Medium size form painted with black 'Elliot's Tar' glaze and 1 2 3 KANT painted onto one side. Placed atop twisted iron plate.

Critique Statement.

July 31st, 1991.

The work that is a result of entering the MFA programme is a new direction for me. Previously as a self employed ceramacist, I was concerned primarily with making articles of commercial appeal. My course proposal is to do with, in general terms: what is the nature of beauty, and also what impact has technology on our lives and ways of thinking, which generally equate to ways of living, religious, secular and political.

My work presently deals with weapons of war, I have long been fascinated by weapons and the strange unsettling beauty they often express. The work is in part an investigation of this fascination which I believe many to have. I feel we have made of the weapon a god, and that like most of our gods, it is there because it clearly suits our purposes. By aestheticising the weapon beyond its general level and suggesting its *deity* I hope to draw attention to the question of why we make war. Furthermore, as long as our rationality lies within the service of the particular and the differentiated, it will remain the instigator and servant of conflict. Anything can be rationalised, the war of liberation can be the war of oppression.

Until a common reason becomes a universal, then 'insanity' shall continue to triumph over 'sanity'. Technology could, through its implementation of the global village conception, enable a 'new order' to become a reality. I am also interested in the relationship of gender to war, in the notion of the missile as phallic symbol.

As an adherent of the concept of dualities within ourselves and through-out our experience, I am inquiring after that partner to the 'active' missile, and for the present have settled on the sea mine of World War Two vintage as embodying the (so called) female element of passivity. My belief in line with Jungian philosophy, is that we as individuals contain both the female and male, the animus and the anima, and that until these two elements are recognised and assimilated, we are incomplete beings and

therefore imbalanced. The war must first be solved within to be solved without. There are two distinct expressions in the work. One I believe to have elements of menace and the other is more inclined to humour. I have often used elements of the humorous in my work, I will continue to do so as an antidote to the seriousness this inquiry contains.

In my MFA submission I hope to create an environment that is filled with multiples of objects of aggression. Within this will be placed twelve 'beautiful relics' of armed conflict. Occupying central position will be an altar of some as yet undecided description.

There will I hope be an unsettling atmospheric, somewhere between a war museum and a church. Many, if not all the aggressive pieces will have on their surfaces names of people who have furthered the cause of knowledge and culture; as symbols of all that is put at risk when

"Two tribes go to war."

CRITIQUE COMMENTS.

I was asked to point out the order in which I had made the articles. I did not carry this out well and fell into my disconcerting habit of talking more to myself than to those present. I should have numbered the pieces to clearly illustrate the order. Addressing himself to the question of beauty **Paul Zika** asked "have you thought of what constitutes the ugly?" I had no adequate reply to this. There was a discussion about materials, I was asked by **Fred Levine** why I was using clay and not metal. I replied that having, as I did thirteen years of working with that particular material, I felt I had a facility with it, that in the two year structure of the course, it seemed unlikely that I would be able to equal with other skills I might acquire during that time.

In reply to **Lindy Lee** who stated that metals have specific qualities related to their use in weapons, I replied that ceramic as a material created an interesting tension due to its fragility. I indicated this by jokingly making as if to throw one of the slipcast sea-mine

forms to **Fred Levine**. He was mortified. The point however was taken. I stated that metals were in fact being used as the lustres are metal based, I pointed out the use of platinum and gold lustres in particular.

Jonathan Holmes asked that as the large floor mine had a crack in the surface, had I considered the idea of revealing the interior mechanism of the weapon. **John Houston** commented on the architectural qualities of **piece no 10**, as being rather like a Gothic Cathedral's nave, which was the association I was seeking. He particularly liked **forms 6 and 7** for their formal qualities. I explained that my working method was to gradually refine to an essence of the idea, and that the works on display indicated the first part of that principle. That I was presently reading a book on **Faberge, the Russian Jeweller** and found the **Imperial Eggs** in particular fascinating. **Houston** suggested that this extreme preciousness could be an interesting aspect to follow up as it was likely to cause the most disruption in perception.

Ted Colless found **forms 3, 6, 7 and 12** to be the most successful as they were the clearest in their simplicity. He saw the small lusted sea mine (3) as the most effective, inducing fascination with the beautiful surface and sensuous form, and yet causing some unease through remaining clearly representative of a weapon.

Rod Ewins in line with **Jonathan Holmes'** suggestion thought it could be of interest to reveal the interior workings. He instanced an artillery fuse. He also mentioned that I should look at the more barbaric type of weapons such as clubs, spears, etc, a suggestion **Fred Levine** had also made. **Lorraine Jenyns** felt the formal qualities of **forms 6 and 7** were of interest and that **6** in particular was reminiscent of a Greco / Roman temple. She liked the formal qualities it suggested. **Lorraine** felt that I should not focus on the idea of a single presentation at examination time as I had displayed a number of differing approaches, most possessing some validity and that I should consider the possibility of separate displays.

SUMMATION.

1. Seen as interesting forms but not yet used to full advantage.
2. Seen as interesting, but as my intention is to fill up a room with them in various heights and so suggest placement in the sea; they were seen at this stage as an illustration of that proposal.
3. Generally viewed as the most successful piece.
4. Viewed as a successful piece.
5. Seen as resolved.
6. Viewed favourably.
7. Viewed favourably.
8. Not successful, seen as too obvious.
9. Not successful, seen as 'corny.'
10. Generally over-looked due to placement on floor.
11. Seen as having some merit as suggestive of human loss. Shown as a rough proposal.
12. Seen as a successful work.

INTERVIEW August 1st, 1991.

with LINDY LEE.

(Painter, Forum speaker and Guest Critic at Critique.)

Spoke at length with Lindy about my motivations for making this work. She felt that the best way for me to proceed was to try and make a single object that could concentrate this 'deadly beauty'. Lindy also stated that it would be in her opinion better to keep this object as simple as possible and yet to make the surface as beautiful as I could. She felt the small lustre mine form was closest to achieving this ideal at the present. Her feeling in the light of my statement on the depersonalised nature of modern war, was that I should select a more direct weapon, for instance a battle-axe.

We talked about the code of chivalry that was present when combat was more personal and thus was able to be limited by factors other than total destruction. Lindy made the suggestion that she felt the narrative I had used on the large shells would be better presented to advantage as 2 D works.

STUDIO VISIT August 9th, 1991.

with COLLIN SUGGET.

(Sculptor and Forum Speaker.)

Collin's own work which he showed and talked about in the forum was very humorous. He was positive about the content of my work and supportive of where it may proceed. He stated that I would have to be careful that the message did not become dispersed by too many disparate ways of presenting it and in particular that with a content of this kind that one must avoid beating the 'big drum' too much, that the intent is to provoke reflection, not depression.

He also felt the lusted mine form was the most successful piece in that it communicated on a number of different levels. He said the sandblasted 'Perf Metal' I used on pieces 7 and 8 was too neat a solution and that I should expose it to salt water to make it look rusty and dilapidated.

STUDIO VISIT August 26th, 1991.

with JOHN HOUSTON.

(Writer, Curator and currently Artist in Residence.)

I showed John slides of work I had done during my preliminary MFA year, and also lustre work that I made in my years of freedom. He was surprised to see the type of work that I had made previously, mainly from what I could gather due to the playful aspect of the work. I said that I felt that the work I made then preceded more my female aspect and the work I was making now came more from my male aspect. With luck and hard work the two may coincide. He felt the work to be in the spirit of a generous offering. He agreed with my statement that the present work was to do with the nature of power distribution in contemporary societies. He cautioned against the dogmatically moralistic statement. The best solution lay, in his opinion, in the visually rich object containing a subtle message.

September 4th, 1991.

Watching video programme on Carl Jung realised that I had forgotten notion of utilising some element of the Holy Grail myth. I will have to research the Arthurian / Camelot legend. The idea of the Grail as the lost higher potential of human consciousness is intriguing, the Grail representing the vessel or 'Lost female essence'. Arthur's sword 'Excalibur' would appear to have particular relevance, the phallic symbol acting as signifier for supreme male wisdom and power. Most significant could be the mythical search by a group of males for their 'lost' (repressed) female attributes.

Ideas for Next	Body of Work.
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October 3rd, 1991.

1. World War II British helmet full of .303 ammunition.
2. Artificial leg in ammunition box.
3. Large scale words such as Truth, compassion etc. To be made out of wood with galvanised metal screwed to the frame. They will be only partial, signifying either entry into the 'ground' or an arising from. They will be interspersed with the large 'Sea Mines' to reinforce this notion of an arising and falling back into.
4. A glass case containing a large stone axe-head bound to a wooden handle with rawhide. The case to be lettered **BREAK GLASS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**. On a clip on the outside of the case will be placed a smaller stone axe.
5. A rusty, water cooled heavy machine gun, fabricated out of light steel plate and placed upon a bale of worn out shoes bound with barbed wire.
6. Two shells, highly decorated (perhaps with a tattoo type pattern). Placed in a satin lined 105mm army surplus ammunition box.
7. A fruit bowl filled with hand-grenades.
8. A revolver with an impossibly long barrel.
9. Three hand-grenades of different types, twice life size, displayed together .
Titled: Three Hand-Grenades.
10. Weapons such as a group of light machine guns cut out of light gauge craftwood, painted black and placed on a wall.
Titled: Four Light machine guns
11. A sub machine gun, twice life size, fabricated from patinated copper sheet.
12. A 'mills bomb' hand-grenade approximately the size of a football, richly decorated.
13. An extremely large 'Iron Cross' German military decoration
14. The lead sheathed box that was used to transport the plutonium core of the first atom bomb at Los Alamos. The core is half spherical and fits closely into a recession in the flat surface of the container (Fig 4).

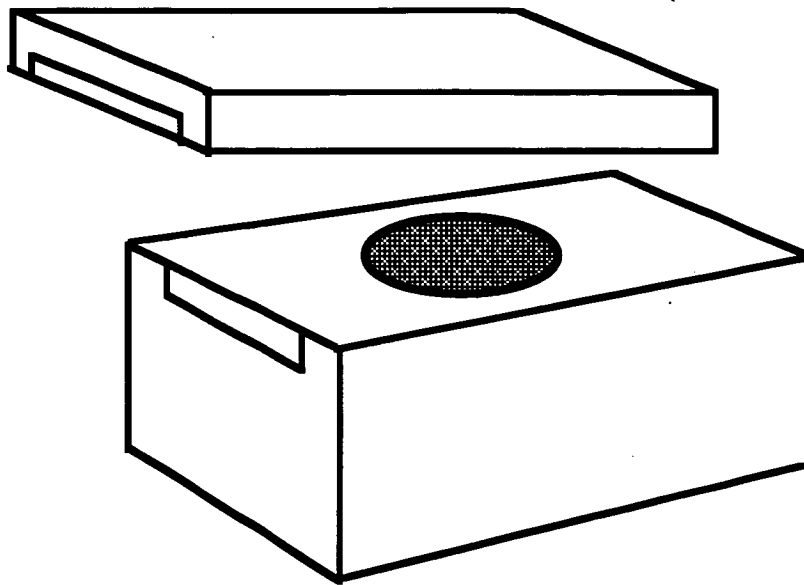


Fig 4

STUDIO VISIT September 25th, 1991.

with FRANK McBRIDE & JANENE PELLARIN

Artistic Director & Gallery Director, Jam Factory, Adelaide.

In discussion on the direction in which the work was proceeding Frank made the suggestion that perhaps I should consider the issue of domestic violence as being of more relevance to the Australian scene. My reply was that I saw the problem in universal terms and that the domestic appeared to my mind as a symptom of a wider issue, which in this case was male power and politics. I agreed that domestic violence was to some degree endorsed by the daily awareness of institutionalised violence, that I felt the former to be more germane at this time to my aims. It was an interesting suggestion though.

STUDIO VISIT September 27th, 1991.

with RON & BETTY BEAVER.

Directors: Beaver Gallery, Deacon A.C.T

Ron as an active participant in World War Two was intrigued by the larger artillery shell shapes which he identified as '9.2s' He and Betty sang me a verse of a song of the war period which went as follows:

"When a 9.2 goes through you, goes through, you, toodle loo, toodle loo, good-byee."

They were very interested in a book I had in my studio on propaganda of World War Two. They told me of an exhibition they had recently visited in Munich of classical sculpture that had been damaged in that war. The exhibition had evidently been held in a very elegant building and all of the statues were alike, in that they were all figures who had lost limbs or major portions of their bodies. For instance where a figure would have had an arm or a leg there was either nothing remaining or only a twisted steel armature. They said they had found the exhibition extremely moving, to the point of tears, in calling up memories of the period.

October 7th, 1991.

Today I took out of the kiln one of the slipcast 'sea mines' that I had glazed with the soda ash /cryolite glaze coloured with orange stain. The surface is quite beautiful, colourful and very wrinkled. It calls up the sea and rust well, I will get some more coloured stains and fire the others also. The only drawback is that the form has been dunted by the stress of the glazes contraction. Trudy (Golley) said that as the cryolite is very corrosive to the clay body it is advisable to fire the bisque much higher, say to 1200°.

Critique

November 9th, 1991.

I did not feel that I went into this critique in a good position as I found that the teaching took a lot more time and energy than I had thought it would, especially as this was exam time. The critique was scheduled about a month earlier than it had originally been intended so as to take advantage of the visit of Gary Kennedy. I went into the critique without a statement and was not in the right state of mind as I felt unprepared. However I was quite happy with three of the pieces I took in as I felt they had something to say. I had five pieces which were as follows:

1. The small lustre mine I had shown in the last critique represented in a different context by being placed atop a plinth that had the word **PAIN** on the front in brass capitals.
-
2. A 1' high 'Pine Apple' hand grenade painted Mint Green which was placed on a plinth that had a sheet of plate glass to the front. This was straight on one side and curved on the other. On this was sandblasted in negative, the word **ARM** in 3" high flowing script. The effect was that one could view the hand grenade through the word.

Fig 5

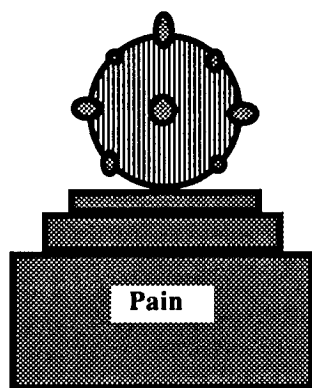
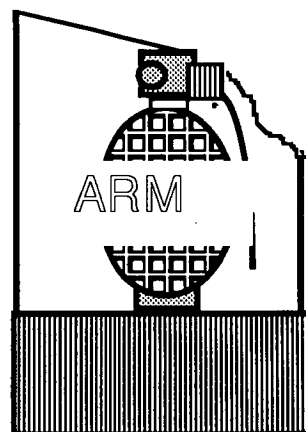
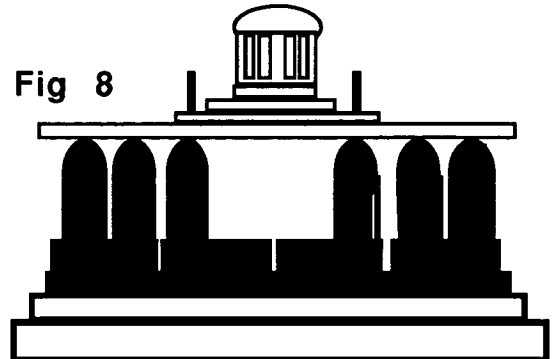
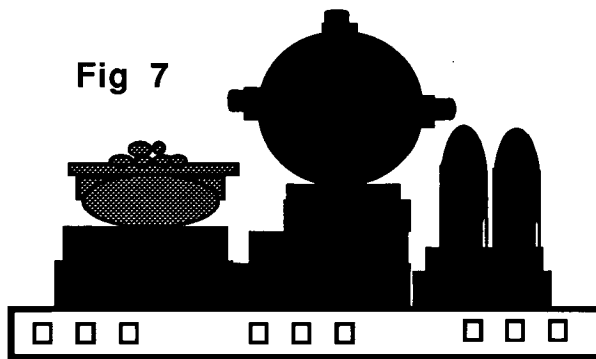


Fig 6

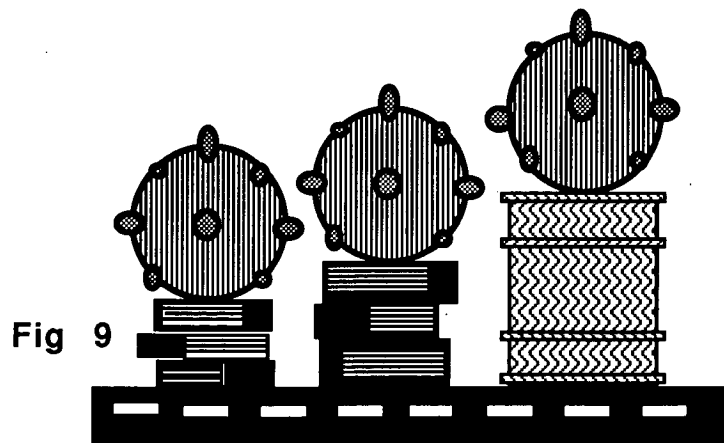


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3. Three stacks of bitumen painted books with four 10" high black painted shells placed on the lowest stack on the right. A black painted sea / mine on the highest stack in the centre, and on the left a World War II British helmet rendered in gold leaf, with red oil paint representing encrusted blood. It was pierced by a bullet that had passed in one side and out the other and filled with Copper Hydroxide crystals (which is a sparkling black rather evil looking mineral). In this were twenty 'live' 7.89mm Nato assault rifle bullets (Fig 7.)
-



4. Five of the black books forming a base on which were placed another four black books, atop this eight of the 10" high shells painted black surmounted by a sheet of sandblasted plate glass. In the centre position on the top of the glass plate is a small model of a Grecian garden temple, with a crabs claw placed inside. (Fig 8.)
-

5. Three mines in pink, blue/green and orange /yellow respectively. Placed one each atop two stacks of large books that had been painted with bitumen. The third placed atop a beaten up, rusty ten gallon drum. The entire ensemblage sitting on a heavy gauge iron tray also painted with bitumen. (Fig 9.)
-



In the critique I stated that I had not presented any theory as I felt that this had been a prominent part of my first presentation and that I felt this work had been made more directly. I said that the books represented a good method for presenting the work in that they acted as a signifier for knowledge and therefore civilisation. I said I was pleased with the way my work was progressing. (Invitation to the wolves?). Speaking of war I observed that virtually every Australian town had a memorial remembering their war dead. I said that these memorials were often in the centre of town and became unseen through their familiarity. That in their own right they were strange emblematic totems (not the words I used).

First to speak was **Kevin Todd** who felt that I should consider the use of the non-obvious type of weapon such as that used in his native Ireland, the suitcase bomb for instance. I felt this was an interesting point but wondered aloud that there would be some difficulty in identifying a suitcase as such as a bomb and also the context that I might use it in. It was an interesting point however and one worth considering further.

Paul Zika wondered why I used the metal drum and the books in their original form and felt the work would have been better served if these pieces had been made out of clay also. This was certainly a contrast to the previous critique where I had been urged to consider the use of other materials. Perhaps the point was that there is a strangeness to something when it is made out of another material to that which one would normally expect.

Gary Kennedy then spoke, I felt in an aggressive manner, stating that he felt the work was a *celebration of war*. I thought at the time this was an absolutely stupid view to put forward, but I appreciate now that the work I am doing often provokes a strong reaction among some. These people seem to be idealistic pacifists and react in a pavlovian manner to anything suggestive of violence that contains ambiguity. My reply was that I could not help his interpretation, but that was not at all my intent.

Incidentally this was another reason for not presenting any literature at this critique, as I felt it would be interesting to let the work be read as it stood rather than directing the reading through a statement. **Kennedy** had made up his mind however that I was a warmonger, and sitting as he was in the front row, he signalled his displeasure by turning his body away from me. Pacifists such as him fail to see their own aggression. The problem of war arises through exactly this type of 'superior' differentiation. We all contain the possibility of violence.

Geoff Parr was amused at **Kennedy's** reaction and tried to point out to him that some of his own work could be viewed in the same way he was viewing mine, but the point was not taken, a closed mind was apparent. I felt put out by this development as he was the guest of honour, and I don't think I really recovered my equilibrium and became from this point on defensive. My humour was not operating. **John Mc Queenie** mentioned that it might be worth trying to suggest the horror of war. My reply was that I felt it was impossible to suggest the horror of war as it would simply be a pale imitation of the reality, and anyway, I could not live comfortably with the idea of portraying horror over a two year term, six months maybe! **Ted Colless** rejoindered humorously, that wasn't it an artist's duty to suffer, however long it took?

Geoff Parr spoke on how the pieces could be viewed as monuments to commodities which was an interesting viewpoint. Addressing **Mc Queenie's** suggestion he agreed that one could not portray the horror of war adequately through art as the horror was itself, and was of such a scale that any attempt to represent it failed. Perhaps photography is the medium that best realises the ability to capture this aspect of war. It doesn't however contain the smell, or the life threatening 'reality' of the battlefield. Imagine the impact on the psyche of the mounds of frozen bodies in the German retreat in **Operation Barbarossa**, or standing by helplessly watching men jump from the bow of a burning oil tanker into a flaming sea that if not alight, will choke them with its heavy film of oil.

I want to suggest the problem of war not the horror of it that is contained in the problem in any event. **Ted Colless** said that instead of using the word **PAIN** I would have achieved a more accurate and stranger resonance if I had used **MINE** instead. He went on to explain that he saw the pieces as my toys, especially in the instances of the lustre mine and the hand grenade, so it would be interesting if I claimed them as such by the use of the appropriate word, which in this case would also be ambiguous. I agreed with his statement about the toy aspect of them, I feel that many things I make have this toy like quality of play about them, and this is in fact a reflection of how I feel when I make pieces i.e. that I am at play.

Ted then spoke about **kitsch** and bad taste, and as these are words that I attach negative connotations to, and as he used them frequently I got an attack of the **Gary Kennedy's** and mentally withdrew. It was apparently quite clear to everyone from my body language and replies that I was not happy about his comments as I interpreted them, **Paul Zika** pointed out that I should not place **Ted's** comments in the negative. My state of mind being fatigued, I was by this time only perceiving scattered words, rather as if they were floating towards me and only some of them were entering my head. My perceptions had become disjointed. **Kennedy's** rejection first and now to have my work called kitsch and in bad taste!!! It was all too much, and although **Ted** attempted to explain what he was getting at it had all become word spaghetti to me. What I didn't realise at the time due to my fragmentary knowledge of art history was that **Ted** wasn't saying kitsch, he was saying *Kitsch* which was so much better, this being as I now realise another word for commodification, and as such the work of people such as **Jeff Koons** whose work I do find appealing. **Steve Kidd** pointed out **Ted's** intention to me later and gave me some articles to read on this work which passes under the title **Neo Geo.** So I blew it, but oh well, it's all learning experience in the end. I am very interested in the notion of commodification in war and indeed in modern western society. Humans in general are always in danger of being assessed as commodities.

Later in discussion **Jonathan Holmes** felt that I was in the position to have a good body of work eventually, but I should give thought to having a major piece with which to tie the whole together. **Les Blakebrough** said he felt the black pieces worked best as they were the most threatening, I replied that this was not the quality I was most interested in.

Geoff Parr commented that he had been really struck when he had seen the weapon elements sitting on the floor awaiting placement, and that he felt that perhaps I needn't worry that much about finding a context in which to display them, he felt they would look extremely interesting in a formal gallery setting.

I was struck by the fact that not one woman among numerous present spoke to the work. More than anything else I realised that as I was not clear in what I wanted to say, and this caused many interpretations to be placed on the work. In retrospect I was pleased it provoked such a reaction in **Gary Kennedy** as perhaps some is better than none, and it bought something out in him he may think about. Which is what I intend the work to do - to promote reflection in myself and others.

Ted's comments were good. It's a pity I didn't *hear* them in the main. I approached him later in the week when I was more rational and we decided we would talk at a later date. I was interested that, as in the last critique, some things I feel are interesting get passed by completely. The use of the sandblasted 'ARM' motif fell into this category and the looking through the word to the grenade form behind. Clearly one should be more alert to directing attention and should ask for specific comments. I will try to remember this point next time. All in all an interesting experience.

MID COURSE REVIEW

2nd February, 1992.

My mid course review panel were my Theory and my Studio Supervisors **Jonathan Holmes** and **Les Blakebrough** plus **Ray Arnold** from printmaking. I had on display a number of pieces including a knight's helmet, a buddha's head and a skull. I felt Ray was probably unaware of my work prior to the review and with this in mind included some earlier pieces. *I had prepared a statement and presented a copy to each of the reviewers. It was as follows.*

MID - COURSE REVIEW STATEMENT.

Within the last few months and largely through the agency of writing my first essay I have come to a deeper understanding of what it is that I wish to address in my work. In essence it is that I believe humans are capable of change and that whilst it is not easy, requiring as it does much pain, it is desirable for the self as well as 'humankind' and all other life I feel that if change is to come about then it can only be through honest reflection and taking responsibility for our actions and origins. Whether our actions be selfish, angry, envious or any one of a number of negative connotations, they are capable with true observation of being transmuted by this agency of indiscriminating observation into a truth through the totality of that 'seeing'.

I started the course using war as a basis for my inquiry. It is a general one and has relevance to all, and it is easily accessible as most people hold strong views on this subject. Also I had an adolescent fascination with it that I felt needed to be worked through. In the two critiques that I have participated in, I have come to realise that I am not expressing myself very well as yet in terms of content, irrespective of certain formal strengths I feel the work has contained. This I feel was partially because I was myself 'in

the middle of the problem' and so therefore the work was reflective only of what I understood at the time and was also reflective of the confusion I felt. In itself the work has what I would describe as a hidden agenda, but it may not be as hidden as I think, or perhaps it is hidden because as yet I haven't approached it in the material expression. I am referring to the 'war between the sexes'. I alluded to this in my first critique in the following statement.

My belief in line with Jungian philosophy is that we as individuals contain both the female and male , the anima and the animus, and that until these two elements are recognised and assimilated we are incomplete beings and therefore unbalanced, that the war must first be solved within to be solved without.

The work is in the large part intended to be about relationship, the relationship of the sexes to each other, and between different persons with different ideologies and so forth, and the violence we inflict on each other in the name of this difference. It is an exploration of my own masculinity, its strengths, and also the violence that is part of this inheritance.

With this in mind I have realised that I have been projecting into my work a problem that I notice in my inter-action with others. This is that I assume they hold a similar point of view on an issue as myself, and so an assumption is made that is often mistaken. This assumption has been clear in the work to date as I have been generally disappointed in the readings made from it. I now realise that I will have to enter into the work with a wider range of icons from a more personal vocabulary.

Holding as I do a belief in the sanctity of all life, and that humans are only another expression of this force, albeit with some major advantages and clearly disadvantages, I have started making a new series of icons, that I hope I will be able to use in my future work to expand its content. These icons at present under construction are : a head of the Buddha, a human femur, a human skull, and a medieval 'Frogmouth' knight's helmet.

Others I plan to make are as follows: a large 'old type' key, a clenched fist, a crab's claw, a spiral sea shell, heads of people I am close to, an early incendiary grenade, a cornucopia, a reproduction of a 'Tang' horse's head, a reproduction of a primitive 'Venus' fertility figure and others. I have also made with the invaluable help of Trudy Golley a cast of my torso, and also my arms, and intend to cast also my legs and face at a later date. I intend to use the torso (and body if required) as a place in which to place 'objects of interest', for instance a hand grenade, or an egg (birds) (large).

I plan a major piece which I will start work on soon after mid course review. The projection for this is that it will be a partial male skeleton, approximately life size, resting atop a partial medieval cart wheel, which will be covered with small tiles that will be painted a sickly green/yellow. The tiles will be stamped with some series of referent to social progress such as names of great people etc. which I will enter into the word processor. They will be in the type-face of symbol which has a hieroglyphic resonance. There will be a partial wing attached to the skeleton.

The major problem I identify for my work this year is in the setting up of various elements. I have an attraction for some reason for three pieces in a line. My intention is to break through this pattern into a setting that extends in all directions with a larger number of 'icons' contained within it.

Having read the statement Jonathan opened proceedings with a statement that in his opinion the work was far too literal. He stated that he had no problems with the amount of work that I had produced over the course to date, but that in his opinion I was not using my abilities that I had demonstrated in my work before entering the course. He felt that the work I had to date had no life to it and that I would need to examine my future intentions very seriously if I wasn't to find myself with major problems.

Ray spoke next and said that he found that whilst some of the pieces weren't working that in others he found a strangeness that was to him appealing. He went on to say that he had noticed that over the break period that I had most of my pieces to date set up in the hand building area and that at one stage I had all of my munitions on the one table and that he had been struck by the impact as a mass they made on him. He felt that it would be worth my while to explore the potential of the fractured or exploded form and also that the notion of the serial object was one that he felt would have a relevance in connection with my subject. Les said that he felt that I should introduce elements of domestic ware into my work such as for instance having a teapot that referred to the idea of war. He instanced the cooling tower teapots of American potter Richard Notkin. He felt that the qualities that my pottery demonstrated were absent in the course work to date. Their reports were as follows:

JONATHAN HOLMES. Theory Supervisor.

I think I discussed the majority of my concerns regarding your work during the critique. The main observation I have to make is that I think the way you are using your objects is much, much too literal. It's not just the fact that you tend to be preaching to the converted; rather the project itself seems to lack a driving sense of poetic metaphor. It's interesting, for instance, that your first essay seems to avoid any real engagement with the visual arts. I get the feeling that you are having real difficulty in determining how you can make manifest your obvious political and social concerns in a suitable visual form and in a way you are tending to utilise some fairly simplistic devices in order to enervate your objects.

While I don't think there are any easy solutions, it seems to me that you are eschewing three special qualities from your earlier work. You have a splendid decorative sense and on many occasions your work has hummed with a rich painterliness. You made the

comment that that painterliness is evident in the recent work but I simply don't think that that is the case; it's as if you have deliberately rejected this part of the newer work and I think it is the poorer for it. There is at least one shell in the studio which is decorated with a range of painted images but the surface seems illustrative rather than painterly (and very much tied to the literal representation of the idea).

You also seem to have restrained your exuberance and what I saw to be your sense of humour - possibly because of the 'high seriousness' of the project you have set yourself. No one would deny the 'high seriousness' of a Jasper Johns or a Rauschenburg, or to give more recent examples, Ian Hamilton Finlay's or Ian Howard's work, but there is wit and a sense of fun in their work which makes their respective oeuvres really engaging. I would like to think that you could imbue your work with some of those qualities but at the moment I think it's missing.

Your first paper is complete and there's no denying that you have produced a considerable amount of work during the past year - that's not the problem. However I think you should consider whether there are some aspects of your earlier work which might be usefully exploited. You seem to be willing the 'content' to come at the moment and I just get the feeling that the results are too forced.

LES BLAKEBROUGH. Studio Practice Supervisor.

The continuing issue I have with Wayne's work is the gulf between what he sees as his "commercial / functional" pieces, and those he has shown at his last critique, and now for the mid-course review. The missile, bomb, and mine have been added to, by yet unfinished pieces, which do indicate a change of direction. In form if not in concept.

Although Wayne sees his commercial / functional items as predictable and has a tendency to dismiss them, I would argue that not only has it moved and changed, and is far from static, but that it has a level of success. Added to that I think it would be just as capable of dealing with many of his concerns, including those raised in his first paper, and that it would most likely engage others with his issues, that the current work is less

successful at achieving. Going back quite a time, the older teapot forms, very largely denying their functions, were in my view highly successful exploits that were engaging not only for their forms which were intricate and complex, but also because they were a celebration of the medium.

It was commented on in our review by others that this work very often had also, a degree of whimsy, and that perhaps somehow rather than dismiss it, take it up as the opposite side of your nature and make it say some of the things you find a need to get across.

About the paper, it needs to be tied better than it is to the work in hand. I did not feel there was a bridge or connection, and certainly no direct link from the text to the work.

RAY ARNOLD. Printmaking.

-Disparity between the articulate position as put by Wayne in discussion and the nature of surrounding work. This is possibly a healthy sign at this stage of the course and obviously a function of the studio interview process.

-The work was dispersed around the studio and included both functional ceramic and or sculptural forms. With in the latter group of works there was a range of form and surface in evidence. Some of the pieces displayed a strange naive quality that contrasted with a more self conscious approach in other work, The work that I liked, and that I could see potential for development, was simple and clear in it's form and economical in it's surface pattern and texture. I could imagine links being made between the notion of replication, the fragility of the ceramic form and the essential conceptual thrust of Wayne's enterprise.

-The papers presented to the panel were lucid and informative although I felt that a major problem with the first essay is it's generality. This might satisfy the course requirements at this stage but I would have liked to have seen a clear path outlined from

the important and fundamental issues developed within the paper to the more personal view. This could be achieved within a framework of association to other artists and their ideas, as Jonathan has suggested, and also with more reference to Wayne's own background.

Summation.

I felt that the panel's remarks were in many respects clearly valid although in reaction to the 'literal' tag I argued that I felt this was a response that proceeded from an audience (art school staff) who were far more educated in their tastes than the general public, for whom in the main I intended my work for. To my mind many of the lecturers are rather similar to ones image of jaded roman senators. Much has passed before their *weary* eyes, a certain aesthetic sophistication is the order of the day. Later I came to recognise that in this instance (the MFA course) my work was required to be directed primarily towards the institutional status quo. I leapt to the challenge and have enjoyed it.

Jonathan's remarks were accurate to a degree and I was, as he pointed out, oppressed by the 'seriousness' of my subject. I did feel however that in light of some of the positive feedback I had received in 1991 it was not a generous appraisal, There were works such as the small lustre mine which had been seen by many as very successful and which had a very luscious surface. I did appreciate the suggestion to enter into the work more completely with my sense of humour. The MFA course I think tends to engage one's ego to the extent that it actually inhibits one. The strong wish to be seen as a serious artist of some capacity was inhibiting. In part also this was connected with my wish to break away from the imposition of function that occurs generally in ceramics. I was sick of being seen as a ceramic artist, rather than an artist who used ceramics as a material of choice. This was in part the reason I had included the option of painting in my proposal. I wanted to break the ceramic yoke. However this was impossible to implement given the

course load and time available. So I had as part of this wish, as Jonathan pointed out, also thrown out the major part of my expression, the one in fact, where many people do identify me as an artist.

It was liberating to 'receive permission' from the panel to return to a field of comfortable expression, I was generally concerned with my work at this stage. I mention this perception as early as the entry for July the 17th 1991. I think from this period on my work split into two streams. There were still sufficient challenges for me in the formal figurative expression that I wished to pursue it as a separate field. I felt I would have been giving up if I had dropped it. I also felt confident enough of my abilities that I might get something out of it before the courses end.

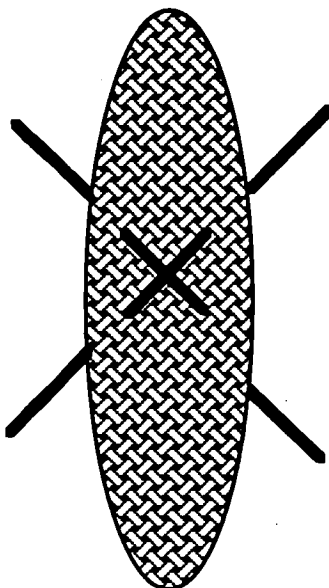
The other issue of importance that arose out of the review was that of my first essay. Coming as I did from a background a number of years ago as a psychiatric nurse and having always had a keen interest in psychology, I wrote this essay, as Jonathan pointed out in his review statement, without reference to art practice. Not having had a formal art education before entering the MFA programme in my preliminary year, at the time I saw my work as proceeding from social issues that I did not link with directly to art history.

I was most unhappy at the negative reaction I received to this essay which was on the aggressive instinct in man and its consequences for our modern world. I recognise now that the criticism was somewhat valid, the essay was extremely general. I have had a major problem with this simplistic, generalising tendency. It is one which I now realise stems from my ideological inclinations. It is apparent to me now that ideology by necessity postulates a simple world. If life's true complexity was able to be acknowledged perhaps nothing at all would happen, or perhaps everything!

Having as I do a strong will to succeed, I set out to write another essay that would fulfill the required criteria. Although I had a reasonable grasp of art history before entering the course, I have found that I have huge lacunae in my knowledge of formal movements in art history. The reading and research I have done since taking my decision to write

a new first essay, along with the actual writing, has absorbed far more time than I anticipated. To a considerable degree I am frustrated that this is so, as I rarely seem to connect with my practical work in these last months of the course. The windfall is that I have discovered many artists who (not surprising to others I'm sure) have shared and share my social concerns, and express their response in their art. So it is that in the last few months of this course, I feel at last, that I have broken from the suffocating yoke of exclusively ceramic concerns. I recognise that my full response will have to wait until the course is finished, perhaps well beyond, but I am pleased with my present position in terms of achievement.

In the third and final critique in July I put up a number of objects illustrating a 'two fold' stream of expression. It was interesting to find that people clearly support the work that proceeds more directly from my ceramic history. This is the work in which domestic objects metamorphose into weapons, specifically hand grenades. The other work is perhaps more straightforward and didactic. Since starting my art history essays, I find that reference to art history is also appearing within the work. In this way I feel these two streams of work I am currently engaged in will fuse and provide a *metamorphic* expression of their own. I feel this process is under-way in the latest work which often combines human body parts with other objects. The metamorphic sexual object finds its expression in a related series stemming from my second essay *Surrealism and the Sacred*.



Last Testament.

6th January, 1993.

This year I have found that I have been increasingly concerned with my notion of the metamorphic. All life is metamorphic. It is rather like the story of the king who had everything. When he asked his wise men to furnish him with an object that would contain all the wisdom in the world so that he might consult it in times of need, they gave him a ring to wear, and upon it was engraved

This too will change.

As identities we contain the male and the female. In our range of mind states we metamorphose from sanity to insanity, from exultation to desolation, from being peaceful to being violent, from the lyrical to the base, nothing is fixed. All around us the world of materiality is in a constant state of flux, all our relationships are in a constant state of flux. In my work I have metamorphosed from the fixed to the floating, having realised that there is no one *truth*. That the situation is as I read somewhere:

*the truth that is fixed is no
longer a truth.*

This means that I am ^{now} free floating and this free floating is as illusory as not floating free. I no longer have to find something other than the floating truth that everything is relative to the place, the moment and the person. Time and space are relative. Freedom is in realising that one is in prison. As Jung said, man has a need of the positive, no matter *how illusory*. How does this affect my work? I started this course with the statement that I intended to investigate modern technological life via the notion of the machine, power and belief. I chose the weapon as machine to encapsulate my concerns. The weapon is often beautiful in its form yet ugly in the raw craving for power it represents. It contains the power of life and death, the ultimate power of domination - Male Power. Nietzsche defined the 'will to power' as the intrinsic need of all men. This will to power is innate and serves to guarantee the continued existence of the organism. Every will to power finds its own

level. The will to power can be seen to exist at the level of the state as well as at the level of the individual. Belief also interests me because it is a determinant of action. Belief often has its capacity strengthened in the believer in the face of facts which could be said to clearly negate the belief. The believer has the advantage of faith!

My work is about war, about inconstancy, about metamorphosis, about the shadows in the garden. It is about the variability of perception, about loss and rupture. Rationality reveals its limitations at every turn. When I started the course I believed in rationality. Now I feel that rationality by itself is something outside of being *fully* human. The icy will of rationality must be tempered with the balm of feeling. I am interested in what it is for humans to be truly intelligent, I feel that to realise this intelligence is imperative to the survival of *homo sapiens* and I wonder if, as a species we can learn to be truly intelligent, rather than merely extremely clever. In Pierre Cabanne's book *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, he asks Duchamp what he feels intelligence to be. Duchamp replies:

That's exactly what I was going to ask you! The word "intelligence" is the most elastic one can invent. There is a logical or Cartesian form of intelligence, but I think Breton meant to say something else. He envisaged, from the Surrealist point of view, a freer form of the problem; for him, intelligence was in some way the penetration of what the average normal man finds incomprehensible or difficult to understand.

The issues I am concerned with in my MFA coursework are diverse but could be said to stem from the notion of the human need for identity and within this identity sanity. As a male I am in sympathy to the idea of a new male persona, but wonder what that may, in reality be. Nietzsche's postulation of the inexorable 'will to power' is an illustration of how he viewed the primary need of the 'Superman'. The only apparent truth is that one must succeed virtually regardless of the cost to oneself and society. Camille Paglia in her book *Sexual Personae* comments: 'What an abyss divides the sexes. Let us abandon the pretence of sexual sameness and admit the terrible duality of gender'. She goes on to say:

Male sex is repetition - compulsion: whatever a man writes in the commentary of his phallic projections must be rewritten again and again. Projection is a male curse: forever to need something or someone to make oneself complete. The artist is the closest man has come to imitating woman's superb self containment'.

Perhaps this is why I wish to be an artist. It is interesting to refer this quote to my insight of July 19th 1991 on possible male perceptions. In my essays I attempt to provide understanding for the reader of what it is I am addressing in my work. I sincerely believe that man has lost his way and that the materialistic world of *maya*, (the illusory world of things) has caught him in its net. There have never been more objects in the world than now and in another moment there will be more. *'What profit it a man if he gains the world and loses his soul'*. I enjoy technology. It is based on comfort, and comfort has a soporific quality. One wants more. But as I point out in my essay *Technology and its Servants* there is also a sinister side to technology other than that of simple comfort and entertainment..

My objects have an increasingly surreal side to them. All objects are surreal. The hand grenade has no potential of destruction until the intent to use it in this capacity is formulated. Like all objects it is neutral. The destructive intent is a formulation, initially of the designer, then the maker and finally the user. Therefore the object is neutral or *innocent*. Many objects have this ability to transform from a state of innocence into a state of being a destructive accessory, but the object has no feeling. *It is always innocent*. The hand grenade could as easily serve as a paper weight, or to hold a door open whilst it awaits its call to destruction. It is a thought of man realised in steel, an intention of evil extended into form.

Domestic objects likewise hold this potential of transformation. The electric jug that faithfully in everyday use brews the hot water for the family cuppa can become an instrument of destruction also if in the violence of a domestic dispute it serves as a weapon in the emptying of its boiling contents on a victim. There is a story of Simenon's where the family joint of meat is used in its frozen state to beat in the skull of the victim.

When the police arrive to investigate the murder weapon has become, through the mechanical process of cooking, the meal about to be consumed by the murderer. This duality that exists in the object, that of being simultaneously object, and yet also perhaps tool and weapon, serves to create an underlying world of menace in the supposedly prosaic reality of everyday life. It could be accurately said that it is thought that is the agent of this transformation of the object, for as stated, the object assumes its usage through the intention of the user. This is in line with a quote I used to open my second essay: 'You are what you think. With your thoughts you make the world'.

Food therefore also contains this element of the object that can be lethal as well as administering. This principle is seen in those fruits that are poisonous but finds a resonance in the metaphorical apple of the Garden of Eden. The apple is at once the object of innocence and nourishment and also serves to remove innocence from Adam and Eve. This principle of the neutrality of the object was used by Duchamp to illustrate the paradox that exists in the existence of the object when he enacted the creation of the ready made. The bottle rack for instance which to all appearances contained its use unreservedly as a utilitarian object was by the notion of acquisition by an artist transformed into an art object. This serves to illustrate that art as is in the mind of the beholder. The doubled object is disquieting and all too real. *Everything man makes reveals his inner being.*

So it seems to me that *life* is a paradox, we exist in a world we can barely comprehend and we find this to a considerable degree intolerable. There is no final answer. The beautiful weapon is a paradox. To my mind, this makes it truly a surreal object.



MAN IS NOT RESIGNED TO NOT KNOWING.

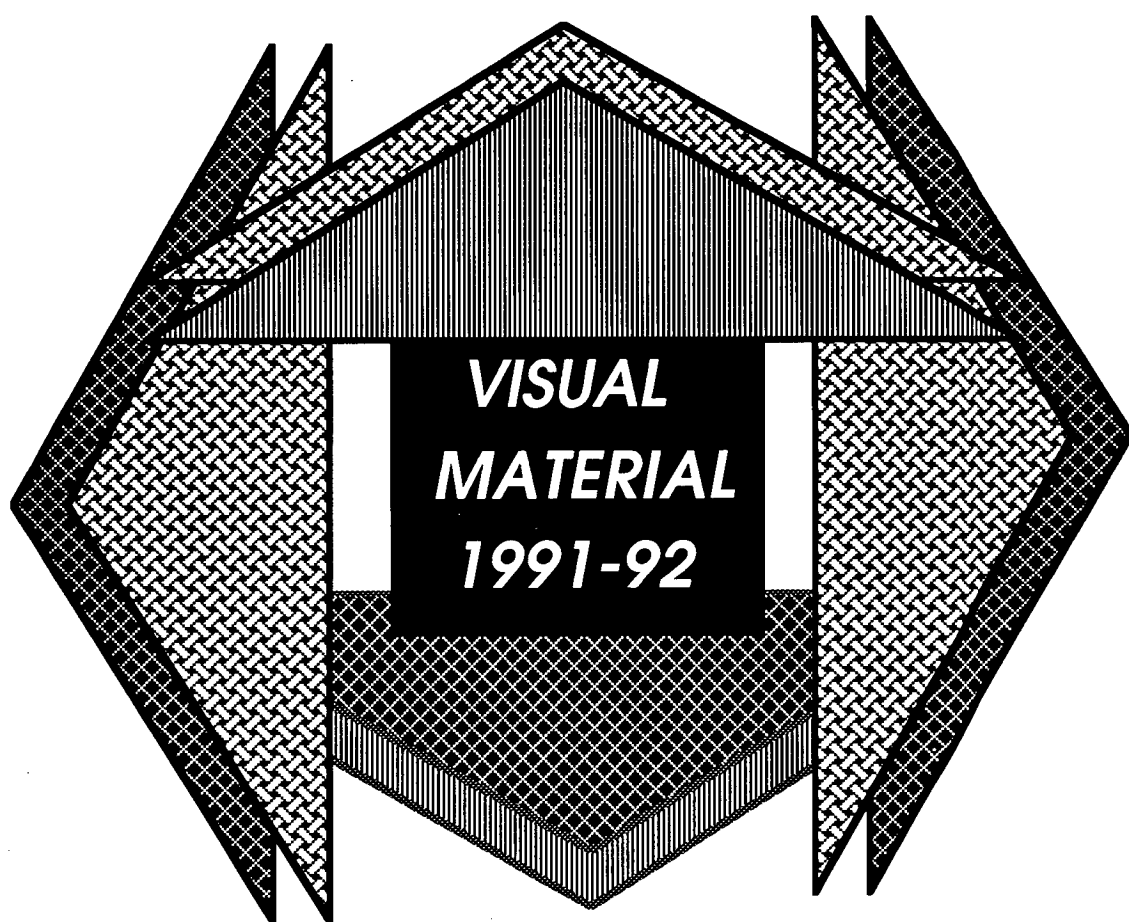
Sigmund Freud

I have included three essays. The first is a much condensed and refined version of the initial attempt that was mentioned in my mid course review. At that time it was titled *The Human Dilemma*. I have included it retitled: *The Flaw in the Glass*. It deals with modern war and the aggressive capacity of mankind and enables, I believe a straightforward entry into my work and the issues I was concerned with in my first year of the course.

The second essay is titled: *Technology and its Servants* and covers the arrival of the machine age in the 19th century. It deals with particular artist's interpretation of the effects of this revolution upon the psyche of early twentieth century man and its continuation in the technological age and present ramifications.

My third essay is titled: *Surrealism and the Sacred*. It looks at the Surrealists and their rejection of hard line rationality and examines their notion of a new consciousness for man - a concept they proposed for a new age. The essay also examines the Surrealist concept of the erotic and the violent in relation to liberation from the everyday world of rational conformity.

The three essays encompass the whole of my concerns, these being in essence the somewhat fragile existence of technological man's identity in a metamorphic world and his need for 'The lost world of the sacred'. Or put another way the relationship between technology, nature and the animal and the spiritual needs of modern man. Man must not become a machine for if he does then he will no longer be man at all. Man who has so long pursued his vision of the Golden Dream will finally and irrevocably become the angel who has fallen to Earth.



FIRST CRITIQUE. August 27th, 1991.

Slide 1.

Large Sea Mine.

Dimensions 550 cm by 330 cm

Description on Page 10 - No 2.

Slide 2.

Artillery Shell *minus glass.*

Dimensions 550cm by 160 cm

Description on Page 11 - No 4 .

Slide 3.

Artillery Shell - ANOTHER VIEW.

Dimensions 550cm by 160 cm

*Description on Page 11 - No 4 *minus glass.**

Slide 4.

Artillery Shell.

Dimensions 550 cm by 140 cm

Description on Page 11 - No 5.

Slide 5.

Three Artillery Shells.

Dimensions 450 cm by 330 cm

Description on Page 11 - No 7.

Slide 6.

Boat form with Missile.

Dimensions 560 cm by 350 cm

Description on Page 11 - No 8.

SECOND CRITIQUE. November 9th, 1991.

Slide 7.

Artillery Shell on Metal.

Dimensions 480 cm by 250 cm

Description on Page 11 - No 12.

Slide 8.

Small Lustre Mine on Box.

Dimensions 490 cm by 400 cm

Description on Page 21 - No 1 (Fig 5).

Slide 9.

Helmet, Shells & Mine on Books.

Dimensions 780 cm by 570 cm

Description on Page 21 - No 3 (Fig 7).

Slide 10.

Temple on Glass on Shells.

Dimensions 820 cm by 460 cm

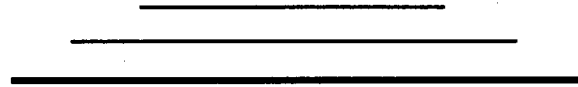
Description on Page 22 - No 4 (Fig 8).

Slide 11.

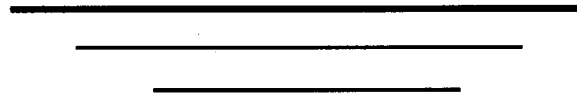
Three mines on Books and Drum.

Dimensions 1100 cm by 730 cm

Description on Page 22 - No 5 (Fig 9).



Photographic record
of work made
during late 1991 and 1992



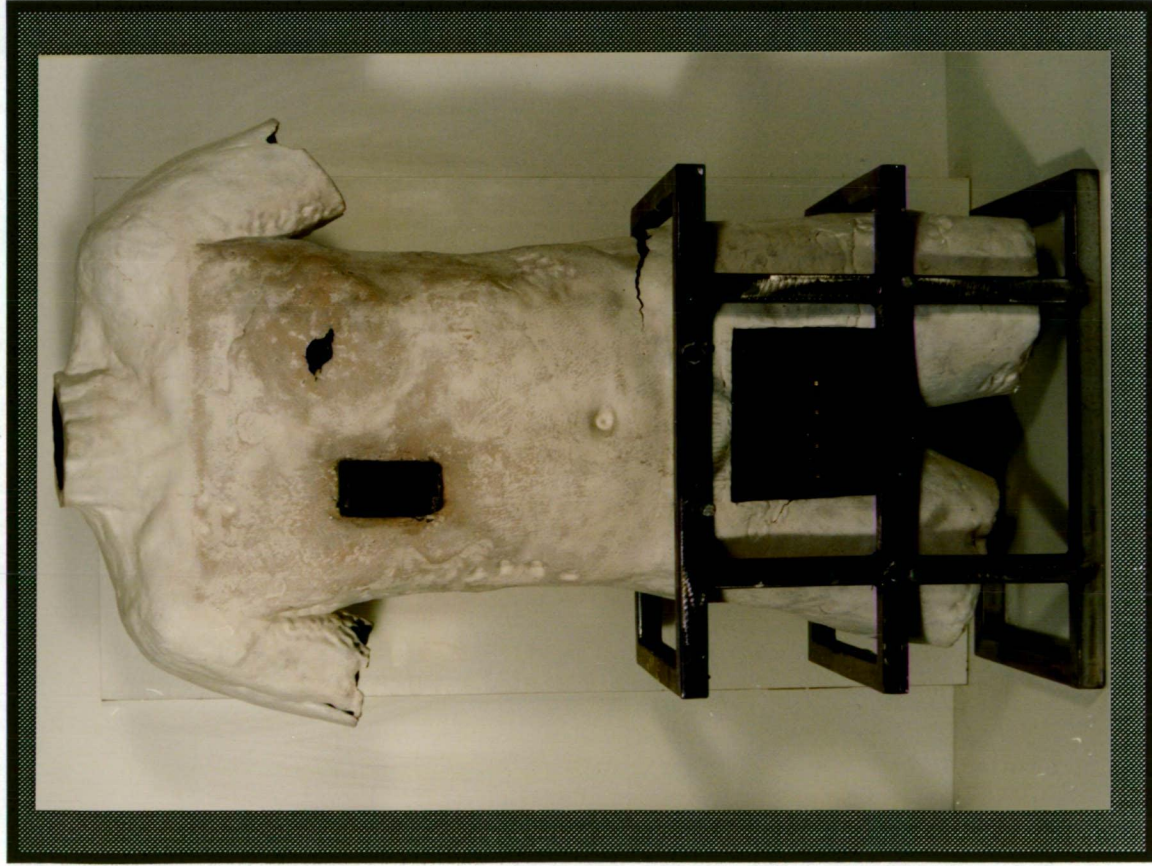


Fig 10



Fig 11

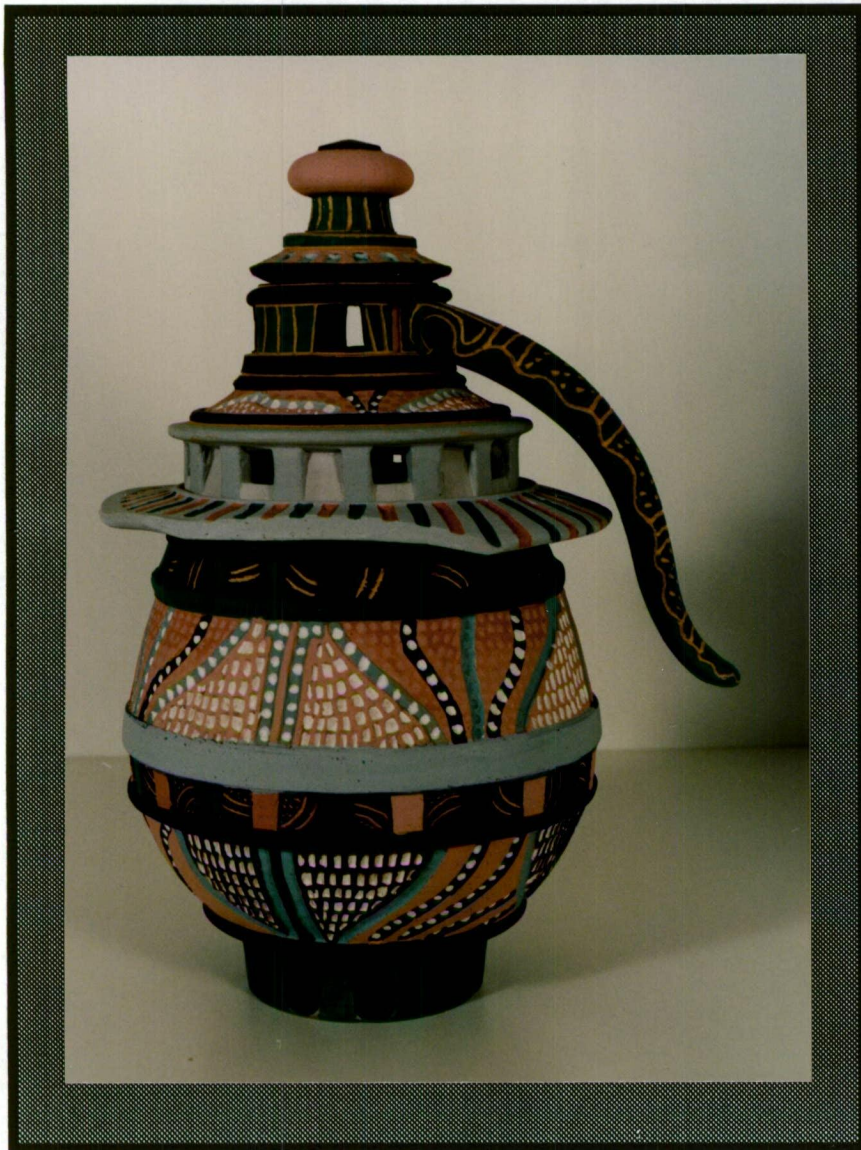


Fig 12

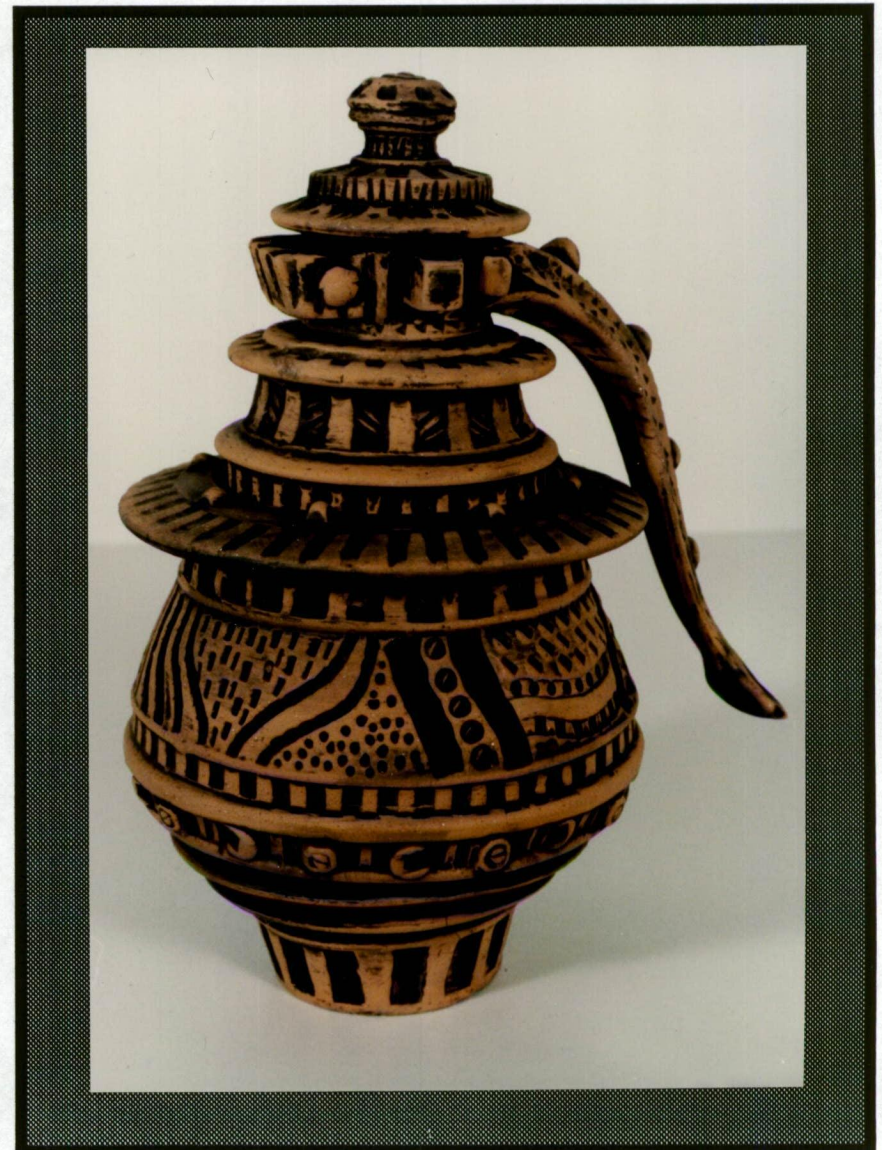


Fig 13



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16



Fig 17



Fig 18



Fig 19



Fig 20

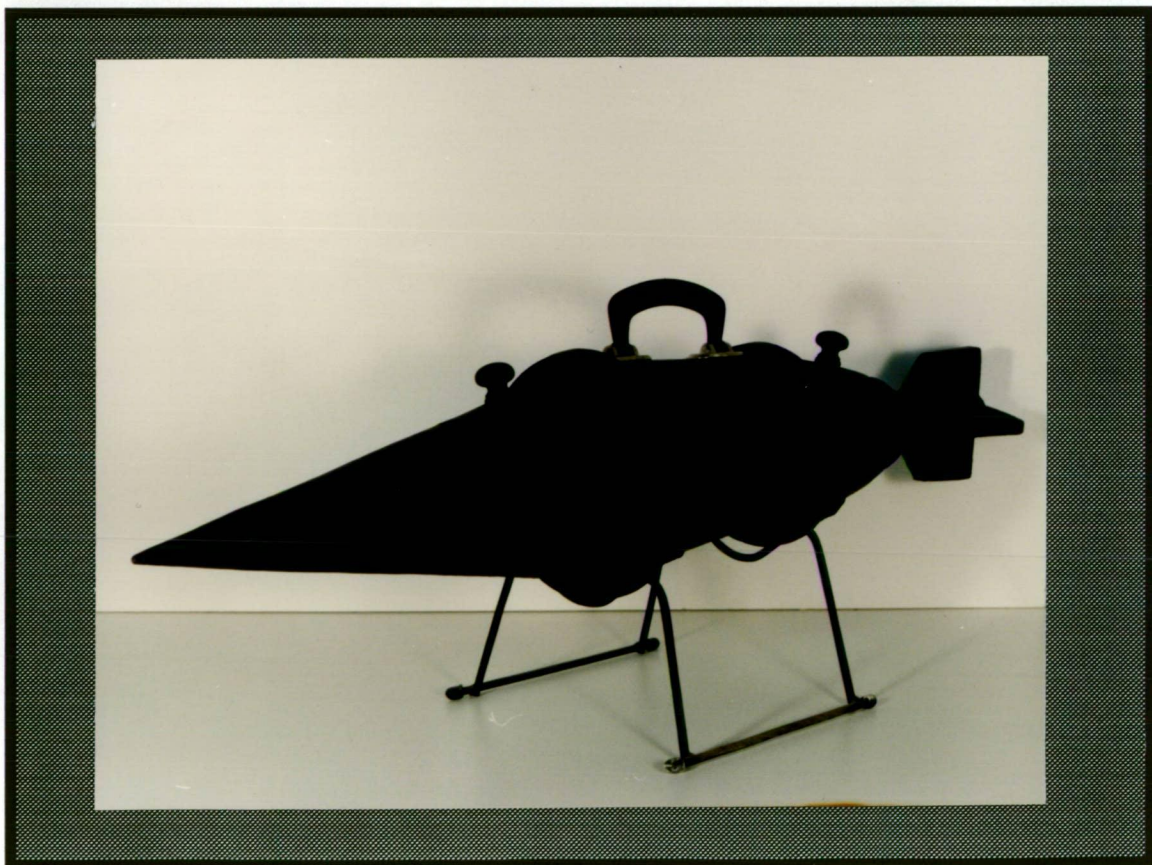


Fig 21

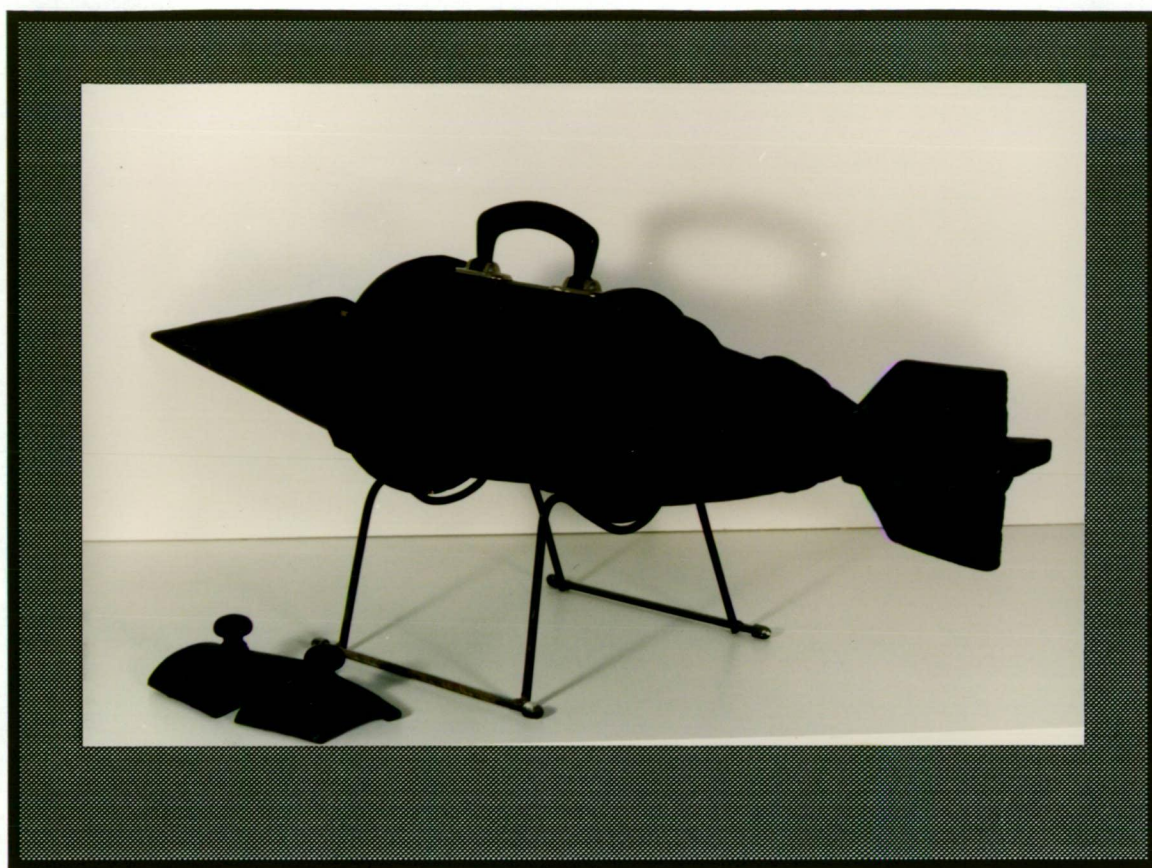


Fig 22

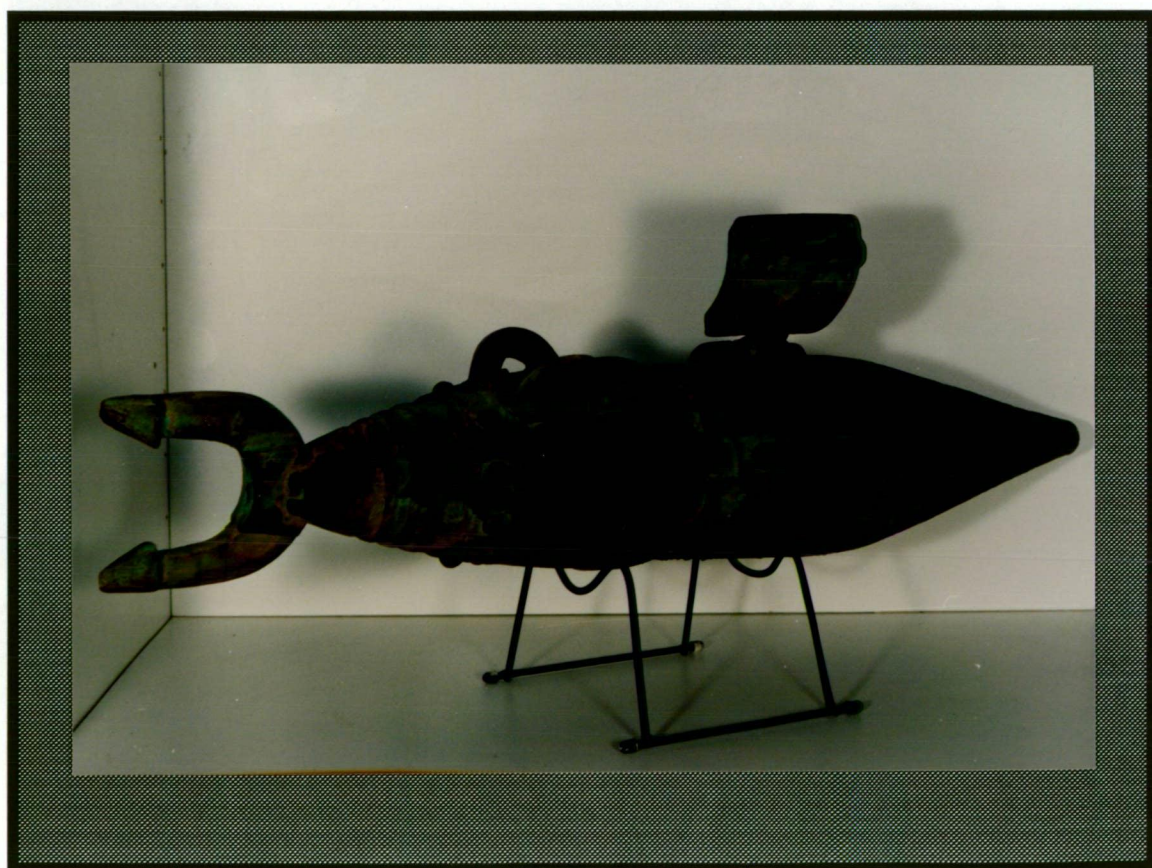


Fig 23

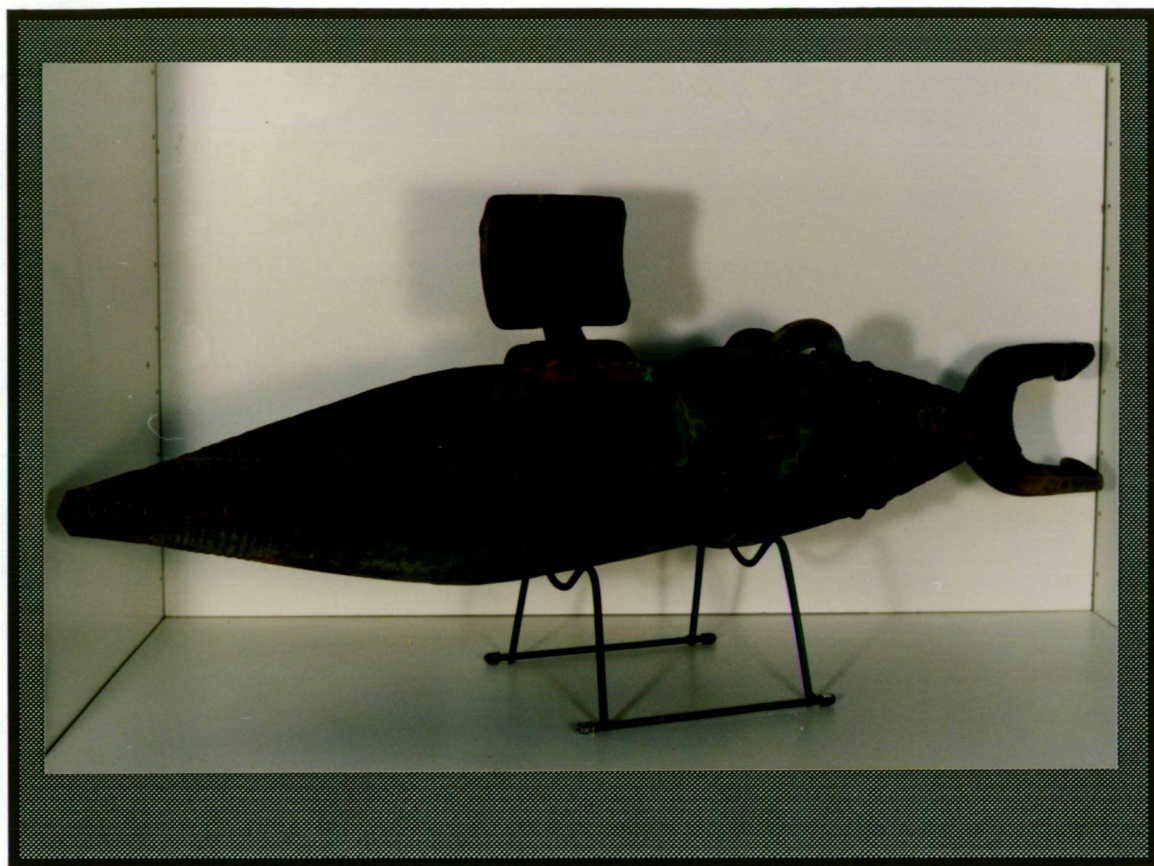


Fig 24



Fig 25

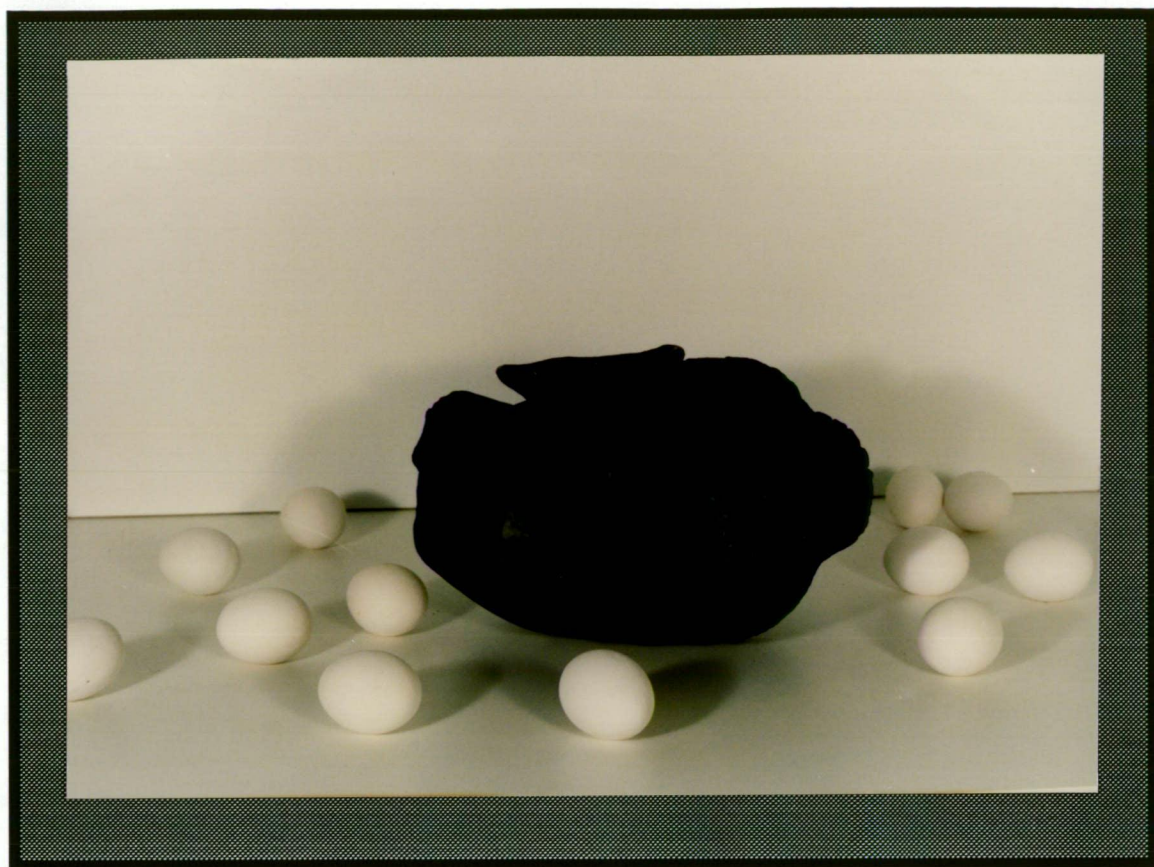


Fig 26



Fig 27

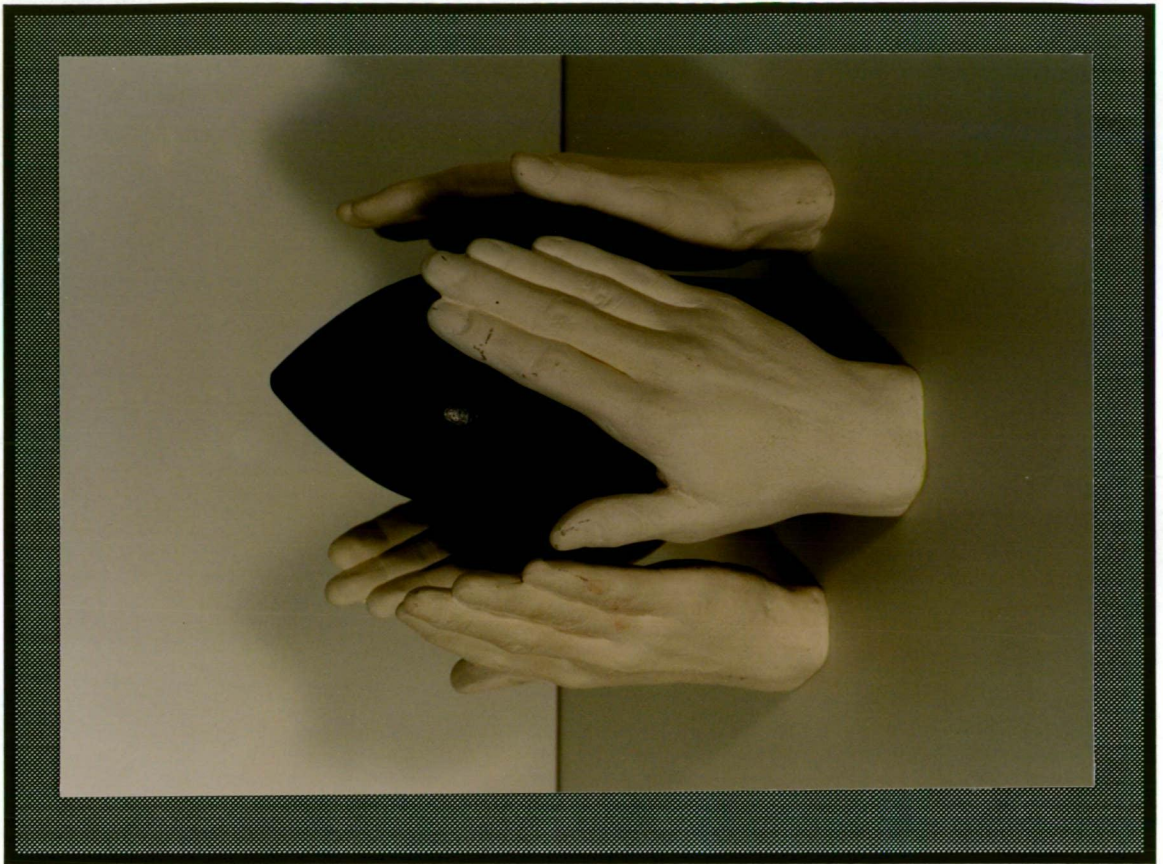


Fig 28



Fig 29



Fig 30

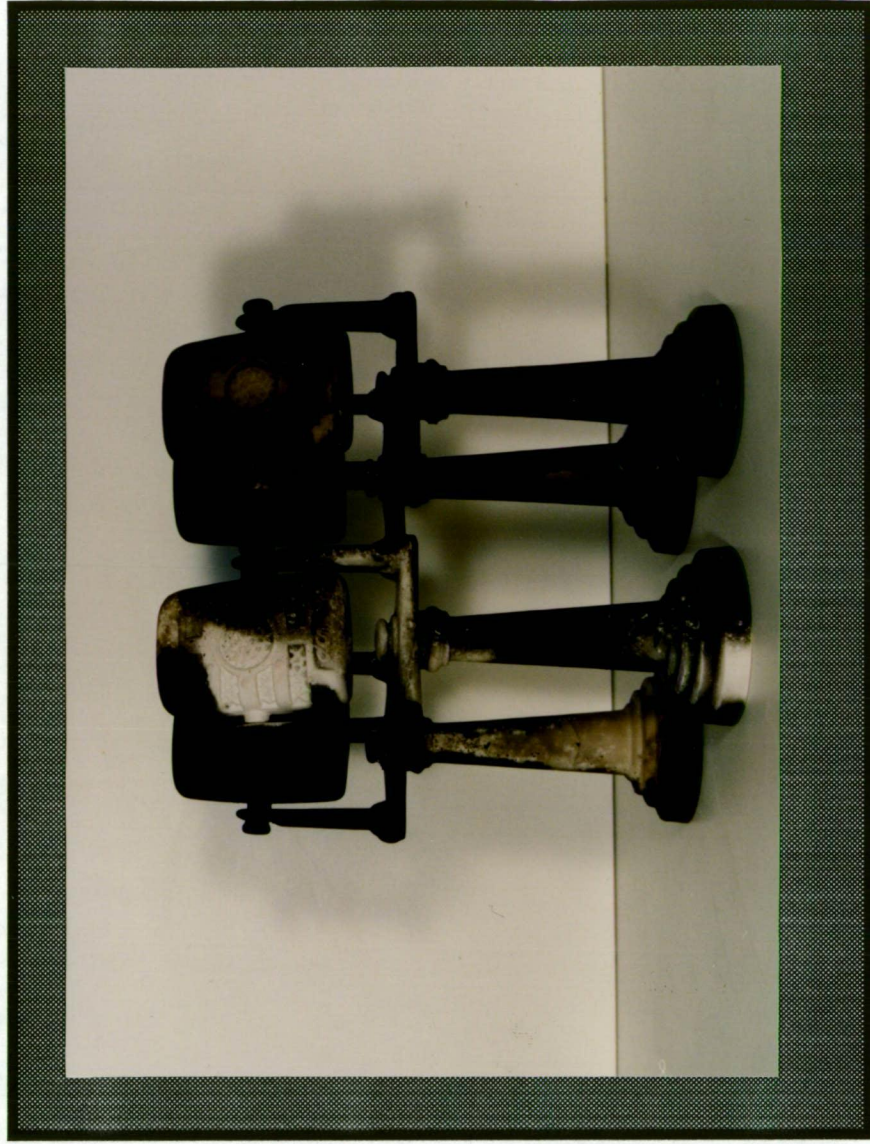


Fig 31



Fig 32



Fig 33

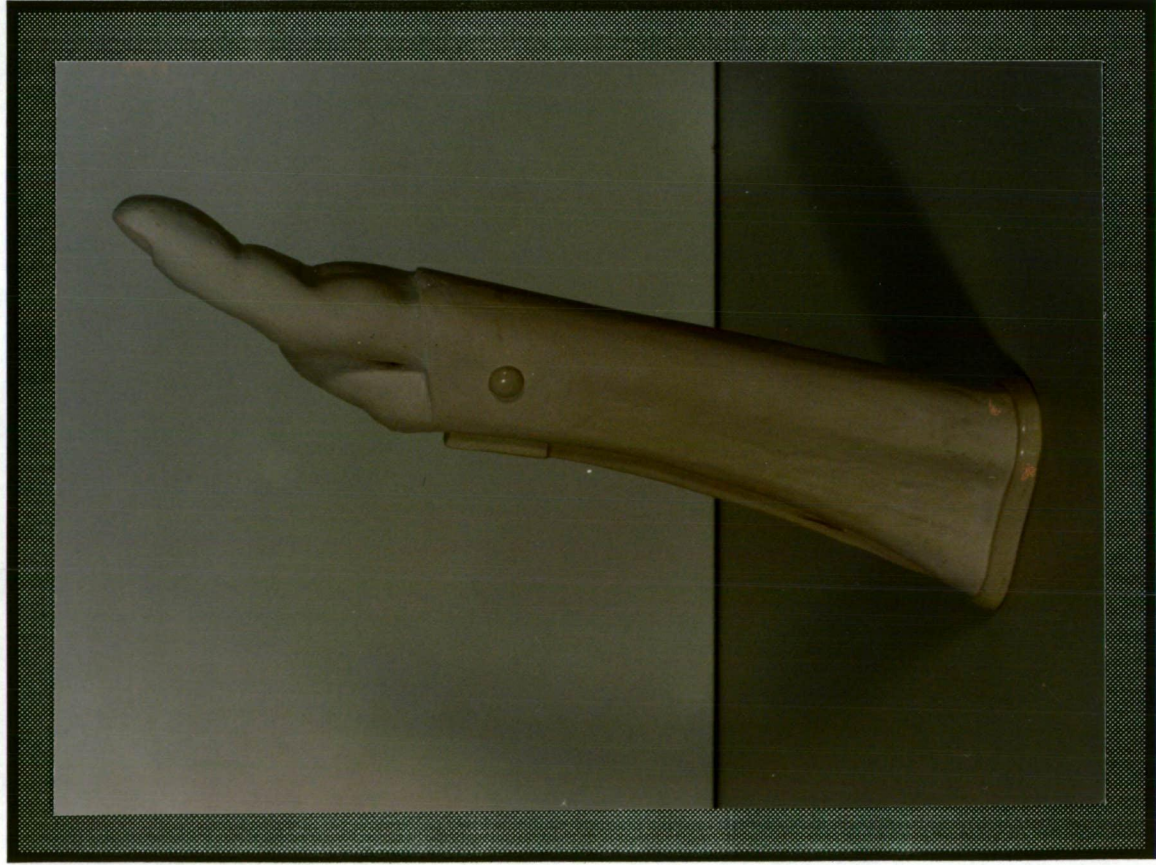


Fig 34

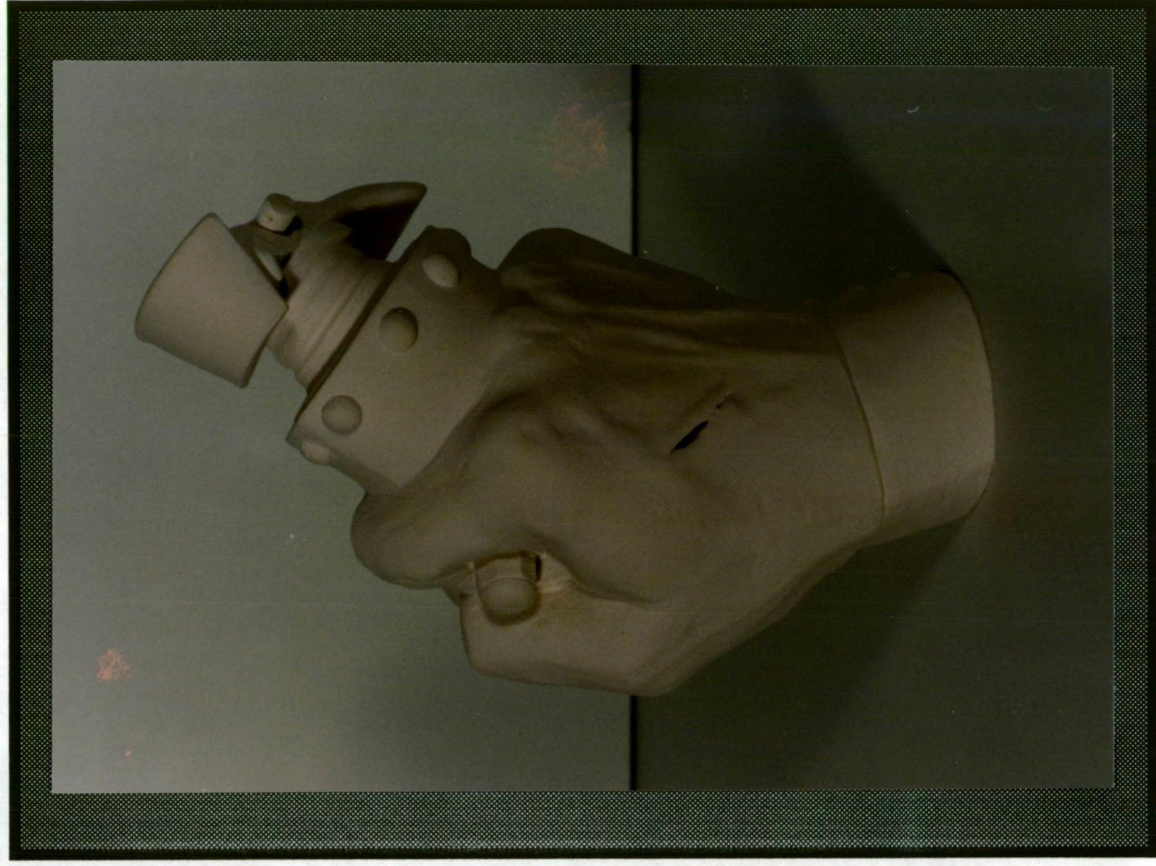


Fig 35

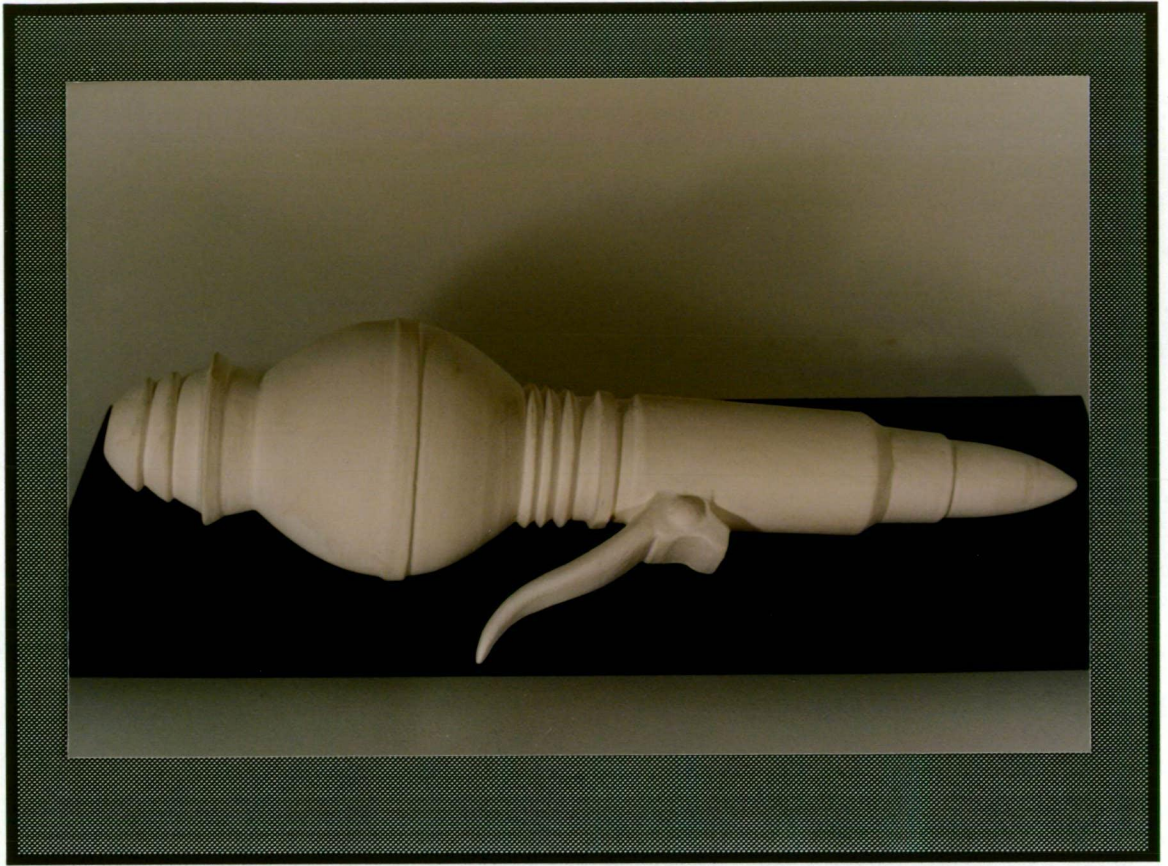


Fig 36

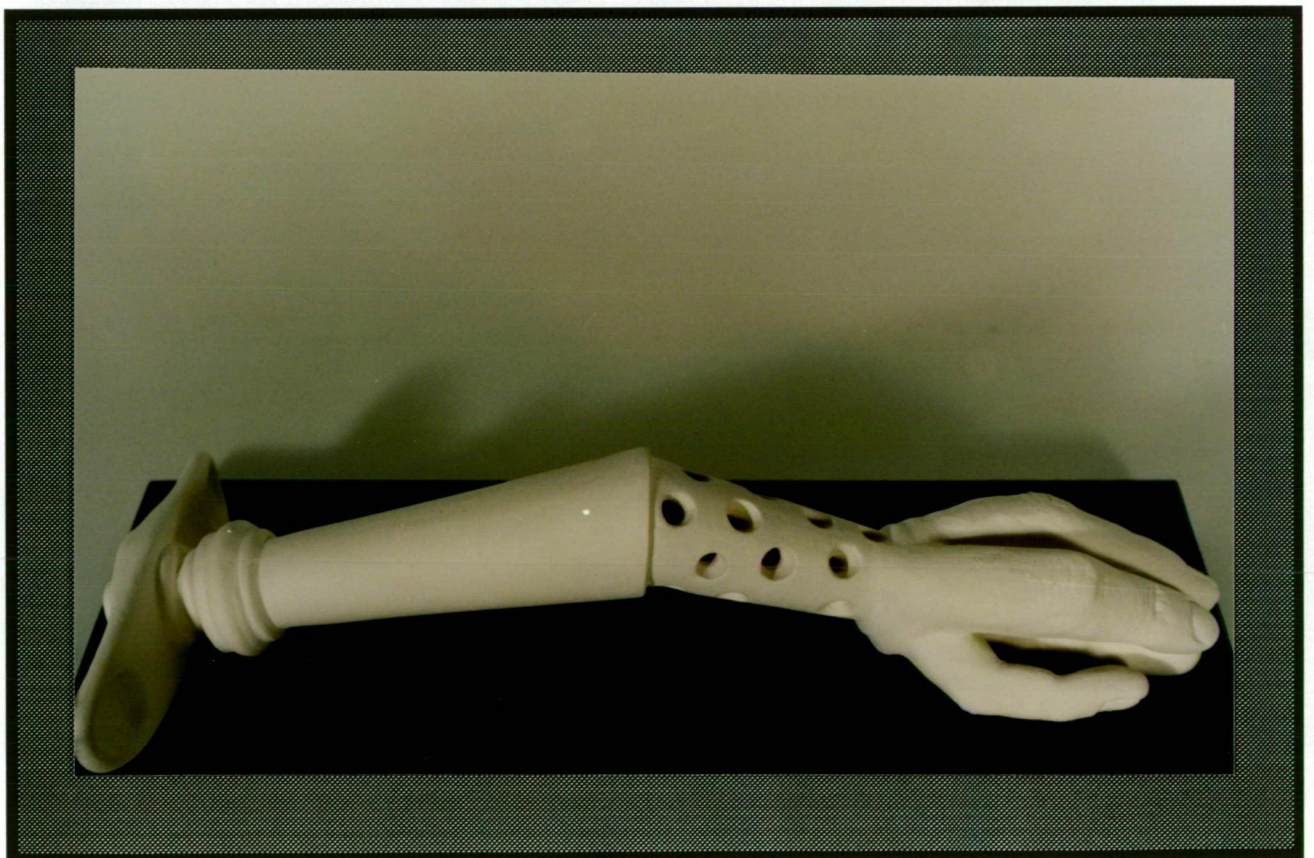


Fig 37

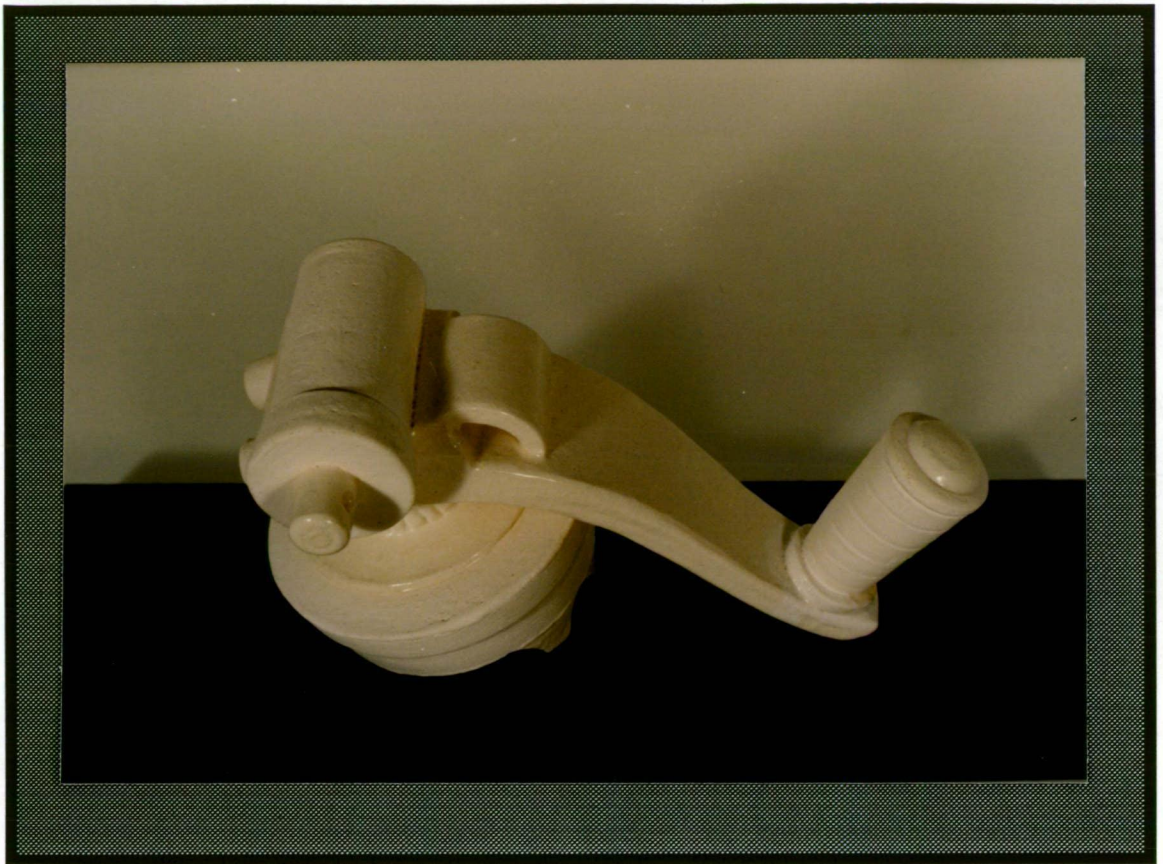


Fig 38

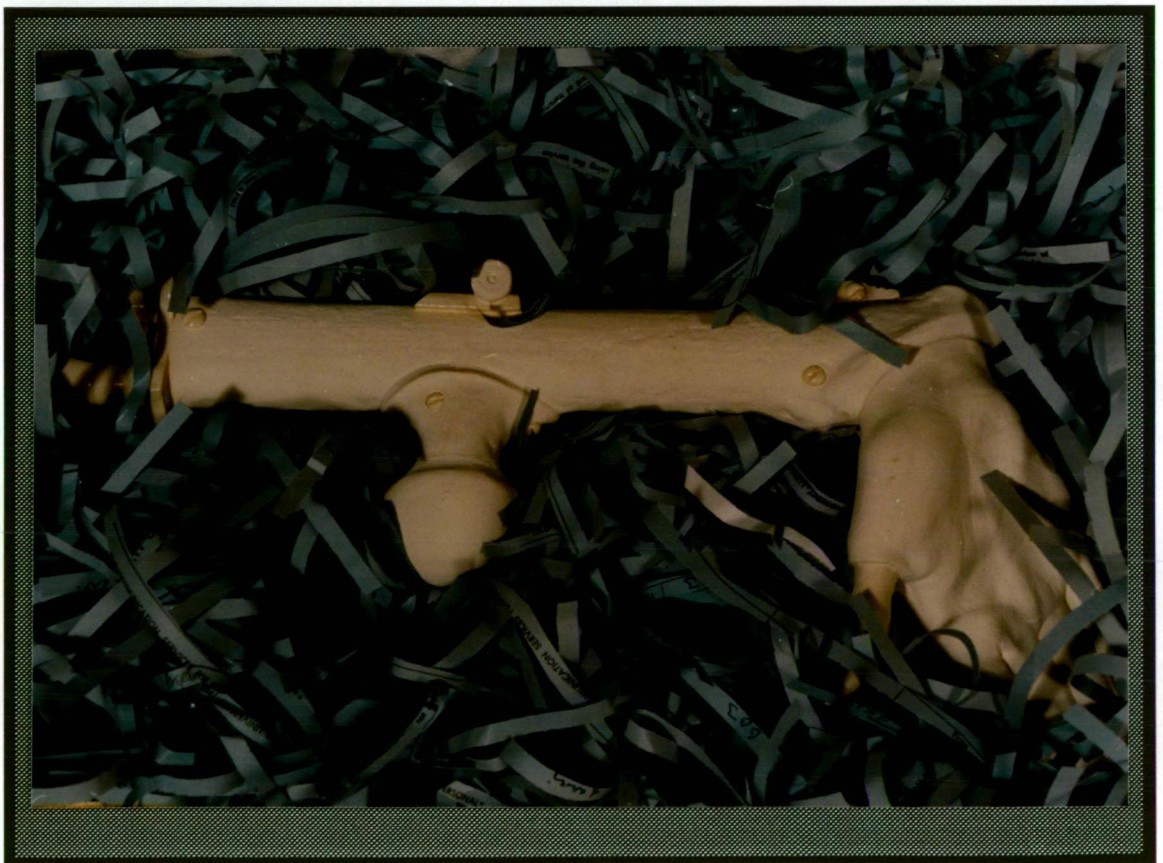


Fig 39

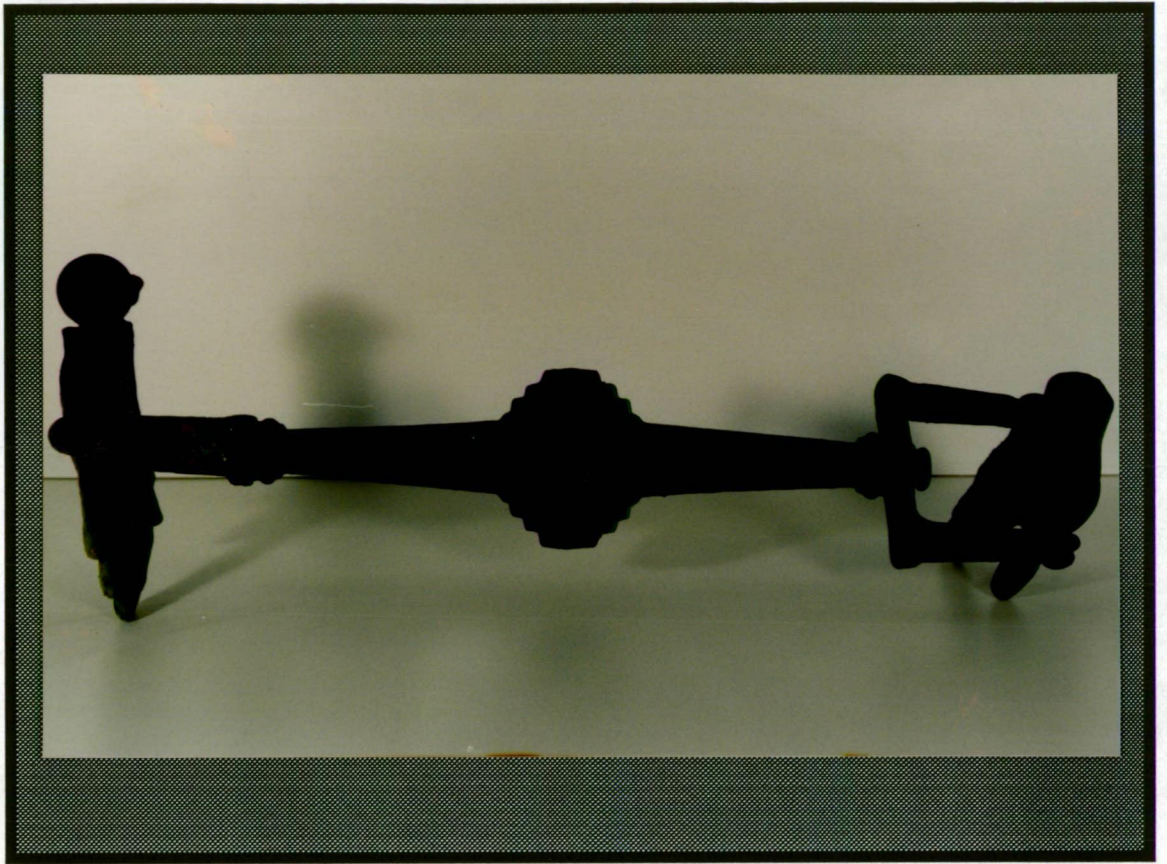


Fig 40



Fig 41

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Dimensions. 940 cm by 330 cm (Discontinued)
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Dimensions. 340 cm by 200 cm
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- Fig 21. Briefcase Bomb. (Mid 1992) Work in progress.**
Dimensions. 850 cm by 180 cm
-

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Dimensions. 850 cm by 180 cm

Fig 23. Patinated Metamorphic Missile with Hatch. (Late 1992)

Dimensions. 1000 cm by 200 cm

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Fig 24. Patinated Metamorphic Missile. (Late 1992)

Dimensions. 1000 cm by 200 cm

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Dimensions. 1000 cm by 200 cm

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Fig 26. Buddhas Head & Eggs. Work in progress. (Late 1992)

Dimensions. 900 cm by 130 cm

Fig 27. Skull with Eggs. Work in progress. (Late 1992)

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Fig 28. Hand and Artillery Shell. (Late 1991)

Dimensions. 200cm by 180 cm

Fig 29. Male Hands and Female Hand. (Mid 1992)

Dimensions. 580 cm by 140 cm

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Dimensions. 200 cm by 100 cm / Work in progress.

Fig 31. Four Burnt Microphones. (Late 1992)

Dimensions 150 cm by 400cm by 300cm. / Work in progress.

PHOTOGRAPHS

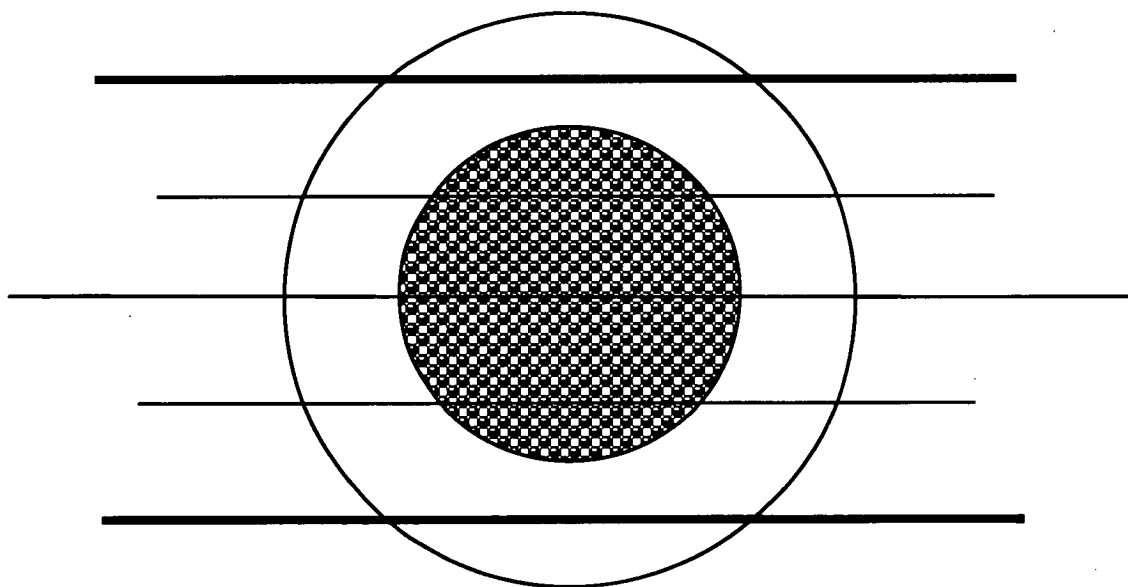
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ESSAYS

THE FLAW IN THE GLASS

TECHNOLOGY AND ITS SERVANTS

SURREALISM AND THE SACRED



The Flaw in the Glass



Revised condensed initial Essay.

The American Civil War of 1867 ended the romantic period of modern warfare when massed troops in striking uniforms faced each other on open fields. Chivalry was a casualty that, along with many thousands of men, died in a war that heralded the coming of the new mechanised war of the modern age. This war caused the deaths of 622 000 American soldiers, more than all the casualties which the United States sustained in both World Wars, Korea and Vietnam. Gwynne Dyer in his book *War* notes that forerunners of practically every modern weapon were used in the Civil War. Arthur C Danto illustrates the dawning of this new mode of mass destruction:

In its climatic moment when Picket's division marched, as if executing a complex figure in close-order drill, into the massed mouths of weapons that made such gestures forever irrelevant in war. Picket's men were conscious of the picture they made in the eye of bystanders, for whom, as Sappho writes "some say a cavalry corps, some infantry are the finest sight on earth." They accepted a code of military aesthetics while facing weapons that confirmed only to the quantitative codes of slaughter.¹

The case was however that apart from the new breech loading magazine feed rifles, many of the new weapons were in an embryonic stage of their development, demonstration of their full effectiveness lay not many years away in the horrific slaughter of the First World War of 1914- 1918. The First World War was the ' War To End All Wars', it proceeded from an obscure assassination in the Balkans and within four years had consumed twenty million lives. To this day, books are written that seek to explain exactly why it occurred, one thing that is clear is that it was the first total war, and equally important in the context of history, it was emphatically the war in which the machine as weapon, and the industrialisation that supported mass weapons production reached its coming of age.

Modern warfare is certainly extremely destructive of both life and property. That this is attributable to the efficiencies of advanced technology of warfare is clearly apparent. There are varied reasons apart from the obvious why this is so. One amongst these is the increasingly remote delivery of these weapons. With the invention of increasingly 'remote' weapons the individual does not even have to take into account the 'being' of his opponent. This is the very effect that the age old art of propaganda seeks to achieve, the dehumanisation of the enemy. Long range artillery, the high altitude bomber, the missile, all weapons of extreme destructive potential in which the operators, if indeed there are operators, will never see the immense suffering resulting from their actions.

Yet another factor is the ease of use of modern weapons system. There is often no physical effort involved for the perpetrator. The act of swinging a battle axe through armour and flesh for example, would have taken much effort, and this would have had an inhibitory effect eventually. For the remote operator of mass destruction there may be little more to do than to press a button to launch a number of missiles. Conventional weapons have now become so sophisticated that they can be seen as the equivalent of low yield nuclear weapons. Consider for instance that a single artillery shell may now contain 5000 lethal steel darts with which to spray the battlefield. It is because of these developments that the modern battle field will, it is estimated within 20 years, become too lethal for humans. Heat seeking devices, satellite tracking, battlefield sensors, lie in wait munitions, smart weapons, extremely powerful computers, all mean that in the near future wars will be decided on a purely technological level and by remote control well away from the actual battlefield.

It is often mentioned that man is the only animal that practices wholesale slaughter and cruelty to his own species, Psycho-therapist Anthony Storr in the introduction to his book *Human Aggression* has this to say:

That man is an aggressive species will hardly be disputed. With the exception of certain rodents, no other animal takes positive pleasure in the exercise of cruelty upon his own kind... The sombre fact is that we are the cruelest and most ruthless species that has ever walked the earth...²

That intra-specific aggression has almost certainly always been part of human interaction is not open to serious questioning. All animals demonstrate intra-specific aggression, but it is only mankind that has lost his innate controls on the destructive aspects of this action. Psycho-analyst Erich Fromm in his *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* :

If human aggression were more or less at the same level as that of other mammals particularly that of our nearest relative, the chimpanzee, human society would be rather peaceful and nonviolent. But this is not so. Man's history is a record of extraordinary destructiveness and cruelty, and human aggression, it seems, far surpasses that of man's animal ancestors, and man is, in contrast to most animals, a real 'killer'.³

Fromm defines this innate aggression as being defensive of the individual and species, being composed of the instinct when under threat to either fight or flee. This benign aggression ceases when the threat has ceased to exist. This is not to say that the other animal is killed as there is an innate trigger that depends upon the defeated animal displaying a submissive posture that signals it is no longer a threat. In some instances serious injury may result as in the case of the male elephant seal, but the primary aim of the victor is not death, but domination. Desmond Morris states that 'fighting represents the failure of threat displays'.⁴ He goes on to say that threat displays are an important means of avoiding conflict. This is important because even a clearly dominant animal can not be sure of avoiding serious damage in a fight, if for instance the other combatant were to fly into a frenzy. As the aim of the organism is primarily reproduction, in the interests of species preservation it does not pay to damage oneself if it can be avoided. With the development of weapons it is no longer the case that combatants will be of a roughly equal status in terms of their ability to inflict damage. As an example, the man wielding a gun

2 Anthony Storr, *Human Aggression*, (The Penguin Press: London, 1968) Introduction.

3 Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, (Holt, Rinehart and Winston: New York, 1973) Page 274

4 Desmond Morris, *Manwatching - A Field Guide to Human Behaviour*, (Grafton Books: London, 1987) Page 156

will feel markedly superior in his capacity to one who is merely armed with a club, and this superiority will act to remove his fear of retaliation, and therefore, could lead to an act of uninhibited savagery. The extrapolation of this superior armament principle to the level of nations is the obvious primary cause of the arms race.

The development of the young of any species depends on the quality of aggression. The human baby and child has primary needs that it must achieve to survive and prosper and it is relentless in its pursuit of the attainment of those needs. The baby as soon as it is able must 'learn' its environment. Psycho-analyst Clara Thompson states this quite clearly:

Aggression is not necessarily destructive at all. It springs from an innate tendency to grow and master life which seems to be characteristic of all living matter. Only when this life force is obstructed in its development do ingredients of anger, rage, or hate become connected with it.⁵

This 'aggression' as Thompson emphasises is a necessary prerequisite to development. It may be characterised as curiosity and it is at its most far ranging in humans. Konrad Lorenz points out that :

In all cases, the juveniles exhibit peak development of curiosity and learning ability, experimentation of all conceivable behaviour patterns of the species is easily discernable... Through the fact that such animals at first treat everything novel as if it were of the greatest biological importance, they inevitably become acquainted with every small detail of the most extreme and varied ecological niches which can contribute to the preservation of their existence.⁶

In any event this assertive curiosity that humankind shares in common with all the other 'higher' species and which in fact we demonstrate to the greatest degree, is the key to both our ability to create our own environment and ironically our expulsion from the ecological niche that it can be argued in terms of 'sanity' is our optimum. We are, as stated earlier, a social animal. This means we are open to the social pressure of the group, and indeed it is this fact that paradoxically makes us largely the creatures of war that we are. We bear within us a great many innate factors that facilitate our social acceptability.

5 Ibid., Page 42

6 Konrad Lorenz, Studies in Animal and Human Behaviour -Volume Two, (Butler & Tanner Ltd: Frome and London, 1971) Page 146

Amongst these innate characteristics can be seen territoriality, group bonding and its associated identification against the 'other', rank striving and infantilism. In connection with group bonding and its specific effects I Eibl Eisenfeldt emphasises the following observation:

An aggressive disposition can be fostered or suppressed by education directed toward specific aims. Warfaring peoples reinforce the martial virtues in songs and tales, encourage obedience, instruct on battle behaviour, and urge retaliation. Children who experience parental affection generally identify with same sex parental role models and assume the values of their culture, whether they are peaceful or militant.⁷

With the adoption of weapons man has transformed his offensive capacity from that of a relatively puny creature to the most fearsome predator the earth has known. The insane act of war in the modern age has threatening ramification even during rare moments of peace. The increasing sophistication of weapon systems and their associated rising costs are draining national coffers that can ill afford in an age of increasing population. According to the Swedish International Peace Research Institute global expenditure on defence in 1990 was \$US950 billion dollars. The major problem facing humankind in the future will be the acceleration of growth in that fertile ground for human conflict, population, and the territorial and resources requirements that follow in the wake of its expansion.

As Eibl Eisenfeldt points out, in the 26 years from 1950 to 1976 the population doubled to a figure of four billion people. This rate is exponential and it is estimated by the year 2000 that the population of the earth will be in the order (or disorder) of six to seven billion, of which 76.5% will be in the developing countries. Even in 1975 according to Eibl Eisenfeldt:

The maximum capacity of the earth has probably been exceeded already by far, for according to the intermediate report of the environmental office of the United Nations (1976), 450 million persons were suffering from hunger, and additional hundreds of millions were living in poverty.⁸

7 Op.cit., Human Ethology, Page 399

8 Ibid., Page 391

Warfare springs perhaps not so much from an innate urge for destruction and extreme violence in the human species, but as a result of population growth resulting from the discovery of technology, and the political power structures that have emerged in concert with technology's rise within the developed world. Man, who has the largest brain of the primates, a brain incidentally that modern sociological and scientific research identifies as having developed in response to the complex social relations of the ever increasing size of human communities, is a flawed being.

Arthur Koestler along with Fromm and Lorenz identify man as easily manipulated through his wish to identify with his fellows. They all see this instinct leading man in the modern age on to destruction as never before, primarily because of the capacity of present day weaponry, nuclear amongst others. This projective capacity of man they name as a form of infantilism that leaves him open to the machinations of guru like figures such as Adolf Hitler and Stalin . If Hitler had had access to the nuclear weapon, the world would undoubtedly be in a very different state today. Koestler describes this type of projection from man as 'magical thinking'

In everything human there is a duality, a positive and a negative. Koestler describes how, in the theatre for instance, we identify with the characters , how there is ' a momentary suspension of belief ' but he draws a line that there is no loss of personal identity in this process. He then comments that in the mass identification of an event such as the Nuremberg rallies, precisely this loss of personal identity happens, and when it does the individual no longer has to take responsibility for his actions. Positive and negative. We are all familiar with reports of people carrying out actions in such conditions that they would not ordinarily contemplate. He feels that this is a form of madness and a fatal flaw in the psychological make-up of man:

Poets have always said that man is mad; and their audiences always nod delightedly because they thought it was a cute metaphor. But if the statement were taken literally, there would seem to be little hope: for how can a madman diagnose his own madness? The answer is he can because he is not entirely mad the entire time. ⁹

So it would seem that man has a choice, that he is not totally disordered and so he can remedy his actions because he can recognise them. This is Lorenz's description of man as the only creature that stays juvenile for his entire life, that it is at the juvenile stage of life that all intelligent creatures display their highest adaptive capacity. Man stands permanently on the tightrope.....

The void is below him.

Technology and its Servants

**From life we steal its loveliest possessions.
Then we clad it in the apparel of a precious idol,
with all the gold of our dreams ¹**

Western culture is presently in the grips of a technological boom that had its gestation in the revolutionary machine age. Modern man has become, through technology, a part of a whole that seeks to set in place, a comprehensive and unified structure in which production rules. The increasing uniformity of computer language throughout the developed world is one example of this trend of standardisation, and is resulting in a global network of computers that can speak to each other in seconds. This technology will result in the first international language, an electronic one. Where man has failed to establish a common language with esperanto, he has succeeded with electronics. Technology is providing man with wondrous toys and comforts. Despite the seductions of this technological cornucopia, it is an established fact that the average contemporary 'civilised man' is regarded by many social commentators as being adrift, as possessing a fragmented and alienated consciousness.

A considerable body of modern social theory defines the problem as a loss of spiritual values, resulting from man's alienation from the instinctive and spiritual sides of his being, an aspect that previously had its source in his awe of nature. One may ask what were the causes, that brought the 'modern mind' to this state of division. I intend to examine in this essay the part that technology has played in man arriving at his present dilemma, the disintegration of an inner belief and loss of a meaningful social connection. French philosopher Jacques Ellul notes that the artist is a seismograph that records the fluctuations of his society. This is a relatively new development that had its genesis in the last century. The artist in the nineteenth century, with the advent of the avant-garde was able, if he chose, to assume the role of social

1 Abel Gance, *Leger and the Modern Spirit. 1918 -1931*, (Muse'e d' Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris: 1982) Page 25

interpreter, critic, or visionary. The concerns of much important art since that period reflects the artist's conscious and unconscious insight of the society they live (and have lived in) and their perception of that society's ills or strengths. The present period of Post-Modernism with its questionable standards, is seen by many, philosopher and art theoretician Arthur Danto for example, as describing a period of decline in cultural standards. Contemporary western society stands as the very model of a confused and disorientated social order.

The flowering of this plight can be realistically identified as having reached clear definition during the previous century, and is reflected in the searching artistic practice of the period. A circumstance which is referred to by Allan Bullock who writes of the modernist era:

Certainly it is possible to see a common temperament at work, radical, innovatory, experimental but continuing so, not settling down with any grand certainties or remaining content with the achievement of one set of new forms or a common language of expression. The old patterns have been broken up: this time they were not replaced.²

Conrad Lorenz refers to a danger which occurs in the history of a species when it makes the transition from one developmental stage to another. He describes this phenomenon in these terms:

When an archaic human social order is transformed to a new one, the developmental advance is in every case accompanied by dangers. The reason for this is that the old structure must be dismantled before the new one has reached full functional capacity.³

Lorenz's view of the chaos that prevails during shifts in culture can be seen as never more applicable, therefore, than to the western world of the late 19th century to the present day,

2 Allan Bullock, in *Modernism 1890-1930*, editor Malcolm Bradbury (Penguin Books Ltd: Middlesex, England, 1976) Page 69

3 Conrad Lorenz, *Studies in Animal and Human Behaviour*, (Vol Two. Butler & Tanner Ltd: Frome and London, 1971) Page 6

the period of Modernism and Post-Modernism. With Nietzsche's declaration last century that "God is Dead", Descartes' rational soul disappeared. Society was confronted with the void, a concept that eastern religion had come to terms with centuries ago as the source of all phenomena. In western consciousness it was felt as an overwhelming emptiness, a soul-less construct that set man adrift with a meaningless life and an equally meaningless death to contemplate. Man became nothing more nor less, than a machine himself, a determinist. Arthur Koestler describes this collapse in the following:

Among the intellectual elite, the rapid advance of science created a rather shallow optimistic belief in the infallibility of reason, in a clear, bright, crystalline world with a transparent atomic structure, with no room for shadows, twilights and myths. Reason was thought to be in control of emotion, as a rider controls the horse - the rider representing enlightened rational thought, the horse representing what the Victorians called 'the dark passions' and 'the beast within us' nobody foresaw, no pessimist ventured to guess, that the Age of Reason would end in the greatest emotional stampede in history, which left the rider crushed under the hoofs of the beast.⁴

Along with the influence of many new conceptions on the world was the spread across Europe of the full force of capitalist democracy. The inevitable associate of this phenomenon, and in fact its catalyst, was the machine. The modern metropolis stands as a symbol of this development. The establishment of the modern industrial city was celebrated in Paris by the erection, in every sense, of the Eiffel Tower, a monolithic celebration of the supremacy of the new technological elite and the power of the state.

The necessity of attracting sufficient workers to the city resulted, ironically, in the promotion of the nineteenth century cult of the individual. The forces acting to promote the advance of the technological order had first to create a mobile and compliant work-force. It was to these ends that the social units of the guild and peasant commune and extended family came under the pressure which eventually resulted in their elimination. The modern trade union arose

eventually to combat the self interested motives of this movement that aimed to create a pool of work units, an anonymous source of cheap labour. The paradox was that to create this mass work force, the myth of the 'free individual' was created. With the successful establishment of the alienated individual, humans became as much of an object to the inhuman pragmatism of technology, as the products its machines remorselessly poured out into the world. This same pragmatism presides as these 'displaced masses' are now being systematically and ruthlessly replaced in industry by the super efficient industrial robot. The machine now re-creates itself. My point, is that in this process man lost an essential social requirement, the connection that roots him in the extended family and community. Donald Kuspit mentions that the lack of 'aliveness' of the modern self can be accredited to any one of a number of factors:

Many have been projected, from industrialisation, which makes us feel like drones in a hive, to the associated collapse of the idea of individuality (reinforced by the contemporary mass media), to the frenzy of analysis that has reduced life to a maze of codes.⁵

He opines that before the destruction of the widely held belief of immortality, the individual was able to derive comfort from the illusion of an everlasting life after death. Kuspit identifies modern art as being permeated with death as a result of western man's wish to supplant his awareness of mortality. This effort of suppression, he writes, leads to an obsession that the modern artist generally shares with his civilisation and as such it surfaces as a common theme in much of modern art, consciously or otherwise. In speaking of the "unfinished look" of much of modern art he comments:

The 20th century non finito signals creative frustration, difficulty in conceiving whole, unannihilated forms... We no longer know how to signal the necessity of completeness as the first requirement of being.⁶

The years from 1880 to 1914 were to witness a plethora of technological developments that heralded an apparent golden age. The phenomenological world was undergoing

5 Donald Kuspit, (Art Forum: February, 1990) Page 114

6 Ibid., Page 112

transformation as well in the world of pure science. Planck had introduced his Quantum Theory to the world in 1900. Einstein was to follow in 1905 with his Special Theory of Relativity, forever altering the accepted notion of reality. With the approach of the turn of the century came an unease that persisted well into the new century. So much change had been simply too much change, and as well as inducing euphoria, there was also a widespread feeling of unease and disorientation. The Europeans sought certainty in new forms of politics such as Anarchism and Socialism and also in the promise of the 'utopian age' that was contained in their perception of the machine and modernism - an idea which the art of the Futurists, for instance, celebrated. The pervading sense of impending doom was to prevail, however, until the advent of the First World War when their nightmare materialised. Robert Hughes comments on the final loss of innocence that was occasioned by this 'War to end all Wars':

After 1914, machinery was turned on its inventors and their children. After forty years of continuous peace in Europe, the worst war in history cancelled the faith in good technology, the benevolent machine. ⁷

This war in its barbarity and mindlessness revealed just how rational the 'civilised world' really was. Man stood fully exposed. In laying bare the reality of man the unparalleled conflict confronted him with his true nature. Freud's psycho-analysis is psycho-hydraulic. It postulates that suppressed material of the unconscious will eventually burst forth when it reaches an unsustainable level. This is the 'psychotic break'. When nations experience it, we know it as modern war. My specific interest is in the notion first raised by Nietzsche, and adopted by Camille Paglia amongst others, that views the fragmentation in man as arising in part from a rift between rationality and irrationality. Nietzsche identified the conflict between these two forces as a primary requirement of a humanist, and thus truly cultural, society. He felt the singular rule of reason had raised it to such a level that mankind was suffocating under its yoke. This schism Paglia sees as having arisen initially from the usurpation of the 'Dionysian' nature

goddess by the 'Apollonian' male god of the Patriarchae. The goddess of the earth cults and nature worship was replaced by the male god of the sky cult, the god of male supremacy. Paglia remarks:

The realm of number, the crystalline mathematic of Apollonian purity, was invented early on by western man as a refuge from the soggy emotionalism and bristling disorder of woman and nature... Number is the most imposing and least creaturely of pacifiers, man's yearning hope for objectivity. ⁸

Dionysus personifies this revolution. As the god of wine and of the earth, a nature god, he was often depicted in contemporary Greek art as hermaphroditic. He represents the need for the ecstatic and transcendent, he is violent, capricious and fecund, as is his nature. The Surrealists were, as is well known, greatly influenced by Nietzsche's theories. The repression that they saw as being imposed by the iron handed rule of Apollonian logic, was a force they wished to overthrow:

The Surrealists attacked traditional ways of seeing and thinking, especially the idea that reason was the pre-eminent human attribute and that Cartesian principles of order and clarity formed the essential structure of society. They reviled Descartes central premise "I think therefore I am" vehemently denying the sovereignty of the mind, most particularly the conscious mind. As an editorial in the third issue of *La Revolution Surrealiste* stated, "Ideas, logic, order, Truth (with a capital T) reason - we consign everything to the nothingness of death. Watch out for your logics, gentlemen, watch out, you don't know how far our hatred of logic can take us. ⁹

Agreat many artists of the early twentieth century chose to use the machine as a metaphor. These artists constructed works that presented man and machine as wedded in metamorphic symbiosis. The vision of individual artists was singular, and yet is, I feel, often of a common chord. In my view this field of expression deals directly with the Apollonian / Dionysian conflict through the metaphor of man and his relationship to technology. Many artists, such as Fernand Leger for instance, were profoundly affected by their experience of the

8 Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae*, (Penguin Books: Middlesex, England,) Page 18

9 Sidra Stich, *Anxious Visions - Surrealist Art*, contributors James Clifford, Stovall Tyler, Steven. Kovacs (Berkeley and Abbeville Press Inc:New York, 1990) Page 11, 14

war; theirs was a shattering experience of the brutal contingencies of the modern age. Totally unlike Leger, who was ironically to draw from his military involvement a positive vision of man in harmony with technology, the German artist George Grosz chose to deal with the theme of dehumanised man, the man of the masses. This concern of his was in the main a result of his experiences during the war years. As Sidra Stich points out this first truly modern mechanised war made the individual man into a cipher:

World War 1 was the first wholly industrialised war, a war that not only established the pre-eminence of the machine but also the suppression of the individual. Both in the assembly lines of the munitions plants and the trenches of the battlefields, regularised, mass activity dominated. Trench and aerial warfare made individuals into anonymous, invisible entities, part of the surrounding scenery. ¹⁰

Grosz was violently opposed to the mindless conformism that saw his fellows rushing off to war when the German militarists blew on the bugle of nationalism. He painted an allegory of his concerns in his painting/ collage *"Daum" marries her pedantic automaton "George" in May 1920. John Heartfield is very glad of it (meta-mech [anish] konst[viert] nach Prof R. Hausemann)*. In this rather lengthily titled work Grosz shows man as a machine who is desensitised, robotic and as such 'lifeless', an automaton holding little apparent human consciousness. His robot-man's bride, is by contrast all too human. She is clearly a prostitute and wears an undergarment that gapes open to display her large breasts and a prominent pubic triangle. She turns as if to look back at her husband in surprise. He is seated dressed in a high collared formal suit of the period, indifferent to her attention. To their rear and centrally placed, is a partial view of a multi storied, barrack like, tenement. To this scene's right is pictured another partial view, this time of a cosy house, in the window of which a partially drawn curtain reveals a vase of flowers against darkness. Meanwhile a disembodied pair of hands appears to feed technical information into the male's head. A single disembodied hand (seemingly his),

lightly touches the bride's nipple. It appears that it is this 'all too human' touch that is the cause of her starting in surprise. In the upper left hand corner of the composition a photograph of a female head with closed eyes faces away from the pair. She appears almost to be dreaming the scene that is pictured. Grosz offers a cynical, knowing image of Nietzsche's man of the herd, conditioned, technical fragmented, and as a result, amongst the living dead. The woman exemplifies in her erotic awareness the chthonic forces that resides in the female. She can be read as a symbol of the procreative and relentlessly carnal capacity of nature, of its overwhelming vitality and totality. Amidst all this fragmentation only she is whole.

Grosz was influenced in this work by the Pittura Metafisica of De Chirico and Carra (the former Futurist). The works of these two 'Metaphysicists' readily bear Nietzsche's maxim: 'Whatever is profound loves masks.'¹¹ De Chirico's vision of the alienated man as the 'manischi', as the object par excellence of the mechanised, industrialised world, was a pivotal one for Grosz and the other young German artists whose work was known as the Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity). Objectification of the individual was at the core of De Chirico's and Carra's work;

Mechanisation has penetrated into the subconscious of the artist. Chirico expresses it in a remarkable way in the mixture he makes of man and machine... The anxiety, the solitude of man forms a melancholy architecture of the preceding epoch and its mechanical dolls...¹²

Through his use of architecture of the classical world along with other props both modern and ancient that exist in strange juxtapositions that he placed within a fragmented picture plane, De Chirico created a world of images outside of the space / time continuum. This is apparently a world of nostalgia but this nostalgia is paradoxically neither comforting nor romantic. It can be viewed as representing modern consciousness, displaced and at risk. Indeed, as the Psycho

11 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, translator Walter Kaufmann (Vintage Books: New York, 1966) Page 50

12 Jaques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, (Alfred A Knopf: New York, 1973) Page 129

therapist Carl Jung points out; '...human consciousness has not yet achieved a reasonable degree of continuity. It is still vulnerable and liable to fragmentation.'¹³ De Chirico invokes a claustrophobic world where the human spirit resides in the hermetic world of the deterministic nightmare. Man in these works is a machine amid a world of fellow objects. Everything appears as Paglia describes, objectified, named, reduced to a spectral manifestation of corporeal existence. Wieland Schmied comments of De Chirico's picture scape: 'it is completely man-made, but it is not made *for* man'¹⁴ This totality of the mundane, presented as it is with its multiple perspectives and fractured planes, induces an atmosphere of dislocation and vertigo. Curiously the overall effect acts to conjure up a feeling of a timeless mystery, of the mystery that underwrites life, the mystery of the void where time has no future, or past. Schmied reasons what he feels it was that the young German painters found in Carra's and De Chirico's work: 'They discovered what they perceived as their own fate, the discontinuity and irrationality of life, the paralysis and isolation of the individual.'¹⁵

Philosopher Jacques Ellul in his book *The Technological Society* remarks that 'Modern art expresses the subconscious precisely to the degree that the subconscious has been influenced by the machine.'¹⁶ He comments that artists as different as Leger, De Chirico and Duchamp illustrate this in their works that embody man and machine in metamorphic union. He goes on to state that:

Although the artist of the present can still master and represent the impulse of the machine, he is completely overwhelmed and impotent in a world that has a place only for a human being who has been stripped of his real self. Contemporary art form bears witness to this impotence.¹⁷

As Ellul points out one of the seminal artists of this period was Marcel Duchamp.

13 Carl Jung, *Man and his Symbols*, M.von Franz, J.Henderson, J.Jacobi, A.Jaffe (Pan Books: London, 1978) Page 8

14 Wieland Schmied, *De Chirico*, (The Museum of Modern Art: New York, 1982) Page 103

15 Ibid., Page 107

16 Op. cit., *The Technological Society*, Page 404

17 Ibid., Page 404

Possessed of a sophisticated intellect, Duchamp saw the situation clearly. He anticipated the effect the machine would exert on society, the listlessness and loss of purpose it would ultimately affect. He was eclectic in his movement across styles. In works such as his *Nude descending a Staircase* (which was strongly influenced by the developments of the then concurrent Futurism) he offers the nude in motion as a kind of machine. This represents a complete break from the naturalistic tradition of the nude and an embracing of the machine aesthetic. Undoubtedly he was influenced also by the photographic studies of moving objects that both Edweard Muybridge and Etienne -Jules Marey had made in the late 1900's. Duchamp dealt with the machine as a projection of the ultimate futility of human desires. His major work whose full title is *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelor, Even* which is often referred to as *The Large Glass* is a metaphysical apparition that illustrates perfectly Kuspit's concept of the modern fragmented work of art. It is complex and yet, in this complexity self defeating, at least in terms of a western male rationality, that sees itself at the pivot of the universe.

The seven bachelors in the lower portion of the glass will never realise their dream of fertilising the bride. She is sealed in her upper segment and their sperm will never penetrate either the division, or her egg. As such, the machine is one that will grind on indefinitely, frustrating the desires of both the bachelors and the bride:

Civilised man conceals from himself the extent of his subordination to nature. The grandeur of culture, the consolation of religion absorb his attention and win his faith... But let nature shrug, and all is in ruin. Civilised life requires a state of illusion.¹⁸

It is the *image par excellence* of the inexorable nature of the concept of determinism. Man is revealed as the victim of a huge, remorseless machine that 'grinds' his desires, nature is always victorious. The whole work can be read as being illustrative of the dilemma that he finds himself in at the present time. Robert Hughes comments that: 'In one sense *The Large Glass* is a glimpse into Hell, a peculiarly modernist hell of repetition and loneliness.'¹⁹ This hell is the

18 Op. cit., *Sexual Personae*, Page 1

19 Robert Hughes, *The Shock of The New*, (British Broadcasting Corporation: London, 1980) Page 56

hell of a life without purpose, a life of bland uniformity. Although the bachelors are individual in their shapes, they are uniform in their impotency, in their inability to achieve their desire. They are half beings who are incapable of a genuine act of self determination. The drones of Kuspit's mechanical hive, redundant and expendable.

The bride who represents the completion of their yearning languishes in her void. She is the goddess who is forever banished from her orgasmic destiny, a machine version of the familiar image of the naked maiden chained to the rock, (an Andromeda whose Perseus no longer exists). Hughes reiterates his theme: ' *The Large Glass* is a free machine, or at least a defiant machine; but it was also a sad machine, a testament to indifference.' ²⁰

The other interpretation possible, of course, is that the bride is self contained and thus enclosed. She is indifferent to the agony of the bachelors. This perhaps is the indifference Hughes alludes to, that woman is one with nature, privy to and part of its cycles and so knowing and accepting of it. She does not struggle against her fate as does man. A timeless theme of male art presents woman as the Bitch / Goddess, as the temptress and the dominatrix (the symbol of natural power that man strives endlessly to dominate). William Camfield has it that Duchamp's machines encapsulated: 'his view of life as a folly-ridden affair where biological drives, social conventions and notions of reason and morality constantly subvert the freedom and intelligence of man'. ²¹

There were many other artists of the time who dealt in depth with the machine / man nexus, Raoul Hausman, Francis Picabia and Max Ernst to mention but a few. Within contemporary society this interest remains active. Has technologically intoxicated man in his wish to subvert the primacy of nature and the ascendancy of woman in the natural order of things over-reached himself and created, as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a servant that will destroy the

20 Ibid., Page 56

21 William A Camfield, *Francis Picabia His Art, Life and Times*, (Princeton University Press: Princeton, N J, 1979) Page 87

household? Jung was of the opinion that :

Our intellect has created a new world that dominates nature and has populated it with monstrous machines. The latter are so indubitably useful that we cannot see even a possibility of getting rid of them or our subservience to them. Man is bound to follow the adventurous promptings of his scientific and inventive mind and to admire himself for his splendid achievements. At the same time, his genius shows the uncanny tendency to invent things that become more and more dangerous, because they represent better and better means for wholesale suicide. ²²

Machine man remains a fascination that reveals itself in many contemporary films such as the Star Wars trilogy, and in the Robo-Cop and Terminator series. These modern myths reveal the dilemma anew. The hero in Robo-Cop acts as a metaphor for the manner in which we choose to idealise ourselves and the machine. He has suffered major trauma and subsequently loses much of his body to be transformed by benevolent science and become a man/ robot. It is his idealised humanity that remains in the ascendancy. This is the romantic notion of machine as servant and extension of man carried to its extreme.

Star Wars covers the gamut of possibilities. There is a 'cute' robot on wheels, R2D2 who symbolises the robot as pet and therefore completely subservient. A robot 'man' C3PO who is a dithering sort, he is the contemporary 'Tin Man' who has found his heart, but occasionally loses his head. Darth Vader represents the villain, and as such, a metaphor for a society that has separated itself from its source and become corrupted and evil. He is machine like by virtue of his technological mask that separates him from his fellow human. He is redeemed when in dying, his 'machine mask' is removed to reveal him as deformed by the chthonian force of fire (ironically representative of the gift which started the technological age, and for which Prometheus in giving to man was sentenced to eternal punishment by Zeus). Thus the distorted chthonian mask is replaced by the technological one which makes him fearsome. It is only with the removal of this second mask that Vader become fragmented, human, and thus loved, and forgiven.

In the Terminator Series the 'irredeemable villain' appears in T-1000 who takes human form and is described as the:

perfect post- apocalyptic killing machine... constructed from an intelligent liquid metal, it is able to mimic the characteristics of anything it touches, changing its shape and colour at will. Early in the film the T-1000 adopts the shape of a police officer it has killed, subsequently dissolving between the shape of the officer and its liquid metal form. ²³

In this film the apocalyptic dread of the machine at war with man is realised. T-1000 appears completely indestructable and one is well aware that where he came from (the future) he is simply one of many. He thus represents a supernatural, apparently immortal force, he is no longer just a machine. He is an alien life force that is the other of man. A daemonic machine that is as unrelentingly hostile and protean as deterministic nature, he can be seen as a symbol for the unstoppable force of technology wedded to the Dionysiac forces of nature, (as is revealed in his matrix of "intelligent liquid metal" that can become 'metamorphically' the form of the fallen police officer). Jaques Ellul speaks of the rift that has occurred in the human personality with increasing industrialisation. He comments:

The average man, with his sentimental and intellectual attachments to the past, suffers acutely. Rare are the men who have so completely renounced the inner life as to hurl themselves gladly and without regret into a completely technicised mode of being. Such persons may exist, but it is probable that the joyous robot has not yet been born. ²⁴

The theme of technological totalitarianism finds horrifying realisation in the fiction of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*, along with Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil*. Ellul argues that the pragmatism that is the bedrock of 'technique' is obsessed with means that become ends in themselves. Humanist 'sentimentalities' have no place in its lexicon of concerns. K.G Pontus Hultens in agreement theorises: 'Perhaps what is most frightening is the notion that modern technology has an evolution of its own, which is uncontrollable and

23 B Swain, *Pixel tricks enrich flicks*, (New Scientist: No 1841, 3rd October, 1992) Page 23

24 Op.cit., *The Technological Society*, Page 37

independent of human will'.²⁵

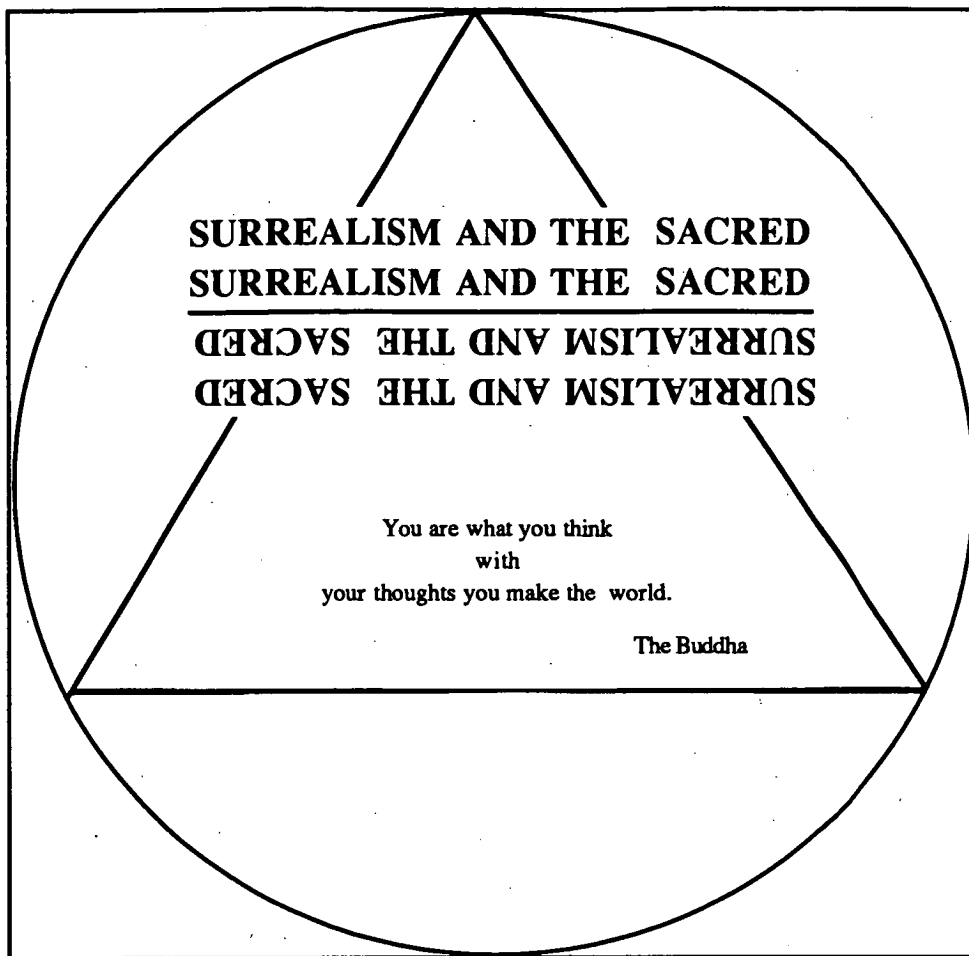
My argument is that the disassociate power of the technological / capitalistic patriachae may have finally found its limit. The concept of complete knowledge of the universe it believes is possible (and the ultimate power it felt this knowledge would deliver) may have found its end in the paradoxical and humbling revelations that are contained both in Chaos theory and Quantum Physics, and that imply 'unknowable' properties in the universe. A growing number of scientists, amongst others, believe these metaphysical manifestations may lead man back to the point from which he began, to that of an inner spiritual belief, to a rediscovered awe of the unknown and therefore a reconnection with the universe. One that it can be argued is a necessary requirement, if he is not become Ellul's promised 'joyous robot'.

Knowledge which has delivered us from the superstition of the 'savage', has delivered us also the destruction of a once bountiful ecosystem and an ever increasing population with its associated pressures. Progress - that questionable construct on which the edifice of man's seemingly eternal 'Golden Dream' has been built, reveals ultimately that at the end of the rainbow may simply lie extinction, first socially, then spiritually, and finally literally. Nature will survive, in one form or another. We are simply destroying ourselves. It may be too late for mankind to develop the true intelligence that lies in sanity, the intelligence that understands the meaning of 'well-being' instead of 'being well off'.

The new science may reverse the trend in combination with the transformations that reformist feminism promotes, and the growing ecological movement champions, but increasingly grave problems clearly confront us in this era. If this humanist New World does not develop then the alternative may be contained in Ellul's following depressing projection:

Life is not happy in a civilisation dominated by technique. Even the outward show of happiness is bought at the price of total acquiescence. The technological society requires men to be content with what they are required to like; for those who are not content it provides distractions - escape into absorption with technically dominated media of popular culture and communication. And the process is a natural one: every part of a technical civilisation responds to the social needs generated by technique itself. Progress then consists in progressive de-humanisation- a busy, pointless, and in the end, suicidal submission to technique... ²⁶

So it would seem that mankind has a choice, or perhaps in reality no choice at all. It is possible that it is already too late and we are on our inevitable way to complete 'virtual reality' and the 'joyous robot'.Hallelujah.



In my first essay I referred briefly to the Surrealists' rejection of Apollonian / Cartesian rationality and its reductive imposition upon the psyche. In this second paper I will examine the Surrealist premise of irrationality and its associated Dionysian concomitants of frenzy / sexuality / cruelty and violence, in relation to the Surrealist notion of establishing their vision of the free man.

The Surrealists, who arose in response to the mindless slaughter and devastation of World War One, argued that in essence, modern man is not as rational as he cares to think himself, and furthermore the irrational forces that he contains must be acknowledged and thus appeased. They saw these irrational elements as not only destructive, but also creative, and thus liberating. They felt the case is as Freud described it, that suppression of these elemental forces causes them to grow to a point where they result in neuroses and eventually psychosis. They maintained that in the case of modern western man, the culture's general imbalance had produced a reciprocal cultural neurosis.

They saw this as resulting in western mans alienation from the spiritual source that they saw as having man at its centre, an alienation they felt cost man dearly.

It is a recognised property of the rational mind that it divides the world into opposites for its own purposes of analysis and cognition, opposites that are in reality each an intrinsic part of each other, day is not possible without night etc. This process of division can only take place after subjective consciousness has been reached. The two-fold nature of man has its origins in the development of language. It was language that cast mankind originally into the sea of duality. It is language that carries within it, the seed of alienation, that makes man simultaneously, both a god and a victim , and it is constant recognition of this simultaneity that drives him to seek the unity that he believes he once possessed. A unity which he apparently believes having lost he can find again, modern man's whole momentum is based on a notion of completion. 'Rejecting a view of life characterised by binary oppositions, the Surrealists instead celebrated the coupling of irreconcilable realities.'¹ The Surrealists identified modern Western man as a tragic figure cast adrift from his legacy.

Surrealism is therefore before all else a movement of the modern spirit, and yet also a manifestation of the apparently perpetual movement to regain the 'lost paradise', the ending of the split of 'being' into self and other. The ecstatic state that is seen as resulting from the reconciliation of all opposites is an ecstasy that would transcend modern mankind's recognition of himself as existing primarily through the action of thought: ergo 'I think therefore I am'. André Breton stated this aim of Surrealism in the opening paragraph of the Second Surrealistic Manifesto of 1929:

Everything leads us to believe that there is a certain point in the spirit from which life and death, real and imaginary, past and future, communicable and incommunicable are no longer perceived as contradictories. It would be in vain to look for any other motivation in Surrealist activity than the hope of determining this point. ²

1 Sidra Stich, *Anxious Visions, Surrealist Art* (Berkely and Abbeville Press Inc: New York,1990) Page 12

Therefore for the Surrealists, it was not rationalism as such that they sought to discredit but a false idol of this capacity that they felt had been raised to singular heights such as to elevate man away from his animal origins and cut him off from his total being. As Georges Bataille points out, and as the Surrealists acknowledged, reason is with us always, it is one of our highest achievements:

No one can imagine a world where burning passion would definitely cease to trouble us. No one, on the other hand, can envisage the possibility of a life that would no longer be bound by calculation.³

The beliefs of most contemporary religions and those of the past offer a final and ultimate vision of reconciliation, whether this be in an exteriorisation of the wish such as the Christian notion of heaven, or an internalisation of the unified state, such as occurs in the Buddhist concept of samhadi. Rejecting the prevailing spiritual expressions of the west as nothing more than worn out forms that had lost all connection with the ecstatic, as forms furthermore that reflected the hypocrisy and cant of the dominant ruling class of materialists, the Surrealists, who were virtually to a man and a woman, socialist or anarchist, attempted to establish an order that would emancipate the masses. The aim of this new order was to re-establish the magical part of man that in the modern conformist had been lost, Nietzsche's 'man of the herd' was to be set free. To do this the Surrealists proposed a revolution in the mind of man, for, as they recognised, it is by his thought that man is imprisoned, and it is through his thought that he will be liberated:

The human mind is no dead end, nor a mere extension of the body enclosed within the brain; it is an immense chasm whose point of intersection with material life is located within the brain but which, from there, radiates in all directions, binding man to all regions, even the most secret, of the visible and invisible universe. It is in the mind, in that abyss, that is found the road leading to the conquest of superhuman worlds.⁴

2 Michel Carrouge, André Breton and the Basic Concepts of Surrealism, (The University of Alabama Press:: Alabama, USA, 1974) Page 11

3 Georges Bataille, The Tears of Eros, (City Light Books: San Francisco, 1990) Foreword

4 Op Cit., Page 23

Initially however it is necessary to consider a state of mind that in the eyes of the Surrealists contained a partial model for the consciousness they sought to promote. This was the intuitive, subjective mind of primitive man. The very opposite of the mind that is dominated by rationality is the so called primitive mind. This is the mind of early man that is revealed in archaic religions in which man is not yet subject in relation to object, but rather exists in a world of homogeneity with nature and its phenomena. In this world man exists rightfully as another animal. He does not set himself apart from nature, and is thus connected to the forces within himself and to the forces of nature. Many regard modern man as still partially primitive. The aspect that they identify as such is his need to conform, an aspect of his nature that makes him perfect fodder for the modern despiritualising industrial machine:

The spread of popular education in conjunction with the coming of the machine age and its concomitants, have together sufficed to create a rubber stamp mentality... the net result is that the mentality of this twentieth century of civilisation in the overpowering main is equivalent in its universality of outlook to the instincts of primitive man.⁵

This factor of conformity has its origins in his social instincts. The hierarchical social structure that the patriarchal order has implemented in the Surrealists eyes exploited this quality. The 'free man' was not to be an unquestioning creature of the herd.

The Surrealists sought to open the eyes of modern dispirited man to a neglected, rather than lost, power of his mind, to awaken a sense of wonder that was relinquished with his banishment from the garden of innocence. Beyond this sense of wonder lay, in their view, psychic powers that would enable man to arise from his knees to a new order of human awareness. As I have mentioned, it is certain aspects of the primitive mind in connection with modern interpretations of the consciousness of contemporary man that I wish to consider and forge an understanding of the violence and overt sexuality that exists in many Surrealist works. Arthur Koestler in his book *The Ghost in the Machine* refers to

the earliest state of consciousness that we can objectively examine in the following creation myth of the newborn:

Freud and Piaget, among others, have emphasised the fact that the very young child does not differentiate between ego and environment. The nourishing breast appears to it as a more intimate possession than the toes of its own body. It lives in a state of mental symbiosis with the outer world, a continuation of the biological symbiosis in the womb. The universe is focused on the self, and the self is the universe- a condition which Piaget called 'protoplasmic' or 'symbiotic' consciousness. The origin of that 'oceanic feeling' which the artist and the mystic strive to recapture on a higher level of development, at a higher turn of the spiral. ⁶

It is this symbiotic state, this 'oceanic feeling' that the Surrealists saw as relinquished with the singular adoption of rationality, of reason. This is a world the adult westerner regains within their dreams and one of the reasons the Surrealists endorsed the unconscious dream state. The Surrealists actively promulgated the unconscious as a wellspring of creativity and as the key to a reconnection with the suppressed, and therefore lost, world of the instinctual and universal. Much contemporary social interpretation describes the dream state as the sole area in which modern technological man can express an instinctual personal need for the magical, a world of magic that is all pervasive for the primitive. Dreams celebrate the irrational as is illustrated in Lautrémont's celebrated coupling of a sewing machine, umbrella and an operating table. The Surrealists celebrated this manifestation of the dreamlike in the metaphysical paintings of George De Chirico, with their strange juxtapositions and disorientations in particular. It was a depiction of the numinous world they wished to reinstate.

For modern man the world of dreams is the only remaining area of his psyche that is not open to the invasive machinations of the technological bureaucracy. Everything is

possible in the dream. It transcends the mundane life that rationalist society presents prepackaged and devoid of imagination. The dream is the transformation of the everyday world into a world of magic, a world in which symbiosis regains its primacy in the life of alienated western man. What the world of the dream image captured for the Surrealists was the sense of wonder and wholeness that infiltrates the perception of the person who has not yet been displaced from their existence within nature.

Wishes do not displace mountains, but in our dreams they still do. Symbiotic consciousness is never completely defeated, merely relegated underground to those primitive levels in the mental hierarchy where the boundaries of the ego are still fluid and blurred.⁷

This lack of separation is demonstrated in the world of the earliest religions in which trees and stones for instance were worshipped as gods. Everything was thoroughly permeated with the awe inspiring, magical spirit of life:

The deified androgynous First Principle in creation was visualised as the emanation of an ethereal spirit which pervaded the whole universe, impregnating with its own essence everything with which it came into contact. The creative spirit was continually flowing from and reverting back to its source in various modes and degrees of progression and regression... This mysterious reproductive force was thought to have extra-ordinary and miraculous powers, such as the ability to produce animate beings from inanimate objects.⁸

One of the prime images in Surrealist art is that of the metamorphic monster and of the incomplete and often disfigured body. This was a reflection in part of the many severely injured men and women who survived the First World War and who were to be found in the streets bearing disquieting witness to the savagery of modern war. Another aspect this deformation raised was fragmentation, and the fragmented body or personage could be readily interpreted as a metaphor for the fragmentation the Surrealists perceived in the psyche of the contemporary 'man in the street.' The horrific wounds and

7 *Tbid.*, The Ghost in The Machine, Page 194

8 *Op Cit.*, Phallic Worship, Page 53

deformations also presented in graphic form an example of the metamorphic condition that all life experiences. As André Masson conveys in his painting *Man*:

The figure of "Man" in the painting takes shape as a transparent, ethereal body and as a contorted mass wrapping around itself and pulsating outward. Unformed and formless, the figure attains the semblance of a head and genitalia, albeit of a non human planetary and aviary order.... Man is presented as a receptive metamorphic being riddled with discordance and full of divergent, convulsive energies. ⁹

The metamorphic state that is described in this painting is a chthonian state of the creative unconscious, it is the flux that contains all things, the object in the moment of becoming is simultaneously falling back into dissolution. This is the raw reality of nature, giving birth to multitudinous phenomena. Paglia points out that 'The Dionysian is liquid nature, a miasmic swamp whose prototype is the still pond of the womb.' ¹⁰

Patriarchal society, therefore, for the Surrealists, by its active lopsided promotion of reason as the supreme human achievement denies the elemental forces that tie man to the natural world, forces that in nature exist as a balanced part of the whole. The Surrealists, in line with their aim for a 'complete man', sought as part of this aim, to re-integrate into his consciousness a radically free vision of sexuality, free from the inhibitive and divisive formations that Christianity imposed with its imposition of its belief in sin. As Georges Bataille comments: 'In the history of eroticism, the Christian religion had this role: to condemn it.' ¹¹

Part of the animal world we share is the world of sexual reproduction, but sexuality in our modern western society and demonstrably in many of the past has developed a dark side that is not immediately discernable in the life of the elephant for example, or the sparrow, or sperm whale. This dark side of human sexual expression finds its champion in literature in the violently erotic writings of the Marquis de Sade and in

9 Op Cit., *Anxious Visions*, Page 12.

10 Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae*, (Penguin books: Middlesex, England, 1991) Page 5

11 Op Cit., *The Tears of Eros*, Page 78

the famous *Maldoror* of Lautréamont, with its celebrated coupling between the protagonist Maldoror, and a monster female shark - a shark, which along with a number of its fellows (all incidentally male), has devoured the survivors of a foundered ship, and has then in turn, also consumed her companions. The mythical 'vagina dentata' in fishy form. This episode in Lautréamont's writing perfectly illustrates certain disquieting aspects that lie at the heart of the Dionysian, and all of which are realised in the archaic Greek ritual of the bacchanal. This orgiastic ritual is recalled in legend as one in which the Maenads in a frenzy tore apart their own children, or at least a symbol of such in the form of a living kid goat whose frantic bleats would resemble the cries of suffering of a child. Herein lies the great problem that underlies the Dionysiac. At its core the irrational is nothing more or less than complete madness:

The ambiguity of this human life is really that of mad laughter and of sobbing tears. It comes from the difficulty of harmonising reason's calculations with these tears.... with this horrible laugh...¹²

Sexual ecstasy in the rite of the Bacchanal was a celebration of the procreative force that underlies the natural world. Social and sexual inhibition was cast aside. The participants indulged themselves in wholesale sexual practice with whomever they found to respond. 'In sex, man is driven into the very abyss which he flees. He makes a long voyage to non being and back'¹³. The unsettling factor is the connection of violence as was practiced by the Maenads which preceded the orgy. This violence lies at the core of Breton's promulgation of the unconscious. It is a violence that lies in the sexual act itself. The sexual act is characterised as an act of violation, for the male the act of penetration is an act of invasion. Camille Paglia describes it as: 'All phases of procreation are ruled by appetite: sexual intercourse, from kissing to penetration, consists of barely controlled

12 Ibid., Foreword.

13 Op Cit., Sexual Personae, Page 20

cruelty and consumption.’¹⁴ The core of this practice lies within the pagan religions of earlier civilisations. This is the violence that has its place in most of the early religions. As Jung remarks, it is almost a given that archaic religions practiced some form of ritual sacrifice. The sacrificial act was intended to placate the anger of the gods. Man was at the mercy of the elements, elements he projected, that were capable of benevolence or animosity towards him, elements that were therefore to be worshipped - gods to be feared. “The ritual of sacrifice has a sorrow about it that is also a kind of joy, an inward acknowledgement that death also leads to life”¹⁵. Freud's theory of the inseparable connection of Thanatos and Eros has its ground here. The pagan religions were earth religions. The procreative force was central to their dogma. Ancient ceremonies celebrated the burgeoning fertility of the earth and associated the sexual powers of humans with this force.

Violence in nature is impersonal. The agenda nature contains relies on violence to fulfil the development of life to higher and more complex forms. These forms are identified as higher by the degree of environmental adaptability they express. Thus mankind becomes the highest animal of all, at least in terms of potential. Mankind contains this seed of violence. In line with Freud's theories on the hydraulic power of repression the Surrealists sought to integrate this reality into life and therefore negate it rather than attempt to deny its primacy at the centre of man's being. This is a policy that recognises that, in the ancient earth religions man recognised himself as a monster, as a hybrid. Dionysus like so many of the earlier gods was a metamorphic monster, and this being of his was a projection of how man saw himself, and of how he saw the overwhelming chthonic forces of nature. These gods celebrated the sexual act, often hemaphroditic or containing parts of both man and animal:

14 Ibid., Page 16

15 C J Jung, *Man and his Symbols*. (Pan Books Ltd: London, 1978) Page 113

The Babylonian god Oannes was a monster comprising the parts of both man and fish... Dagon, the god of the Philistines was half man, half fish. In the festivals dedicated to Bacchus the women taking part in the processions carried the symbol of the fish alongside the phallus.¹⁶

Bacchus of course was a later, tamer manifestation of Dionysus. The metamorphic monster raises its head constantly in Surrealist art. The fish in ancient times was a symbol for the female sexual organ. This is why it was carried alongside the phallus: '... the shape of the fish was considered to bear some resemblance to that of the female vulva, and to this factor was traced an intimate connection between the two.'¹⁷

The mythic mermaid is a personification of the doubling principle and appears for instance in Paul Delvaux's painting *The Mermaid* reclining under a full moon (the symbol of the Goddess) on a strange altar that could be seen as sacrificial, in an odd city scape that contains buildings from both the classical and modern periods. This allusion is taken even further in a work by René Magritte titled: *Collective Invention*. In this work a fish's head is combined with the lower body of a voluptuous woman, her pubic triangle is emphasised by both its placement in the lower centre of the composition and by its prolific hair-growth. This creature is lying at the edge of the ocean, the primordial source. In this painting Magritte has doubled the sexual reference, with both the symbol and the actual united. Works such as these reveal that Surrealism found its source in the primordial unconscious. Monsters proliferate, Picasso's bather series for example, or *The Robing of the Bride* by Max Ernst with its eerie overtones of violence, eroticism and the fabulous. Haim N Finkelstein quotes Breton as asserting in 1960 that 'beyond their obvious dissimilarities, all works considered as surrealist have in common primarily an erotic function.'¹⁸

16 Op Cit., Phallic Worship, Page 46

17 Ibid., Page 57

18 Haim N Finkelstein, *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object*, (UMI Reseach Press: Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1979) Page 67

Man is far from free from his pagan past. It is part of him, and throughout his world. The ritual of the sacrifice has its parallel in Christianity, but now it is the god who is sacrificing his own son to appease the sins of mankind. This draws from ancient practice in which victims were often worshipped as being of the same nature as the god before their sacrifice. Furthermore the fish is the symbol of Christianity, a fitting one for a religion which declares "go forth and multiply". In the modern world the names of the days of our week incorporate references to ancient deities such as Woden and Thor and rituals such as the Roman Saturnalia. The Surrealists were attempting to reinstate this lost metamorphic world with its benefits for man alongside the development of reason. The new man they envisaged would be far more balanced than any of the past. His inner violence would be recognised, as would his sexual interest and passion, and his spirituality. With recognition and fusion these powerful drives could be integrated into a life that would fulfil man in a way which he had never before known. The new man would, through knowledge be free. Knowledge of his inner and outer psychic realities would free him from the life-denying affects of the sentimental, the banal and the fanatical :

For the Surrealists one of the great strengths of Nietzsche's, Freud's and Darwin's ideas lay in their capacity "to lay waste to the ideas of Family, country, religion" to rebel against the repressed condition of mankind, and to attack a unified, static, narrow, or rational perspective of the world. They viewed the world as precarious, ever-changing and always unknowable... this vision of the world was not one that wallowed in a mire of pessimism but rather exalted in reclaiming the suppressed realms of human expression and in confronting contradiction, difference, disjunction, multiplicity, rupture and incongruity.¹⁹

This was the basis of the Surrealistic experiment. It was a revolutionary movement that aimed to move beyond the aggressive nihilism of Dada and provide a means of liberation to modern man. In this then it was humanist in its intention. The Surrealists fastened on the sexual and the violent for two reasons in the main, in the first place to

liberate man from his yoke of sexual and rational inhibition and to allow him the freedom to see himself as he really was, and in the second place, they used these elements for their subversive content, to outrage the orthodoxy they saw as placing the yoke around mans neck, with their presumption of 'knowing':

Whoever denies the existence of the unconscious is in fact assuming that our present knowledge of the psyche is total. And this belief is clearly just as false as the assumption that we know all there is to know about the natural universe. Our psyche is part of nature, and its enigma is as limitless. Thus we cannot define either the psyche or nature.²⁰

The sacrificial component of the bacchanal was a form of appropriation to the divine madness which seized upon the women in their ecstatic frenzy. Ritual has always played an essential part in the everyday life of man, in the present day most of these rites have lost their essence and now merely reflect their forms as husks of a once vital ceremony. In our present day we have only to look at the plight of Easter and Christmas and that present day initiation ceremony the coming of age rite - the 21st birthday party. Man has a need to celebrate the animal in him as well as the human. They are demonstrably one and the same. As Paglia remarks: ' Human beings are the only creatures in whom consciousness is so entangled with animal instinct.' ²¹ To this end the Surrealists sought to impose through their visual works, their poetry and their writings, a new vision for western man, one in which he could exist truly as an individual within a free society. As one of the greatest humanists of our age and a fellow believer with the Surrealists in the magical psychic world of dreams, C J Jung points out :

The individual is the only reality. The further we move away from the individual towards abstract ideas about Homo Sapiens, the more likely we are to fall into error.²²

20 Op Cit., Man and his Symbols, Page 6

21 Op Cit., Sexual Personae, Page 4

22 Op Cit., Man and his Symbols, Page 45

MISCELLANEOUS

READING LIST.

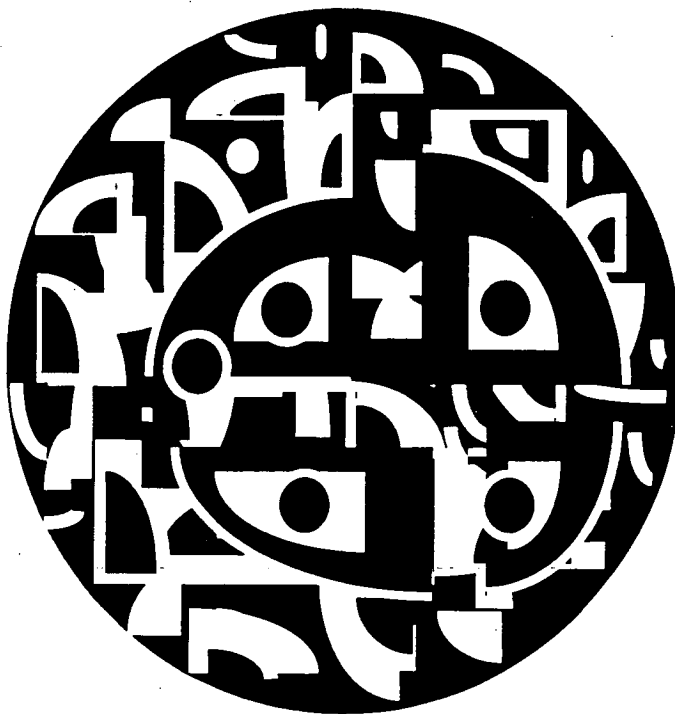
1991 AND 1992

PLUS

CURRICULUM VITAE

PLUS

SUBMISSION SLIDES RECORD



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- Celant. Germano** **Futurismo & Futurismi ,** (Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri: Milan, 1986)
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(General Editor)
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***THE SECRET OF A CREATION CAN BE
REALISED IN OUR OWN ACTUALLY
CREATING.***

BENJAMIN PAUL BLOOD

CURRICULUM VITAE

WAYNE ALTY

- 1950** Born in Dunedin, New Zealand.
- 1976-78** Graduated as a Psychiatric Nurse from Tokanui Hospital, Te awamutu. NZ and travelled to England via Asia.
- 1978-79** Arrived in Adelaide and worked as a Psychiatric Nurse at Hillcrest Hospital. Attended night classes at Henley and Grange Arts Society, taught by Angela Valmanesh.
- 1979-81** Returned to New Zealand and established a pottery workshop with wife Kathy making a range of functional stoneware, fired in a diesel fueled brick kiln.
- 1981-85** Returned to Adelaide to spend six months working as a production thrower for Laurie Touminen, before leaving to establish my own studio in Trinity Gardens making a range of brush decorated stoneware. In 1984 I was a committee member and newsletter editor of the Potters Guild of South Australia ,and also taught lessons at Tea Tree Gully T.A.F.E and Payneham Community Centre.
- 1985-87** Assisted by a Workshop Development Grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council, moved to Auburn in the Clare Valley to establish - **Riverview Pottery**. (wholesalers).
- 1987-90** Established Riverview Pottery Studio Gallery in the "Old Temperance Hall" in Auburns main street dealing directly with the public.
- 1990** Moved to Hobart, Tasmania ,where I am currently at the Centre for the Arts, full time, as a preliminary Masters student in the Ceramics Department.
- 1991** Full Time Masters of Fine Art Candidate, Centre for the Arts, Hobart
- 1992** Full Time Masters of Fine Arts Candidate, Centre for the Arts, Hobart

Exhibitions

- 1982** **Royal Show Craft Awards , Adelaide. SA.**
- 1983** **A Survey of Contemporary South Australian Ceramics. David Jones Gallery , Adelaide , SA .**
- 1984** **High Temperatures - a joint show with Kathy Alty and Setsu Ogishi . Birchgrove Gallery , Hahndorf, S.A**
- Fletcher Brownbuilt Award Exhibition,**
 Auckland. New Zealand.
 Awarded Merit Prize. Judge. Don Rietz. of U.S.A.
- Potters Guild of South Australia Gold Medal Exhibition. Studio 21 Gallery, Blackwood Adelaide.SA.**
- 1985** **Potters of the South Australian Potters Guild Beaver Gallery , Canberra , A.C.T.**
- 1986** **Potters Guild of South Australia Gold Medal Award Exhibition. Studio 21 Gallery , Blackwood, S.A.**
- Fletcher Brownbuilt Award Exhibition. Auckland, N.Z .**
- CRAFT EXPO. Centrepont, Sydney, N.S.W.**
- Selected South Australian Ceramics. Huon Gallery Albany, N.S.W.**
- Gawler Arts Festival . Gawler, South Australia .**
 Winner - Ceramics and glass award .
- Beaver Galleries Christmas Exhibition.**
 Canberra, A.C.T.
- 1987** **CRAFT EXPO. Centrepont, Sydney, N.S.W.**

Ceramics by Wayne and Kathy Alty
Weswal Gallery, Tamworth, N.S.W .

**1988 Inglewood South Australian Invitational
Ceramics Award.** Adelaide Arts Festival, S.A.

**Riverview Pottery Studio-Gallery Teapot
Exhibition** Auburn, S.A.

Jam Factory Teapot Exhibition.
Payneham , Adelaide, S.A .

1989 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award Exhibition.
Auckland, N.Z.

Lake Russell Gallery Christmas Exhibition.
Coffs Harbour, N.S.W.

1990 Tasmanian Potters Society Annual Exhibition.
winner - 1st prize, functional ceramics section.

City of Clarence Award Exhibition
Hobart. Tasmania

Hands in Clay
Wayne Alty and Phillip Supersad, Entrepot Gallery, Hobart

1991 When the Boats Come In
Entrepot Gallery, Hobart

1992 Resonance
Wayne Alty and Christl Berg, Entrepot Gallery, Hobart

AWARDS

**Fletcher Brownbuilt Award Exhibition Auckland, NZ 1984.
Merit Prize**

**Ceramic and Glass Award Gawler Arts Festival, Gawler, South Australia
1986 1st Prize**

**Functional Ceramics. Tasmanian Potters Society Annual Exhibition 1990
1st Prize**

**Sculptural Section. City of Clarence Annual Exhibition Highly
Commended**

POSITIONS

**Committee Member and Newsletter Editor Potters Guild of South
Australia, 1984.**

**Part time Teacher Tea Tree Gully T.A.F.E. & Payneham Community
Centre.**

Board Member Entrepot Artists Supplies/Gallery. Hobart, Tasmania 1990.

Part time tutor Ceramics Dept, Centre for the Arts.

COLLECTIONS

Fletcher Challenge Collection. Auckland, NZ.

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Collection, Hobart.

Tasmanian University Collection, Hobart.

Tasmanian Student Union Collection, Hobart.

Private Collections in Australia and Overseas.

FINAL SUBMISSION SLIDES FEBRUARY 7th, 1993.

Slide 12.

Missile with Hatch.

Dimensions 200cm by 1000cm

Slide 13.

Black Missile.

Dimensions 180cm by 850cm

Slide 14.

Sperm Missile.

Dimensions 140cm by 480cm

Slide 15.

Hanging Bomb / Blue bomb

Dimensions 140cm by 480cm

Slide 16.

Spinning Top Grenade.

Dimensions 370cm by 640cm

Slide 17.

Globe Grenade.

Dimensions 100cm by 180cm

Slide 18.

Sperm Grenade.

Dimensions 200cm by 340cm

Slide 19.

Han Grenade.

Dimensions 230cm by 380cm

Slide 20.

Aboriginal grenade

Dimensions 180cm by 300cm

Slide 21.

Gold Grenade and African Grenade.

Dimensions 90cm by 160cm

Dimensions 150cm by 200cm

Slide 22.

Hand Grenade and Clipper Grenade.

Dimensions 120cm by 200cm

Dimensions 80cm by 135cm

Slide 23.

Small Lustre Mine.

Dimensions 260cm by 260cm

Slide 24.

Mine Marinara

Dimensions 340cm by 340cm

Slide 25.

On / Off.

Dimensions 340cm by 420cm

Slide 26.

Two Small Grenades / Microphone.

Dimensions 490 cm by 400 cm

Slide 27.

Metamorphic Megaphone

Dimensions 210cm by 220cm

Slide 28.

Post Modern Gas Mask.

Dimensions 230cm by 490cm

Slide 29.

Not Waving / Drowning.

Dimensions 120cm by 480cm

Slide 30.

Metamorphic Hand Gun.

Dimensions 200cm by 360cm

Slide 31.

Medical Instrument / Sex Aid

Dimensions 180cm by 300cm

Dimensions 100cm by 300cm

Slide 32.

Fire Extinguisher

Dimensions 180cm by 500cm

Slide 33.

Massed Shells.

Dimensions 600cm by 740cm