

That Which Is Between Internal and External: A Visual Investigation

by *Miranda*

Rowan^Reynolds

BVA (hons), University of South Australia

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Signed *R Reynolds*

Rowan Reynolds

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Abstract

In my research I have focused on what it is that is between opposites. I have considered the edge of the human body (the skin) as that which is between the opposites of internal and external. The understanding of what is inside and what is outside our skin is considered by many to underlie our acknowledgment of all other opposites and definitions. As well as being interpreted as a site of separation the skin can be considered a site where inside and outside converge. Because of this duality, it is often referenced by artists who associate this aspect of the body's edge with a meeting place between internal and external including Eva Hesse, Anna Mendieta, Yayoi Kusama and Doris Salcedo, to whom I have given particular attention in the theoretical and practical aspects of my investigation.

My studio research has aimed to explore the subtle, smooth, fragile visual transitions between suggested internal and external forces. In sculpture and installation works I have experimented with materials associated with skin, in particular those that come through the skin, such as salt and water. I have also considered the use of fabric in order to represent the transition between inside and outside. I have mixed edible flour with talcum powder to confuse the two realms of inside and outside. I have approached my research through process, allowing my intentions to have a connection with my processes of making; this often results in ephemeral works. These latter works have been documented during the research project. Several further ephemeral works will have been created for the examination submission and these reflect my investigations into this particular aspect of the sculptural process. The research project is a significant investigation of the potential of ephemeral

sculpture to represent the transition between inside and outside.

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Introduction

My practical research is based on skin as the physical border between internal and external. In this research I have experimented with materials associated with skin, in particular those that come through the skin, such as salt and water. In my exploration of water I used coarse pigment to reveal the way in which it flows through a solid mass. I have used these materials to portray skin as a transitional edge in this way. One of the main reasons for producing this work was to make an edge the subject of a work rather than something that simply separates what is on one side from that of the other. I also chose to combine materials more likely to be associated with external use with materials more likely to be associated with internal use such as corn flour and talcum powder. I am interested in how skin can be seen to be both an edge and part of a continuum between inside and outside.

I worked at developing a quasi-scientific approach to my studio research. I established repetitive processes making only slight changes so that I was able to track what would cause a material to behave in a certain way. I chose this and I preferred this method to deliberately manipulating the material. The resulting works were to some extent anticipated, and to some extent surprising.

I have chosen to look at skin because in providing an edge to the internal and the external, skin can be seen to be one's most significant edge, both physically and in the way it contributes to our metaphysical understanding of self. I have used skin as an edge to which I have been able to relate other more abstract edges. This has been initiated by Didier Anzieu's idea

of the 'skin ego'¹, Deleuze and Guattari's perception of 'becoming imperceptible',² Irigaray's articulation of the 'Sensible Transcendental',³ and ideas relating to Lacan's and Freud's perception of the 'mirror stage'.⁴

Through a study of what is between opposites such as inside and outside (and the idea of an edge in itself) I seemed to find a process of its dissolution. I wanted to present an edge in a way that reflects the paradox that it may be an edge and at the same time occupy a space of transition between sides or opposites. I wanted to explore the shades of difference that exist in that process of transition. I aim to give expression to the way in which one opposite can be found in its 'other' and to make available an experience of transition for the viewer if they wish. I have explored this in the section of the paper titled *Elements of the Project*. These are: skin in its position between internal and external, and the concept of paradox which I use to explain what it is that separates opposites. I draw upon the connection between the body and the mind in my research of that which is between internal and external.

¹ Anzieu, Didier., in *Didier Anzieu: A Skin for Thought; interviews with Gilbert Tarrab on psychology and psychoanalysis*, Briggs (translator), Nash (translator), Daphne (translator), Karnac Books, London, p64.

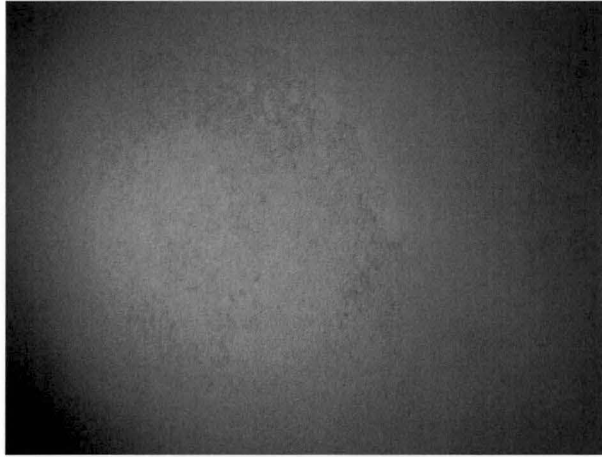
² Deleuze and Guattari., cited in *Irigaray & Deleuze : experiments in visceral philosophy*, by Lorraine, Tamsin E., Ithaca ; London : Cornell University Press, 1999, p188 – 189.

³ Irigaray, Luce., Whitford, Margaret., ed., and introduction, *The Irigaray Reader*, Blackwell, Oxford, UK, 1991, p?

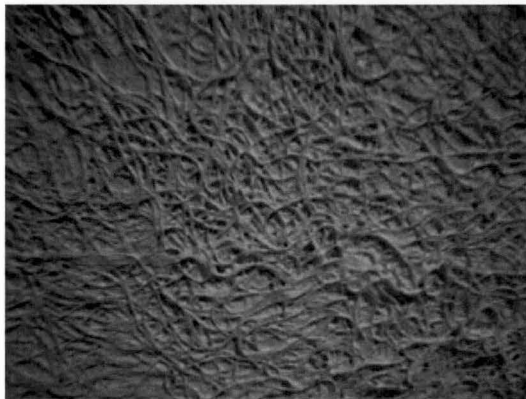
⁴ Freud, Sigmund., cited in *Jacques Lacan*, translated from the French by David Macey, by Rifflet-Lemaire, Anika., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, p182.

Section 1: Art works submitted for examination:

Thread/Wall (series)



Thread/Wall 2, thread and paint on wall, 2006

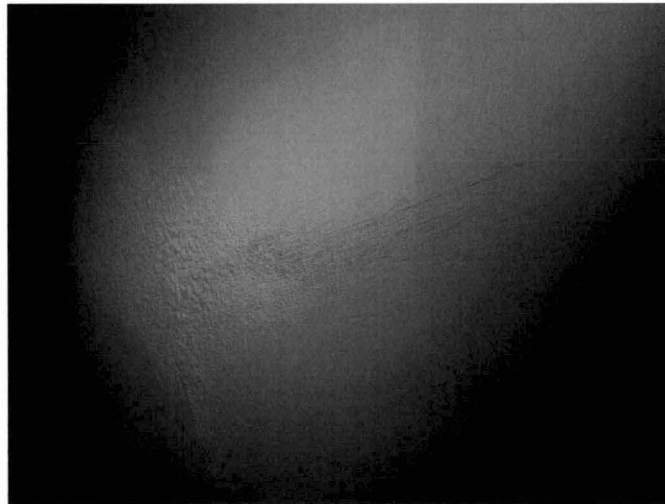


Thread/Wall 2, (detail) thread and paint on wall, 2006

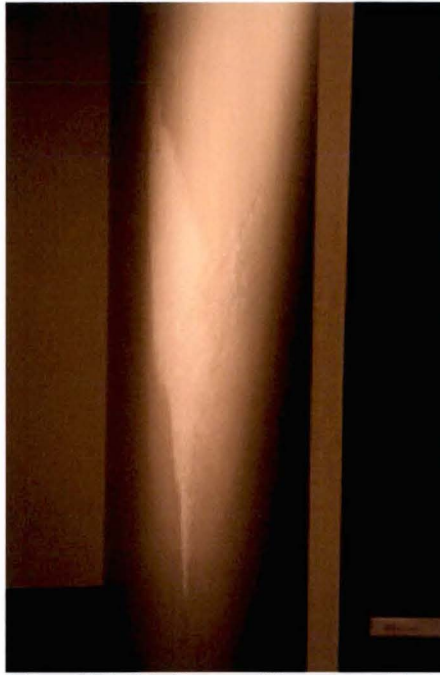
Thread/Wall is a series of works where I have painted works made of threads into the walls of the gallery. I wanted the work to merge into its environment. At first glance I would hope that the viewer will be unsure if they have seen something or not, for it to be possible for the viewer to walk past the work and miss the piece or be uncertain as to what they have seen. I want it to be possible for this inkling to become the beginning of visions ability to be able to dawn on its recognition. I have been uncertain whether to write about this intention of the work because I imagine that if you expect to see the work in this way you might be less likely to do so. I use soft edges in this group of pieces in the hope that the viewer may see

before the viewer recognizes. I use the colour of the gallery wall or close to it to blend the pieces into their surroundings. I have painted over some of the works with the gallery wall paint so they are as if inside the skin of the wall. I do this so that the work may enter the viewer's awareness without a battle, without jolting.

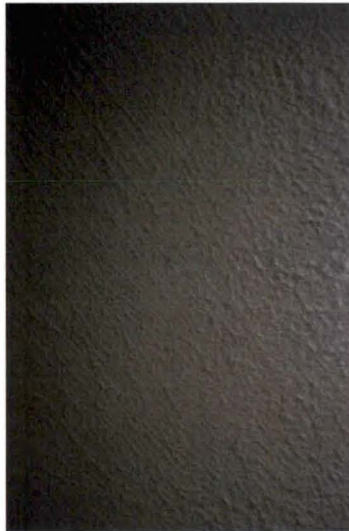
The texture of *Thread/Wall 2* is largely made by the way I applied the paint. This was a process of dabbing, slapping and stroking it on. I did this to create a soft hair or fur-like texture. Because it is a fairly uniform, even bland work it is my intention that it has the possibility of being overlooked. I do not mind if it is not thought much of. If there is some annoyance in the viewer having missed the work I also do not mind. I left some blank walls between the *Thread/Wall* works to create a certain sense of searching for the work.



Thread/Wall 3, thread and paint on wall, 2006.



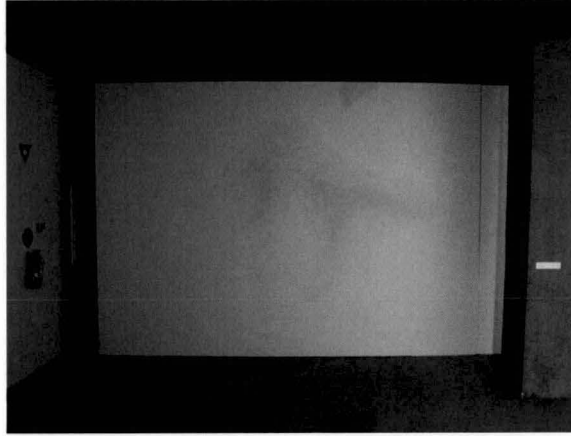
Thread/Wall 3, (from a different angle) photo by Jesse Reynolds, thread and paint on wall, 2006.



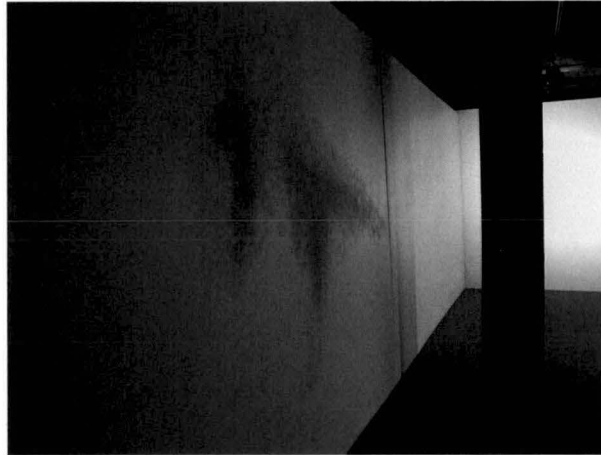
Thread/Wall 3 (detail), photo by Jesse Reynolds, thread and paint on wall, 2006.

In *Thread/Wall 3* I also wanted to make a work that was between appearance and disappearance. In *Thread/Wall 3* I left some of the white thread unpainted so that the transition between wall and thread would be a little more viewable. Over a small part of this I dabbed grey paint to create a slightly different texture in the work. The shape of this painted section corresponds to a place in the exposed

thread where I have cut some of the threads to create a similar shape. I used lighting in *Thread/Wall 3* that would cast some shadow from the threads making it a little more viewable than *Thread/Wall 2*.



Thread/Wall 1, thread and paint on wall, 2006.



Thread/Wall 1, thread and paint on wall, 2006.

In *Thread/Wall 1* I coated the work in a thick amount of paint in order to create a smooth transition. I used the same pale gray of the Plimsoll Gallery wall paint in all of the *Thread/Wall* works. Fabric becomes a material one uses to fall between self and world. I wanted to use it in these series of works to make the wall less of an edge.

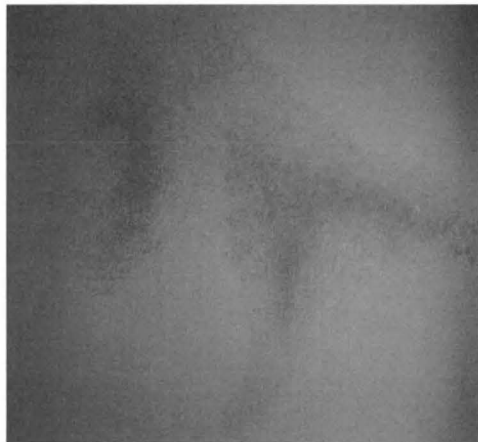
The experience of making work has a connection with its intended meaning for me. In making these thread works thought and action seemed to become inseparable in contemplating the next place for the thread to land. There

was continuity in the flow of the thread and repetition in the chaos of the twists and curves as it fell. I have found the experience of a continuity of practice to provide rest. Even if it is physically tiring it is a rest for the mind. Within rhythmic action, action and thought can more easily become the same. It is a trance-like process. A thread's shape is uniform throughout its length. Though my eye was moving along its form its appearance remained the same. Though the thread was moving I kept the position of my sight at a constant level. The process led to an experience where nothing seemed distinct or separate, to a sensation of edgelessness. It was the experience of consistency and movement simultaneously. Points of focus were sent in the many directions that the threads headed for. The outcome for the viewer is that this will, I hope promote less involvement in looking. I like to explore the way the material can mix up and mingle light and shadow in this way.

I find it important to say that while the work may be interpreted as an expression of obsession, I do not personally associate the processes of making with a negative experience of obsession. Subtle movement can promote a dawning of comprehension. Within such movement vision and thought seem to be able to move more synchronously. The external world can appear more knowable and understandable through repetition. There is a certain amount of predictability in anticipating what is next to come, knowing it will be a simple, next to insignificant repetition of what one is familiar with. It becomes easy to become lost within the plentiful repetition of the action. In the process of applying thread I began to find a hypnotic security in what in that moment felt like a potentially infinite action. It was an experience where the singular and the multiple could be seen to have the possibility of becoming momentarily indifferent. In this way, infinity and nothingness, though opposites, seem to have

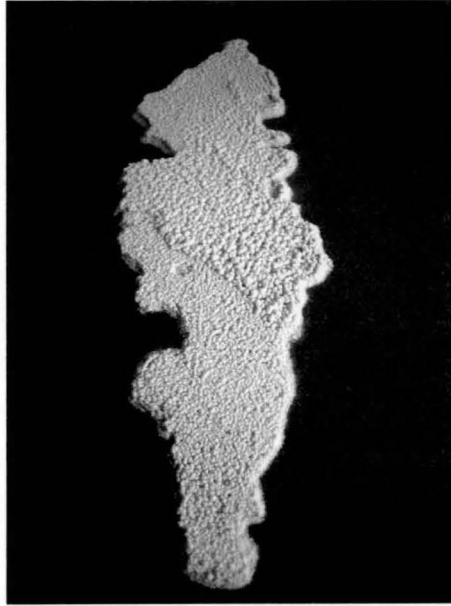
everything in common.

In my studio, looking at a stained container, it gradually dawned on me that what I was looking at was on the other side of the container; through the stains the container was transparent. I was able to see that what appeared as stain to me was an object, slightly viewable on its other side. That dawning moment of recognition, which may be free of association with thought, is what I seek in this work. In a moment akin to exploration or surprise a process of registration may allow for a reestablishment within this position. This position seems to allow for a fuller registration of what is seen. The interpretation of that which is between what one sees and what one knows and between that which is discovered and that which is seen is a position to which I intend to lead a viewer.

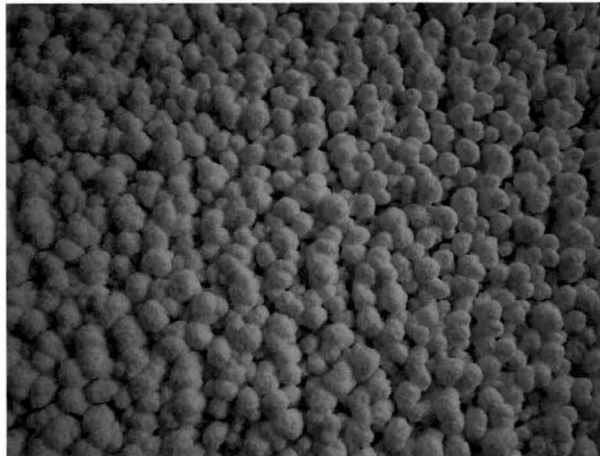


Thread/Wall 1 (detail), thread and paint on wall, 2006.

Salt on Wool



Salt on Wool, salt crystalised onto wool, 2006.



Salt on Wool (detail), salt crystalised onto wool, 2006.

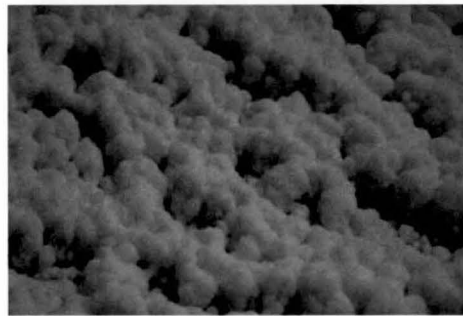
Salt on Wool is a work in which I used wool as the foundation for growing salt crystals. The crystals grown on the wool corresponds in some way to the support they are grown on. The twists and turns of the wool can still be slightly seen in the way the salt has grown on them. The work is connected to the *Empty Cloth* series in terms of my intentions. I placed the work in this room to draw a connection between the thread works on the walls with this work on the floor. I placed it here to in some way draw the

attention of the viewer to the works on the walls, as they might be more subtle than the viewer may be used to.

Empty Cloth (series)

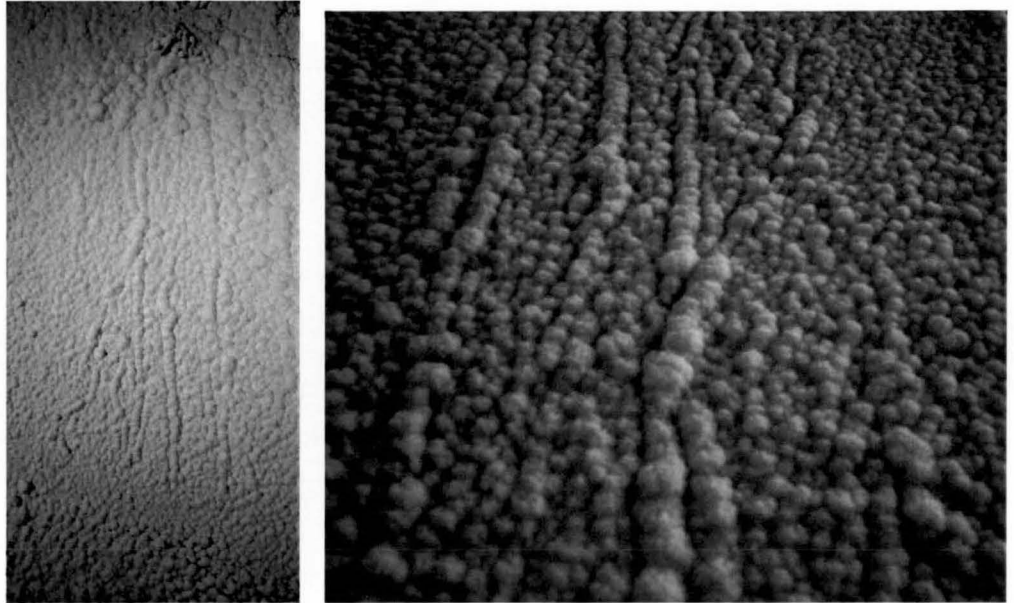


Empty Cloth 1, salt crystallised onto thread on Perspex, 2006.



Empty Cloth 1 (detail), salt crystallised onto thread on Perspex, 2006.

The work *Empty Cloth 1* is of threads arranged in a way that they suggest clothing and the edge of the body. I have been applying a strong saltwater solution to the work over a period of a few months. The crystals which form from the salt rise up the peaks in the work and outwards away from its exterior (along the support of the perspex).



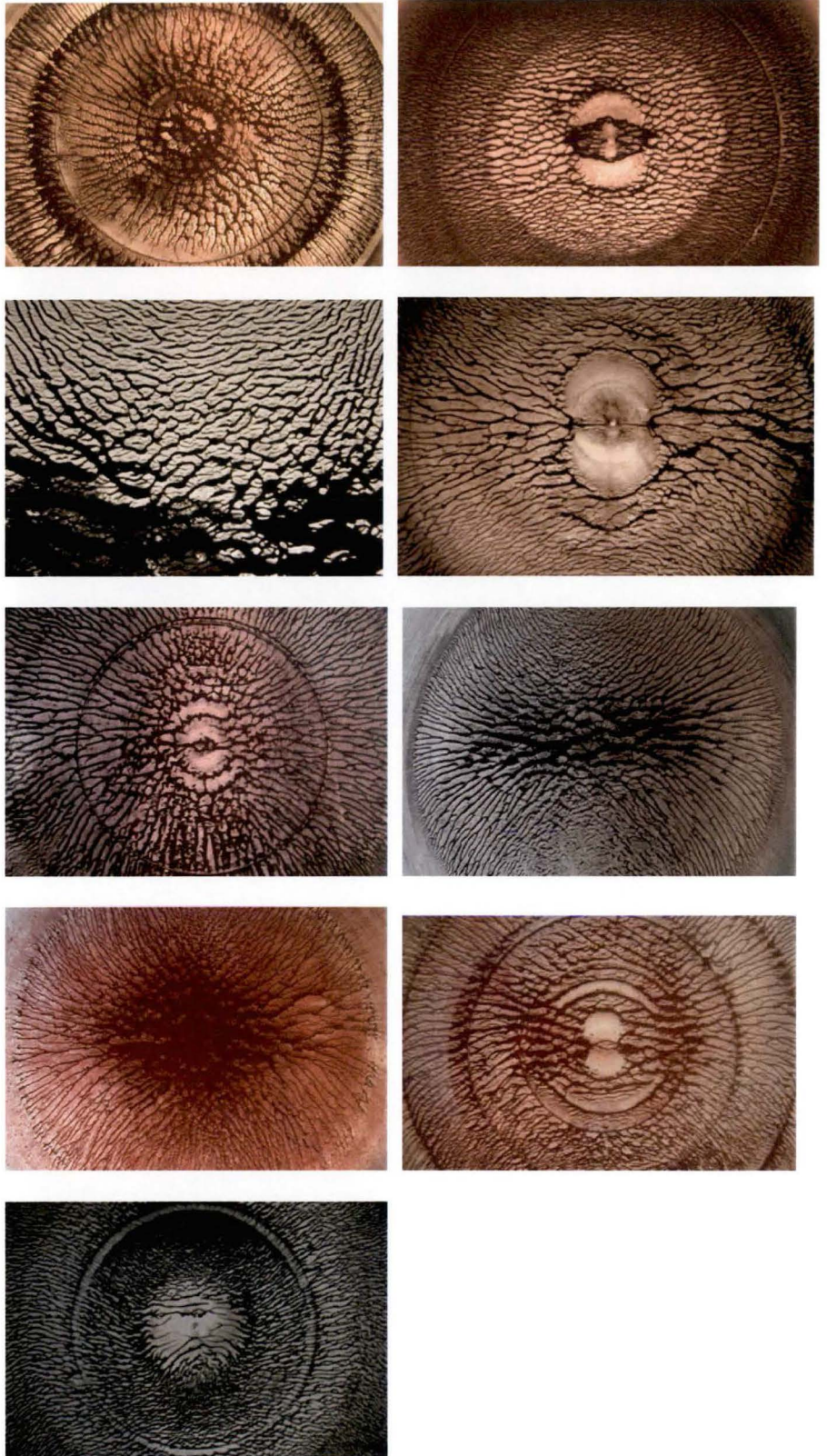
Empty Cloth 2, salt crystallised onto organza on Perspex, 2006.

Empty Cloth 2 is a work of salt grown on organza fabric. Although the crystals grown on this fabric are very built up and almost completely cover it, the form of the fabric beneath in can be seen in some ways because of the way the crystals have grown around it.

The movement of salt through the skin could be seen to break up the notion of skin as an edge that distinctly separates inside from the outside. In using the form of clothing I draw reference to clothing as that which provides transition between inside and outside. The idea of the work was to make an edge an object by not making it an edge for anything other than itself. It does not eliminate the inside by separating it from the outside and it does not eliminate the outside by presenting only that which is inside. Because the edge is itself the object it does not strictly divide itself between notions of inside and outside. It is without the significance of being the periphery to something; it is not in aid of anything to which it is container. It can be seen as being an edge yet it is not itself a separator or a definer. What side is a side for a side - inside or outside - is not known to the side itself.

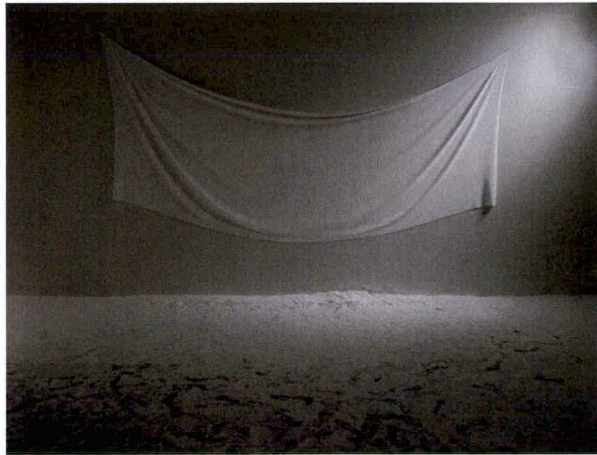
Liquid Through Solid

The images of this DVD projection are of the way in which liquid can move through solid. It is the result of pigment which can flow with water and settle with its movement, the shape of its pattern belongs to the water, the ridges of the container and the movement of rocking it. If the water is stirred, the pigment will be different; if it settles in still water it will be different. The pattern itself has no edge of its own. The appearance of an edge belongs to the many surfaces of powder that forms it. As the oxide is carried by water it settles on the sides of long narrow pathways. Each successive movement of the water has an effect on the last; the transitions of marks made in the powder arise out of a confusion of currents colliding, swirling and merging, passing through and overlapping. With repetition a connection between order and chaos can be seen though the definitions of these concepts are opposites. The work has some connection to the way in which water passes through the skin.

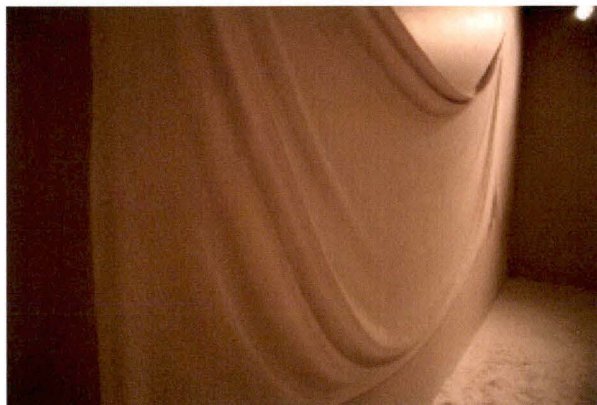


Liquid Through Solid, projected images, 2006

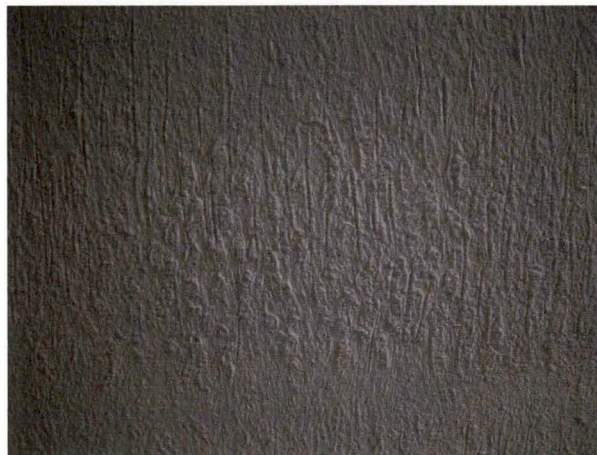
A Moment Ago (1)



A Moment Ago (1), cornflour and talcum powder on fabric, 2006.



A Moment Ago (1), (detail), photo by Jesse Reynolds, cornflour and talcum powder on fabric, 2006.



A Moment Ago (1), (detail), cornflour and talcum powder on fabric, 2006.

In sieving flour and talcum powder onto a square of fleecy

fabric the material becomes weighed down to a belly-like bulge. The curves gradually fold in as the bulge begins to sag under the weight of flour. I was working with balance and the likelihood of collapse in making this work. Unpredictably clumps of flour fell as a result of the fabric sagging further. When it did so the fabric was lighter and sprang upwards, sometimes causing a lot of flour to fall at once and dramatically change the texture I had been working to make.

The work reflects the tendency to switch to an opposite when looking for a middle ground. It also reflects the possibility of taking an idea too far. In this work I aim to reveal the possibility of misplacing inside and outside. I aim to reveal the possibility of becoming one's opposite in a process of finding a position of balance in between. As the flour is on the outside the work aims to reflect the collapse implicit in flipping oneself inside out. Perhaps also the possibility of mistaking inside for outside and outside for inside. The structure may not support its weight. The works could be seen to reflect the possibility of traveling to an opposite after mistaking the middle ground of paradox, of turning oneself inside out in the case of this work.

The texture between the flour that is on the fabric is similar to the texture of the flour that fell on the wall beneath it. I like to see the transition between one work and the next and to make the viewer aware of the space the work has become a part of yet remains something that the work is not itself.

A Moment Ago (2)



A Moment Ago (2), photo by Jesse Reynolds, corn flour, talcum powder and fabric on wood.



A Moment Ago (2), corn flour, talcum powder and fabric on wood, 2006.

A Moment Ago 1 is made upon a fragile structure. I placed pieces of wood (unfixed) against the wall, some on an angle at which they are just about to tumble. Fabric helps to keep one of these pieces in place, without it the wood would fall. Similar to *A Moment Ago (1)* I have combined flour and talcum powder to suggest a collapse between internal and external

I built up flour onto these pieces of wood and fabric. On the steeper slopes the flour is more likely to tumble down. This happened on one of these slopes during the making of the work. The concave scoop left in the flour where the rest had fallen from underneath it draws attention to the impermanence of the work. As I write I am aware that the work may change again before the show comes to be seen.

There is a transition between the wall and the floor in the work. On top of some of the pieces of wood I was able to build the flour to continue the line of the wood into the wall. At the base of the work where the folds of the fabric rest on the floor I built up the flour to blend the work into the powder surrounding it. The flour on top of the work tapers into the paint of the wall behind it as it clings to the texture left in the paint by a roller. There are some clumps of flour directly above the work where I have banged the sieve against the wall. I was happy to leave this as part of the work because I like to leave indicators to the way in which works are made. I also liked the sense that there was a break between one part of the work and the rest of it, to draw attention to the vertical drop between them and the precariousness of it staying unstuck onto the wall. When the work is viewed on the side the white powdery marks of flour falling between the sieve marks and the work can also be seen.

With No Edge



With No Edge, cornflour and talcum powder on fabric on gallery floor, 2006.

Surrounding the installations I have used corn flour and talcum powder in order to blur the distinction between the white of the gallery walls and the floor. I did this by sieving the flour mix against the walls of the room so that the flour filled the air and settled on the floor in a gradation away from that edge. This softened the space and made its edges less distinct. Its impermanent, movable substance becomes obvious as footprints become part of the work. My aim is to provide a smooth transition.



With No Edge, and *Where Something Becomes Nothing*, 2006.

I hope that the work reflects the possibility of an embraced duality to an extent that a notion of opposites becomes unclear. It is my intention to lead the viewer into a space where they are perhaps less concerned what is positive in shape and what is negative in shape, what is inside and what is outside, what is space and what is object. It points to the possibility of being whole which is perhaps to be neither of these things and both at the same time.

Within the transition between the wall and the floor I have placed fabric as the foundation for some of the sieved flour. As the flour builds up over sections of the fabric it smoothes its creases and joins into an uninterrupted, skin-like covering. I intended the fabric, like the flour, to soften the transition between the wall and floor.

This work is partially inspired by seeing an exhibition titled *The Blue Room of Humanity*⁵ by Franz Ehmann. Unexpectedly, and not obviously so, the exhibition began before I went into the gallery. Every now and then I noticed a faint blue mark on the ground, so slight I did not make an automatic association with the exhibition I was going to see. As I continued to walk the marks became more frequent and began to appear as footprints. Pathways met with pathways; I turned a corner to the gallery and saw a river of blue extending from the door. With gradual introduction there was no alarm in what I saw. Sight seemed to precede recognition. It did not distract me too abruptly to see it as it was. Soft edges held with it the possibility of soothing expectations. The work had the ability to dawn in a way that led me out of my own thoughts and expectations of seeing an exhibition in order to be able to see it as it was. The exhibition as I saw it, I have to point out, was not as Ehmann had planned it to be. In an

⁵ *The Blue Room of Humanity* by Franz Ehmann 17th september-11 October at the EAF (Adelaide), 1997

unplanned way the initial work had been walked on during the opening and was carried away with the viewers as they made their ways home.



1. Franz Ehmann, an image from the installation titled *The Blue Room of Humanity*, 1997

Where Something Becomes Nothing



Where Something Becomes Nothing, cornflour on gallery floor, 2006.



Where Something Becomes Nothing, cornflour on gallery floor, 2006.

After many experiments with elaborate forms of sieved flour I became most interested in the simplest: a pile of sieved flour that formed a peak as it built up. The texture I made in the flour can be seen under a strong light. In making this peak, the point is highest just before collapse. The practice for me has been to sieve the flour to that point. At its peak this mound could be said to hold a space in which up becomes down, left becomes right, front becomes back, height is nearest to collapse, substance tapers into nothingness and vice versa. In the becoming the point is itself as well as all that is around it; in the becoming, opposites can be seen to be one. It is in some way a point of resolution. It is a point where one can be seen to have the choice to either separate opposites or to see them as the same. It is a point of disappearance and a point of appearance. It can be seen to be reflective of a simultaneous experience of being and not being. In the works' physicality it is my aim to allude to that which is not physical in the space where the flour tapers.

The Relationship Between Works

It is my intention to encourage a sense of transition

between each of the works in the exhibition and the surroundings in which I placed them. I placed thread/wall works in places and under lighting in which they may be missed or searched for in order to find. I placed a wool and salt work on the floor of a room filled with thread/wall works to encourage viewers to look for those works. I placed works requiring dark spaces beside works requiring a lot of light in order to create an experience of transition between light and dark. I placed some large images of close-ups in *Liquid Through Solid* so the viewer may be inclined to look closer at the patterns forming themselves within materials throughout the show that might only be seen in detail. In setting up the installations made with flour I worked at letting the forms become reflective of each other and the room they are in. I made the square-like edge of *A Moment Ago (2)* to roughly mirror the wall it is hanging on in shape and dimension. This was one way of placing an organic form within the formal structure of a cube shaped room. I aligned the structure of *A Moment Ago (1)* to the sweeps of *A Moment Ago (2)*. I painted the floor a dark colour to reveal the way in which the flour of one work combines with the flour of another work allowing the transitions to be seen through the flour. In *With No Edge* I allowed flour to collect and sieved it into the point where the floor meets the wall to soften this sharp definition.

Section 2: Central Argument

A Question of Containment

For some there is a questioning of the concept that one's body is contained in a way that makes one completely separate and distinct from the world that surrounds one. Pat HOFFIE, in an essay titled *Skin and Canvas* makes the point that while scientists view skin as giving a definite border to the body, artists appear to be not so fixed in the way they express that division.⁶ A merging of the body into its surroundings can be seen in what I assume is an Untitled work by Andy Goldsworthy. In this work Goldsworthy lay on the ground while snow was falling leaving the outline of his body as the border between grass and snow. In taking away the snow that fell on him his outline becomes viewable. On looking at this work the viewer will know that snow either keeps falling or melts and possibly evaporates. This process will merge the mark left by his body into the surroundings where he had lain.



2. Andy Goldsworthy, *Untitled*, 1988.

⁶ Hoffie, Pat., *Skin and Canvas*, cited in Artlink vol. 22, no.1, 2002, p63

The work has similarities to a handprint on a cave wall. HOFFIE speaks of handprints as 'a sign that presence can extend its boundaries through the skin and beyond to other skins, other surfaces . . . The cave wall and the hand are involved in a kind of collusive act,' she says; it is 'the moment at which the world of the human body and world beyond it are brought together in an image;' it is a form of 'leaving a presence of yourself outside yourself.'

Christine Battersby has a similar discussion in an essay titled *Her Body/Her Boundaries* in which she contests what she sees as a masculine view given by Mark Johnson that the body is a container.⁷ That it is through a sense of fitting into a body that we learn how to sort information, to think of one thing belonging inside another and forming the basis of language. Battersby does not see her body as a container, suggesting that the female experience is different. She seeks to 'reconstitute the inside/outside, self/other, body/mind divides' by looking at gender. 'Adopting the container body-ideal and inhabiting a female body would be likely to pathologize me,'⁸ she says.

Luce Irigaray has the view that 'identities based on spatial containment, substances and atoms belong to the masculine imagery, and what is missing from culture is an alternative tradition of thinking identity that is based on fluidity or flow.'⁹ She writes that 'The western tradition has left unsymbolized a self that exists as self not by repulsion/exclusion of the not-self, but via interpenetration of self with otherness.' 'Woman' she says 'confuses all

⁷ Christine Battersby., *Her Body/Her Boundaries*, cited in *Journal of Philosophy and the Visual Arts: The Body*, by Andrew Benjamin., (ed.)1993, Academy Editions, Ernst and Sohn, Great Britain, p34.

⁸ Christine Battersby., *ibid.*, p34.

⁹ Luce Irigaray., cited *Her Body/Her Boundaries* in *ibid.*, p34

boundaries.'

While there are ways in which these understandings can be used to express or identify differences between the sexes I feel it can also be used to understand their similarities to an experience that could be seen to be available to both sexes. I feel that I can say this after viewing some works by male artists and reading the writing of some male thinkers that I have addressed in this exegesis.

In *Thinking Through the Skin* Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey write:

'consider how the skin is lived, read, written, narrated, seen, touched, managed, worked, cut, remembered, produced and known. These diverse approaches to thinking about the skin as a boundary object and as the site of exposure or concealedness, invite the reader to consider how the borders are already crossed by differences that refuse to be contained on the inside or the outside of bodies.'¹⁰

The body is what we communicate with, it is how we sense the external world and bring in information from it. The skin is described by HOFFIE as the "shroud between being and appearing,"¹¹ a place that could be said to shift between dissolution and defense, concealment and display.

Stacey and Ahmed explain how Merleau-Ponty describes the connection between body and world:

'For Merleau-Ponty the very experiences which make the body "my body," as if it were a "sole body before a sole world," are the very same experiences which open "my

¹⁰ Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey in *Thinking Through the Skin*, Routledge, London, 2001, p2.

¹¹ HOFFIE, Pat., *ibid.*, p62

body" to "other bodies," in the simultaneous mutuality of touch and being touched, and seeing and being seen. In this sense, "my body" does not 'belong to me': embodiment is what opens out the intimacy of "myself" with others. The relationship between bodies is characterized by a "with" that precedes, or is the condition of possibility for, the apartness of "my body."¹²

Moira Gatens points out that the body can become as if it was an 'other' to oneself; it can become as if it is one's double.¹³ She writes: 'We can be objects, for ourselves and to ourselves: recipients of our own sadism/masochism, esteem/disdain; punishment/reward; love/hate. Our body image is a body double that can be as 'other to us as any genuine 'other' can be.' My interest in exploring these ideas has been to recognise the links between body and mind, between its physicality and one's psyche, one's understanding of oneself and of the world.

The artist Claude Cahun explains that in becoming a mirror for someone else or to encourage someone else to become a mirror for you, is a form of imprisoning oneself. It is an act that prevents transference.

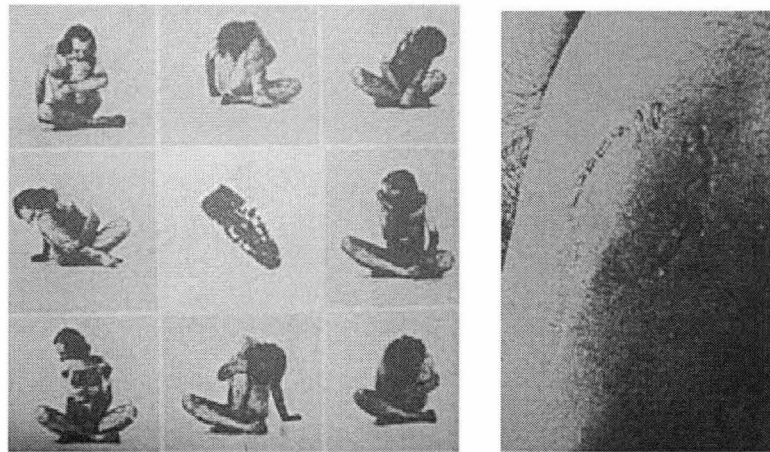
'A sheet of glass. Where shall I put the reflective silver? On this side or on the other: in front of or behind the pane? Before, I imprison myself, I blind myself. What does it matter to me, passer by, to offer myself a mirror in which you recognize yourself, even if it is a deforming mirror and signed by my own hand? . . . behind I am equally enclosed. I will not know anything of outside.'¹⁴

¹² Merleau-Ponty., cited in Stacey, Jackie., Ahmed, Sara., *Thinking Through the Skin*, Routledge, London, 2001, p5.

¹³ Moira Gatens., *Imaginary Bodies: ethics, power, and corporeality*, London, Routledge, 1996, p35.

¹⁴ Claude Cahun., *A Veux Non Avenus* cited in Chadwick, Whitney., ed., Ades, Dawn., *Mirror Images; women, surrealism, and self-representation*, MIT Press, Camb., Mass., 1998. p11.

In a work titled *Trademarks*, Vito Acconci bit the skin of his body, breaking through the surface to create the bleeding outline of his teeth. He then used these marks to make prints with the blood. He writes of his work: 'reasons to move: show myself to myself – show myself through myself . . . Make my own outside – send my inside outside.'¹⁵ Kathy O'Dell relates this work to the mirror stage, suggesting that sending one's insides outside is a form of seeking power over what is outside oneself.¹⁶



3. Vito Acconci, *Trademarks*.

In a collaborative work between Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville uses a piece of perspex to transform the edge of her body. The work is a series of photographs titled *Closed Contact*.¹⁷ The photographs, taken by Glen Luchford, are shot from underneath the perspex on which Saville presses and distorts her shifted body weight. The work seems to question what the body is as its edges are pushed, bent, squeezed and folded. The wrinkles in flesh appear to mark the journey of twists and bends of dragging flesh on the perspex. Saville says of the work, 'I wanted to

¹⁵ Vito Acconci., cited in O'Dell, Kathy., *Contract with the Skin: masochism, performance art, and the 1970's*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998, p21.

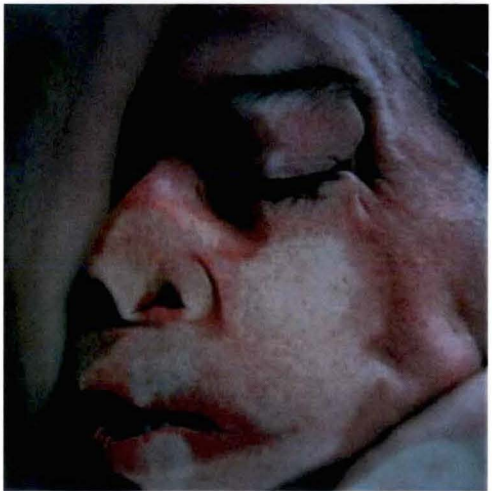
¹⁶ O'Dell, Kathy., *ibid.*, p20.

¹⁷ *Closed Contact: Jenny Saville, Glen Luchford, Gagosian Gallery*, Los Angeles, California, 2002 (no page numbers given).

see if I could almost bring the inside of the body outside.
So you could see the texture, the fabric of the body.'



4. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville, *Closed Contact* (series), 2002.



5. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville, *Closed Contact* (series), 2002.



6. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville, *Closed Contact* (series), 2002.

Skin Ego

Sue Cataldi writes of how the skin both 'protects us from others and exposes us to them.'¹⁸ The skin is the site where one learns the notions of inside and outside. Inside and outside the human body is perhaps the most basic of opposites. It is the place from which the understanding of all other opposites is said to stem. It is from where we learn to either make connections between or divide opposites. Freud sees the body as that which enables us to determine the difference between internal and external; this is learnt in childhood, this experience then becomes something that can be referred to, to enable differentiations between other things.¹⁹ This first understanding of inside and outside leads on to the understanding of other opposites.

To look at the skin is to look at the in-between, the substance that is both inside and outside. Skin separates by becoming each to both of its sides. It does not simply separate but provides a transition as it takes on the

¹⁸ Cataldi, Sue L., *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: a study of sensitive space*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, 1993, p145. cited in Ahmed, Sara., Stacey, Jackie., *Thinking Through the Skin*, Routledge, London, 2001, p1.

¹⁹ Freud, Sigmund., Riviere, Joan., (translator) *Civilization and its Discontents*, Hogarth Press, London, 1930, p241.

qualities of the world around it and the life inside it. It is a place that incorporates and facilitates opposites. Instead of the in-between being a space that separates opposites, it can also become a space where inside and outside exist as the same, as a paradox perhaps, or a point where each becomes one.

In looking at the skin ego I will give a brief definition of my understanding of the concept. Freud's description of ego is that it is the 'construction of the self,' that every 'stone in' its 'edifice sacrifices part of the truth of the essence,' that is the self.²⁰ The ego communicates in symbols, symbols that come to stand in for what is actual. It 'submits' to the 'symbolic' nature of the world; 'it takes on those values without understanding their cause.' It is to this shell or edifice that Didier Anzieu brings an association with the skin. These associations have been made because of the way in which the ego comes to develop in such close connection with the understanding of inside and outside and with skin. The skin, like the ego, forms a perimeter to both self and world. Anzieu gives this link the term: 'skin ego'. He says of this:

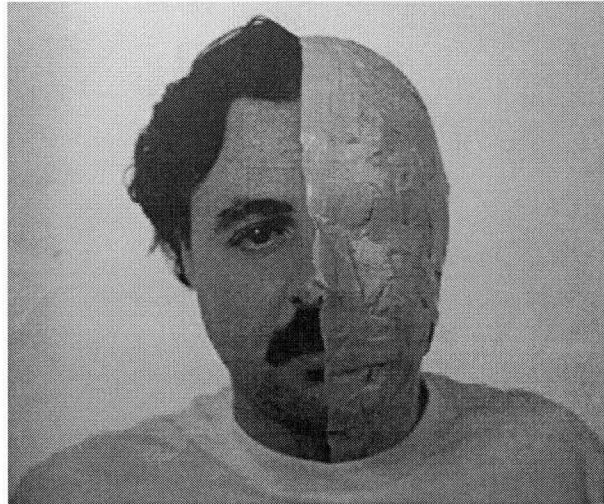
'just as one of the capital functions of the ego is to distinguish between what belongs to me myself and what does not belong, between what comes from one and the desires, thoughts, and affects of others, and between a physical (the world) or biological (the body) reality outside the mind; the ego is the projection of the psyche of the surface of the body namely the skin, which makes up this sheet or interface.'²¹

Khalil Rabah's work titled *Half Self Portrait* (live work) seems to refer to the very real need for self protection. In

²⁰ Freud cited in Rifflet-Lemaire, Anika., *Jacques Lacan*, translated from the French by David Macey, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1977, p182.

²¹ Anzieu, Didier., Briggs (translator), Nash (translator), Daphne (translator), *Didier Anzieu: A Skin for Thought; interviews with Gilbert Tarrab on psychology and psychoanalysis*, Karnac Books, London, p63.

this work Rabah has covered half of his face in band-aids. In the process of protecting himself, the band-aids have also concealed effective communication of body language. Arranged in such a way that one comes to associate the band-aids more with metaphor than with function the work suggests that the skin alone is not enough to protect one's self.



7. Khalil Rabah, *Half Self Portrait* (live work),

Perhaps in linking ego with skin Anzieu is acknowledging the requirement of ego's protective qualities, representing them as a necessary and sometimes expected part of the psyche in order to deflect that of others yet also enabling a necessary permeability and transference between what it serves to either unite, define or defend. My main reason for researching the skin ego is to reflect upon the link between the body and the mind. As I have drawn upon this link in my practical research I have found it helpful to investigate the way in which others have explored this link. The ego like the skin seems to be that which is between internal and external. Because of this I have drawn upon it as a way of using the physicality of an art work in order to become suggestive of what is other than that.

Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey reflect on the link between mind and body. They write that the body is not simply

considered to be 'brute matter,' but is 'rather understood' to be 'both the locus of thinking – the site from which thinking takes place – and as the object of thought – as being already subject to interpretation and conceptualization.'²² They say that 'thinking through the Skin is a thinking that reflects not on the body as the object of thought, but on inter-embodiment, on the mode of being – with and being – for'²³

Deleuze and Guattari explain how in the process of maintaining a sense of personal self one has to take the task upon one's self of excluding the world to some degree. In doing so one limits one's understanding of the world as well as limiting one's own capabilities for the purpose of being clear about who and what one is. One manipulates some of the flexibility required for understanding in order to be able to maintain a concept of who one is, both for self perception, projection and protection. Though this may be necessary Deleuze and Guattari explain how there are ways in which one can also explore a freedom from this. They name this possibility 'becoming imperceptible'.²⁴

'Becoming Imperceptible'

'Becoming – imperceptible,' Deleuze and Guattari say, 'involves challenging conventional body boundaries, taking the risk of becoming indiscernible as a social subject, and unsettling a coherent sense of personal self.'²⁵ The word 'becoming' is used in a way that draws attention to the

²² Ahmed, Sara., Jackie Stacey., *ibid.*, p2-3

²³ Ahmed, Sara., Jackie Stacey., *ibid.*, p2.

²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari cited in Lorraine, E. Tamsin., *Irigaray & Deleuze: experiments in visceral philosophy* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1999. p188-189.

²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1987, pp279-80, cited in *Irigaray & Deleuze: experiments in visceral philosophy*, *ibid.*, p188-191.

possibility of this being experienced continuously. To maintain a state of becoming is to maintain a state that is forever fresh, adaptable and spontaneous. One is forever arriving into it. In doing so, it is explained, one simultaneously 'transforms . . . the world' and becomes 'transformed by the world in the process.' This 'sets into motion a world of becoming.' In doing this Deleuze and Guattari speak of 'fluxes' and 'flow' as being able to move through one as well as be transmitted from one, of existence becoming a more fluid experience and not necessarily bound to the desire to protect or enhance the parameter of self, the place where world and self may undergo interpretation. 'Becoming-imperceptible' appears to encourage the loss of identity; it suggests the possibility that one can be there at the same time as not there. The outcome of this is that a combined experience becomes more significant. One risks losing one's self to become what is between, the giver and receiver of this combined experience. Deleuze and Guattari say; 'becoming everybody/everything is . . . to make a world.' It is, perhaps, worth the risk of losing what one thinks oneself to be for the possibility that becoming Imperceptible talks of.

Elizabeth Grosz writes of how Deleuze and Guattari's framework is helpful in reconceiving 'bodies outside the binary oppositions imposed on the body by the mind/body, nature/culture, subject/object and interior/exterior oppositions.'²⁶

Tamsin Lorraine paraphrases Irigaray's idea of the sensible transcendental and relates it to becoming imperceptible. She writes:

²⁶ Lucy Irigaray cited in Grosz, Elizabeth., *Volatile Bodies: towards a Corporeal Feminism*, Allen and Unwin, Australia, 1995, pp. 164, 165, cited in: *Sally Smart: The Unhomely Body series, Femmage, Shadows and Symptoms series*, Sally Smart, Melbourne, 1999, p14.

'Irigaray's notion of the sensible transcendental . . . hints of a sensibility that goes beyond ordinary sense experience. In receptivity to the divine that is the horizon of one's becoming, the feminine subject touches upon that which is always beyond and yet contiguous to her experience. Receptivity to this impermanent transcendental requires transformation of oneself as well as transformation of one's understanding of the world. Self and world (including the other within it) thus partake in a mutually engendering communion wherein no identity can remain fixed. Becoming-imperceptible also requires leaving behind not only the perceptible boundaries of the body but also one's conventional understanding of oneself, of others, and of one's world, in order to respond to the informing impact of imperceptible encounters.'²⁷

In a lecture Peter Weimier spoke about the possibility that a photograph may become as if ego, that in producing this image there becomes less space between self and surroundings, that there is the possibility of world and self to exist in an art work, and that in this process world and self can be seen to become one.²⁸ It is perhaps similar to what artists exploring other types of media experience in their practices. Mark Rothko speaks of paintings as 'skins that are shed and hung on the wall.'²⁹ Mike Parr talks about his experience of making art. He says, 'I just lose myself in the process . . . for me it's completely about the body . . .' He explains how he 'had the extraordinary feeling (that he) . . . had dissolved into the mountains and sky.'³⁰

Gustave Courbet's self portrait, *Man With a Pipe* seems to

²⁷ Lorraine, Tamsin E., *Irigaray & Deleuze: experiments in visceral philosophy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1999, p188-89.

²⁸ Peter Weimier Tasmanian School of Art, Art Forum.

²⁹ Rothco, Mark, cited in *Out of the Body: Mark Rothco's Paintings*, James E.B. Bresdin, Cited in *The Body Imaged*, 1993, Pointon, Marcia., (ed.) Adler, Kathleen., (ed.) Cambridge University Press, p43.

³⁰ Mike Parr, cited in Carroll, Alison., Murray, Les A., *Other Stories: Five Australian Artists: Rosalie Gascoigne, Fiona Hall, Mike Parr, Rosslynd Piggott, Hossein Valamanesh, with The Idyll Wheel, a poem by Les Murray*, Asialink Exhibition, Melbourne, 1997, p12.

convey something of this possibility of 'becoming-imperceptible'. A trail of smoke as if the man in the portrait seems to stand between the viewer and his face, encouraging the viewer to do the same. Michael Fried speaks about the way Courbet is able to establish a 'relationship between sitter and beholder, one in which the two are made congruent with one and another'.³¹ The work seems to portray an experience that is lost to one's recognition. In the portrait the man's eyes appear to point in the direction of this momentary loss, better prepared for the memory's return. Smoke hangs; secrets lost; reality fresh. It is paradoxical, perhaps, that the times when we are the least focused, we can also be the most present.



8. Gustave Courbet, *Man With a Pipe*, 1849?.

Margaret Sundell writes of Francesca 'Woodman's . . . ability to . . . simultaneously create and explode the fragile membrane that protects one's identity from being absorbed by its surroundings'.³² Woodman makes images such as those of *Space (squared)* series, in which she can be seen

³¹ Fried, Michael., *Courbet's Realism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, p68.

³² Margaret Sundell., *The Elusive Self*, cited in Woodman, Francesca., Sollers, Philippe., *Francesca Woodman*, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain; Zurich: Scalo, 1998, p169.

to be both there and not there. In these photographs she becomes partially transparent with movement. Because of the slow shutter speed she has used the swing of her head or the twitch of a hand sees her morph into the surroundings. Her actions spread her around the image and erase familiar edges. It blends, merges and smudges as light and shadow converge. Liquid forms flow into solid. Objects have become viewable through her flesh. It reflects an experience (perhaps) of becoming indistinct, of being uncertain of who one is.



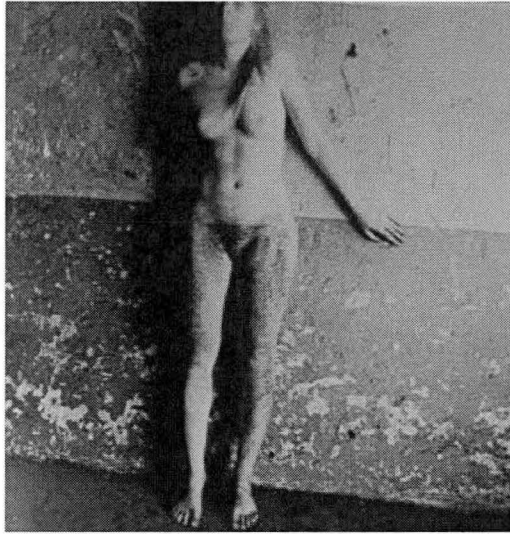
9. Francesca Woodman, *Space (squared)* series, 1975-78.



10. Francesca Woodman, *Space (squared)* series, 1975-78.

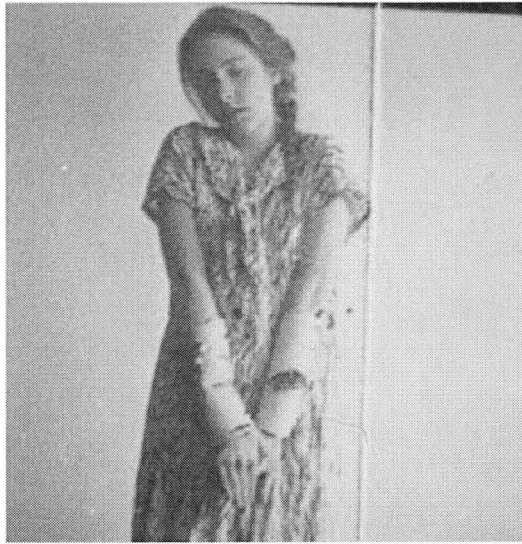
Woodman has explored other ways of merging herself into the background of a photograph. In an *Untitled* photograph she aligns the edge of her pubic triangle to the edge

between two colours on a wall behind her. In line with the wall behind her she has painted half of her body with the colour that is behind her. She appears to rest her hand on this edge which has the effect of making it appear more physical than it is and perhaps more physical than she has represented herself.



11. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, May 1977-August 1978.

In an *Untitled* series of photographs Woodman blends the association of a tree with her arm. In the images she has placed the bark from the same kind of tree she is in front of around her arms. In these images flesh and tree seem to merge.



12. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, 1980.



13. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, 1980.

In *From Space (squared)* Woodman conceals part of her body with the wallpaper peeling from the wall behind her. The parts that are revealed are fragmented.



14. Francesca Woodman, *From Space (squared)* series, 1975-76.

Similar to this, in *House* series, she blends her body into a disintegrating room. In *House no.4* she is behind the surrounds of a fireplace; in *House no.3* she wraps herself in paper. In both these images her movements blurs her image adding to her merging with the room.



15. Francesca Woodman, *House no.3*, 1975-76.



16. Francesca Woodman, *House no.4*, 1975-76.

Paradox: what is it that separates opposites?

I am drawn to the idea of paradox because it is a word given within the system of language which points to a way out of this system. It is a symbol given to that which may be difficult to symbolise, yet can become a symbol when required around other symbols.

Zen paradox, expressed in its art and its sayings can perhaps take one to a state of mind that reflects that paradox, that is between being and not being, where paradox is a solution to what may seem strange and complicated riddles which may at first appear to have no solution such as 'Those who know do not speak. Those who speak do not know' or 'to live as if already dead.'³³ It refers to a state of mind that can be interpreted as either being or not being; and therefore can perhaps be interpreted as neither and both simultaneously.

In defining an edge one can be said to conceal a more elaborate interconnectedness. To name a boundary a paradox can perhaps bring this definition into question. An understanding of paradox can be said to encompass a position from where subtlety is more likely to be

³³ Cited in Hoover, Thomas., *Zen Culture*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1978, p8.

recognized. It is able to shift the emphasis from that of making a distinction to the recognition of the influence each side can have on the other. Paradox, perhaps, can lead to a state of becoming, as if skin, where transference and the freedom to become either side exists.

It is my aim to give physical expression to this position of paradox and the position where outside becomes inside in works titled, *Where Something Becomes Nothing*. I have used the shape of a peak to be expressive of a paradoxical space. I have described this shape of the point in section 1 as inhabiting a space where up becomes down, left becomes right, height is nearest collapse and matter tapers into nothingness. It is a space of opposites meeting and becoming as if the same.

As the word paradox has been given more than one meaning I feel the need to define it in the way I intend to use it. A paradox may appear self-contradictory, yet upon consideration may become comprehensible. Paradox has the possibility of seeming absurd because one may be unaccustomed to opposites being intentionally placed in a way in which each cancels the other out, as can be heard in the sayings: 'nothing is as constant as change' or 'less is more' to repeat two well known paradoxes.

In considering paradoxes I have come to relate the processes of understanding them to a pendulum. I wanted *A Moment Ago* to be reflective of the pull that can sometimes occur between opposition much like a pendulum. To be reflective of a process of flipping to an opposite in order to find the middle ground between the pull of oppositions much like a pendulum might. A pendulum switches back and forth – one extreme almost matched by its opposite (the other side) until it stands still. Similar to this, a paradox matches a quality with its opposite in order to rediscover the middle ground between

them. It is this resting spot of the pendulum to which a paradox can be seen to lead. At the resolution of the pendulum's movement it is possible to say that one thing may be as if its other; that one side is the same as its opposite since there is no longer any pull towards either.

Jim Powell explains how 'Inside/outside assures us of order. On its assurance, Plato tells us what is properly "inside" philosophy.³⁴ Derrida's strategies' such as deconstruction 'unfix the order.'³⁵ In unfixing order, in lessening the opposition between order and chaos, insights that may previously have been obscured have the potential to become revealed. It is a potential that may previously have been denied them.

In some ways similar to Derrida's concept of deconstruction paradox may be seen to encompass the very position where decision tends to become fixed. In doing so this is likely to confuse the initial understanding to which paradox gave room. It is in the very place where a wall can be built, made to section off opposites in order to establish a distinction that might with a different attitude lead to an understanding of subtlety. The initial excitement of discovery may appear to benefit from being defined, there is perhaps the desire to make a marker, something to come back to; however, often one finds oneself coming back to just the marker, not what it marks. From a position of possibility there becomes a distinction that allows for no further questions. Curiosity might turn into expectation because of this limitation. The process of making definitions can be likened to a place of interest that becomes destroyed in the process of being appreciated; lost to previously glimpsed at images perhaps, it is seen

³⁴ Plato, cited in *Derrida for Beginners*, by Jim Powell., Writers & Readers Publishing, 1996, p37.

³⁵ Jim Powell paraphrasing Jacques Derrida., cited in *Derrida for Beginners*, ibid, p37.

before it is seen; what may have been awe becomes transferred to comparison. To present an alternative, the in-between, instead of being a space that separates opposites, can be seen as a point where, at the point of transition, both sides exist as the same.

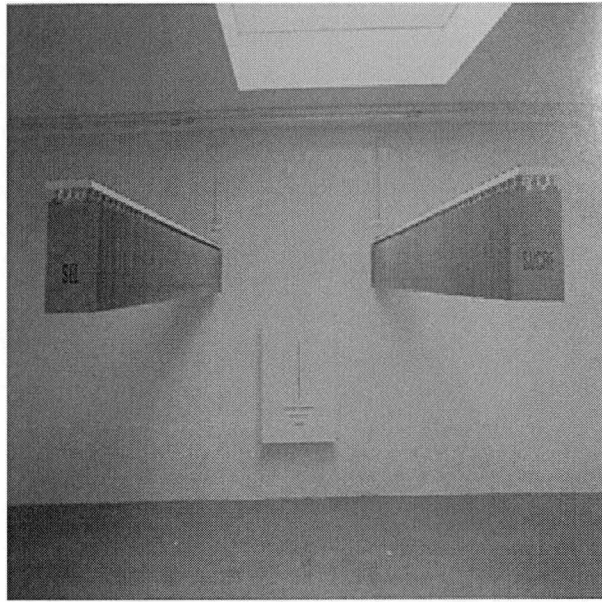
In *The Painter's Studio* Gustave Courbet appears, in his self portrait, to become part of a transition into the image he is creating. Michael Fried speaks of how 'an obscure merging of the painter's lower body with the dark bottom portion of the picture on his easel, is consistent with the implied dissolution of the boundary between the worlds of painting and painter-beholder.'³⁶ The work can be seen to be reflective of the experience of becoming one with the process of making a work. Making physical one's imaginings draws attention to the possibility of experiencing a lack of separateness, to the possibility of there being an absence of distinction, boundary or edge. It seems to convey something of the experience of the body, mind and the world around one to become as if the same. In the work, Courbet sits at his easel surrounded by onlookers. A boy and a woman join Courbet in looking at the point where the brush meets the painting. They appear mesmerized by the act of stroking the brush and possibility of combining what the mind sees and what the eye sees. It speaks of the possibility of a work to perhaps do this for a viewer.

³⁶ Fried, Michael., *Courbet's Realism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, p159.



17. Gustave Courbet, *The Painter's Studio*, 1854-55.

Pieter Laurens Mol has made a work that relates to the position of being between. Titled *The Ideal Place: The Focus of Extremes*, Laurens Mol has placed sugar and salt opposite each other, the space between directs the eye towards a symbol-like motif. The placement of these extremes in flavor seem to bring one's attention to the centre, to what the title seems to tell us may be an ideal place. The work implies that this position needs to be highlighted, needs the form of the symbol to point out that it is there. It is, perhaps, too easily overseen on the swing between one extreme and another. Too easily ignored, perhaps, or criticized for not being obvious, definable or something to make comment on. Because of this it does require focus and marks to highlight it. An ideal place is possible and waiting but not easily won, recognized or maintained as is suggested by this work. It has no flavor of its own, and none so dazzling as salt or sugar. Of itself it is not, it requires something that is, to again highlight how it is not, yet also remind us of its presence. Though the work appears to have created a symbol for that which is not easy to symbolise it is perhaps necessary to have a symbol if it is to be recognised within an environment of symbols.



18. Pieter Laurens Mol, *The Ideal Place: The Focus of Extremes*, 1995.



19. Pieter Laurens Mol, *The Ideal Place: The Focus of Extremes*, 1995.

The experience of being between can be said to simultaneously incorporate both the presence and absence of the extremes it sits between. In doing so, perhaps, it is more easily misinterpreted as being precisely what it is not; excessively extreme, than that which clearly defines its position. Moments between, or paradox, carry with them the possibility of being misinterpreted as excessively open to chaos, sometimes difficult, awkward, strange, unusual, and unknown. Paradox can perhaps also be conceived to

be a mistake for its uncertainty, criticized because it is indecisive. It creates the assumption in another of one having stalled. This is perhaps because it is not in opposition to anything, carries no distinction to mark or declare its position on one side or the other. It is perhaps more often that which is unnoticed, it is not possible to create a signpost to return to because it itself would not be the signpost; one may be more likely not to remember it because what is it that one is remembering? Yet from here, there is perhaps a greater possibility of interpreting and acting without making an unnecessary bypass. *

One of the ways of providing transition is to make one's external environment reflective of the body, soothing the differences between each. Constructing the external world to reflect an internal state could be seen as a way of lessening the extremes between inside and outside. Familiarity may be sought in objects such as cars with faces, buildings with rooms that can be seen to correspond to parts of the human body and artworks that can translate states of mind. Helen McDonald writes of how Sally Smart's works act 'like extensions of the body' in the same way as one's home may be seen as an extension of one's body.³⁷ McDonald writes how 'Architecture has often served as a metaphor for the body; windows being eyes, the front door the mouth, and the fireplace the anus.' Smarts work is said by McDonald to be 'a play on the way architectural space is implicated in our ideas about, and responses to, the body.'³⁸

Unique Interior (with hair) takes the type of pattern one might be used to seeing in a home environment and incorporates suggestions of the body such as a ribbon

³⁷ McDonald, Helen., Kent, Rachel., *Sally Smart; The Unhomely Body Series; Femmage, Shadows and Symptoms Series*, Sally Smart, Melbourne, 1999.p?

³⁸ Helen McDonald., *ibid.*, p?

which is tied to a strip of pattern is made to look like a pony tail. One other strip of the same pattern turns into the knobles and ridges of something like a backbone. Here the hints and suggestions of a home to resemble one's internal and external body are made real to the viewer. In blurring the distinction between inside and outside Smart's 'experiments make us ponder upon whether it is true to say that I have a body, or that I am a body, making us doubt that the mind and body are really split.'³⁹ In smudging this distinction between inside and outside the distinction between mind and body also becomes smudged. McDonald writes how 'everywhere in this show there are marks, stains and traces to indicate the artist's bodily presence.'



20. Sally Smart, *Unique Interior (with hair)*, 1997.

³⁹ Helen McDonald., *ibid.*, p14.



21. Sally Smart, installations from *The Unhomely Body Series*, 1997.

In thinking about that which is between internal and external I have come to think of the skin as a place that is between opposition. I have been thinking about that which is between opposites as holding the possibility to become a position of transition or a place to find rest in. Skin because it is within a position of duality can be seen as if a paradox.

Section 3: Related Art Practices

Introduction

The main artists I have chosen to research in relation to my practice are Ana Mendieta, Doris Salcedo, Yayoi Kusama and Eva Hesse. Though the work of these artists is not specifically about the skin, it is about the edge of the body. What links my current research and the work of each of these artists is the dissolution of this edge.

Anna Mendieta

The dissolution of this edge is shown in Anna Mendieta's work as the body merging into the natural environment. In *Untitled* from the *Silhouette Series*, a hollow shape forms the outline of a body on a beach. There is a scattering of red pigment both inside and outside of the impression. In this work there is no separation between body and earth; the edge of one makes the form of the other. As the inside of the impression is empty a space could be said to be made available to experience, to be molded by the intention of the work. The work alludes to a person being there, in its absence the viewer is able to become present in the space this creates. The work becomes the shell of an experience, an experience that, perhaps, can only be suggested by showing what it is not. It could be said to have become the outside of a viewer's internal experience, a place to find rest in.



1. Ana Mendieta *Untitled* 1976

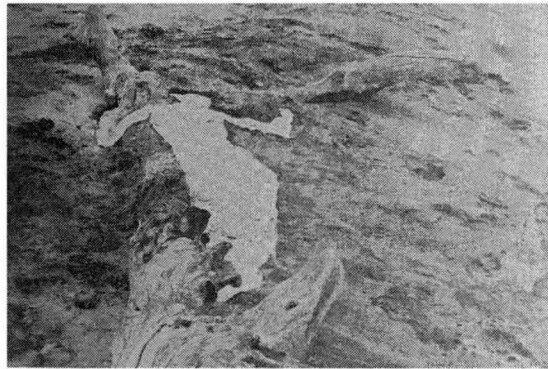
Pigment is scattered in both the inside and outside of the hollow shape in this work. Being on a beach it is apparent that the form and the pigment will soon be washed away. The presence of the person is momentary. As the image implies, the body is born, maintained and consumed within nature. The body is at the littoral edge between land and sea and, indeed, the work is quintessentially about the edge of things – water/earth, earth/air/, body/earth, body/air. The pigment inside and outside the space of the body alludes to the transference between these spaces. It points to both the collapse between them and the distinction between them. It is between empty and full, substance and insubstantiality, negative and positive.

The physical nature of this work is indicative of the force the natural environment has on Mendieta and of the way she allows herself to give in to this. In *Untitled*, a cloth silhouette drapes around a piece of driftwood. Being cloth, being a single edge, it wraps itself around the curves of the environment. It looks as if it has drifted and settled there, finding its place with the lowering of the tide. In another *Untitled* (1977) work she has covered herself with the mud, leaves and sticks at the base of a tree. In the photograph

she has pressed herself against the trunk of this tree. The rough application of mud on her body gives it a similar texture to the tree trunk, the sticks and leaves connects the tree with the produce at its base. The leaves and sticks, having belonged to the tree, return to the tree through the soil. Mendieta puts herself in the place of this transitional matter in applying it to her body and posing as the tree in front of the tree.



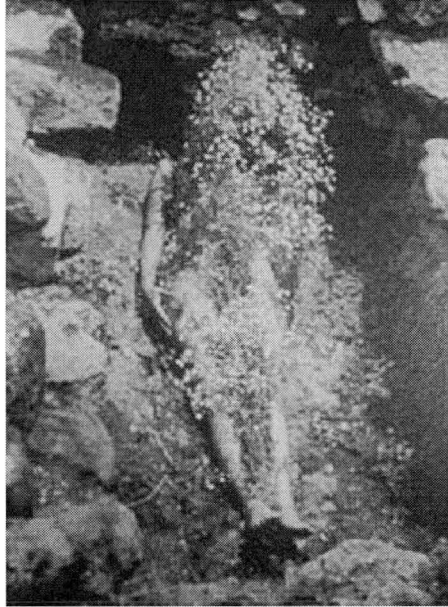
2. Ana Mendieta *Untitled* (1977)



3. Ana Mendieta *Untitled*, 1977

In one of the first performance pieces in the *Siluetas* series, *Untitled*, (1973), flowers cover a body which is positioned in a hollow of earth, surrounded by rocks. The flowers form the shape of the body. They conceal as well as define its form. The temporality of the flowers is suggestive of the temporality of the body. In being inside a hole a connection

is made with returning to the earth, it is as if flowers have been thrown into a grave. It makes a connection with becoming one with nature in death. Mendieta's work lessens the distinctions between her body and the world. She writes, 'Through my earth/body sculptures I become one with the earth . . . I become an extension of nature and nature becomes an extension of my body.'⁴⁰



4. Ana Mendieta, *Untitled*, (1973),

In Mendieta's work the edge of the body comes into question. We tend to consider the body as something that we own, which is us. However, in her images, the body as edge belongs equally to the forces surrounding it as it does to the self. When the body is thought to be an edge it reveals how external influence can have a force equal to that of internal impulse.

It could be said that the appearance in her work is of

⁴⁰ Kuspit, Donald., Ana Mendieta, *Autonomous Body*, in Ana Mendieta (Santiago de Compostela: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea) 1996, p51. Cited in *The Self and the World: negotiating boundaries in the art of Yayoi Kusama, Ana Mendieta, and Francesca Woodman*, Helaine Poner Chadwick, Whitney (ed), p164, *Mirror Images: Women, Surrealism and Self Representation*, 1998, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States of America.

⁴⁰ Kuspit, Donald., *Ana Mendieta, Autonomous Body*, p39, *ibid*. Cited in *The Self and the World: negotiating boundaries in the art of Yayoi Kusama, Ana Mendieta*, p164, *ibid*.

disappearance. Donald Kuspit says of her work "the body is simultaneously substance and elusive shadow."⁴¹ The edges of Mendieta's works are fleeting. Anne Raine writes of this aspect of her work:

'The anthropomorphic form is . . . utterly tentative, its boundaries vague and subject to immanent dissolution. At any moment, the flowers will scatter or decompose, the mud or sand will wash away, the flames will burn out.'⁴²

The association I make with Mendieta's work is this temporality; the body is suggested through its absence or the process of it becoming absent. It shows the body merging with the environment in which it is placed. She uses the edge of the body as a marker between what is present and what is absent. In giving attention to the edge and not its substance she gives priority to the interconnectedness of existence over individual experience, she represents external influence as significant as internal influence. This edge is an edge that, within these images, is sluiced in mud, has become the fuel of fire, is surrounded in flowers and impressed into sand. It is a trace, a fleeting impression, a shadow, a suggestion of existence that is inseparable with the natural environment that has created it.

Yayoi Kusama

Like Mendieta, Kusama also questions the edge of her body. She uses the motif of the polka dot (among other motifs) to do what she refers to as 'self obliteration'. She relates the polka dot to an experience of looking at a tablecloth that was decorated with red flowers. The impression of the pattern traveled with her vision to cover everything she looked at. When she looked at herself she,

⁴² Raine, Anne., *Embodied Geographies - subjectivity and materiality in the work of Anna Mendieta*. Cited in *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts*, Pollock, Griselda., (ed) 1996 Routledge, New York.

also, was covered with the flowers. She writes of the experience; 'I' felt as if 'I would self-obliterate;' as if 'I' would 'be buried in the infinitude of endless time and the absoluteness of space, and be reduced to nothingness . . .

⁴³

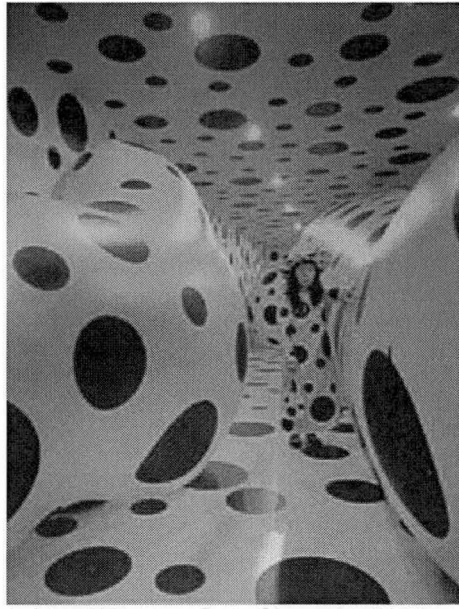
In becoming a part of her eyesight, the mark became a part of her, seeing the flowers imposed in the outside would have been like seeing a part of herself outside herself. To see part of yourself outside yourself is to question where you end. In losing the distinction between inside and outside she associated this with the loss of what she perceived herself to be.

In installations such as *Dots Obsession* she made this perceived experience actual, simplifying the form of the flower to a circle, which she repeated many times, to recreate what she saw. She writes:

'Become one with eternity. Obliterate your personality. Become part of your environment. Forget yourself. Self-destruction is the only way out . . . when we obliterate nature and our bodies with polka-dots, we become part of the unity of our environment.'⁴⁴

⁴³ Kusama, Yayoi., *Waga tamashii no henreki to tatakai (Odyssey of My Struggling Soul)* in *Geijutsu seikatsu (Art and Life)*, Tokyo, November, 1975 p96-113, cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, P119, Hoptman., Laura, Tatehata., Akira, Kultermann., Udo, 2001, Phaidon Press Ltd, London.

⁴⁴ Kusama, Yayoi., *The New York Free Press and West Sode News*, New York, 15 February, 1968, cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, p112, *ibid*.



5. Yayoi Kusama *Dots Obsession* 2000

The painted edges of dots confuse the edges of actual objects in this work, the clearly defined mark of black against yellow, in some ways, have become more obvious than these physical edges and the room itself. In this image she also places the dots on herself, and in doing so, proposes to block herself out of the picture.

The skin can be said to contain the inside and make it distinct from the outside. Kusama turns this idea on its head by creating an outside that both initiates the viewer's internal vision and reflects it as it did for herself. The work she makes with these dots could be said to be an image of inside and outside meeting. It creates an environment in which dots may become part of the viewer's vision (as it did for Kusama) perceived and actual dots mingling together. To create an entire room of dots is to create an environment where nothing detracts from this experience. I feel the experience created enables the viewer to return to a state of mind where they are able to see, that which is less obvious. When you are not making distinctions between right and wrong, inside and outside, you are, perhaps, freer to see that which is subtle.

She relates her work to an experience of 'living in continuation,'⁴⁵ she uses repetition to describe a simultaneous experience of existence and non-existence. She describes this as a 'compulsion to realize in visible form the repetitive image inside' her. 'When this image is given freedom,' she says:

'It overflows the limits . . . of space . . . I feel as if I were driving on the highways or carried on a conveyer belt without ending until my death. This is like continuing to drink a thousand cups of coffee or eating thousands of feet of macaroni.'⁴⁶

It is indicative of the trance-like state of mind that repetition and simple continuity can transport one into. It is interesting that this action of repetition, which can be interpreted as obsessive, can perhaps be equally interpreted or experienced as trancelike and meditative.

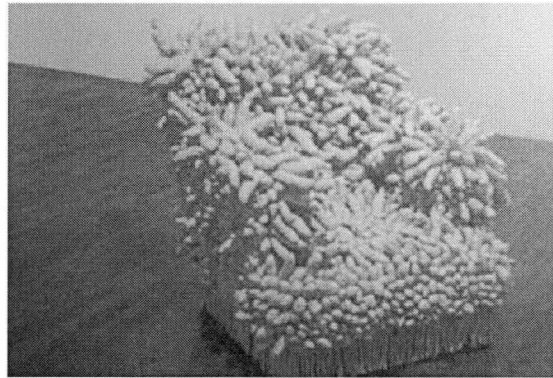
Kusama uses opposites in such a way that they cancel each other out. The extremes of one can be seen to point to the extremes of the other and in doing so each becomes less significant. The extreme and total complexity of her work paradoxically appears as less complex because it is absolute and uniform. Through repetition this complexity, which can be seen in *Accretions* and *Compulsion Furniture* could be seen to have become controllable and understandable. In this work, shapes made out of stuffed fabric cover the surfaces of furniture and objects, which makes them unusable. Although they are unusable it seems that complexity has in some way been cancelled out because it is *en masse*.

⁴⁵ Kusama., Interview prepared for WABC radio by Gordon Brown, executive editor of *Art Voices*, first published in *De nieuwe stijl/The New Style: Werk van de internationale avant-garde, Vol. 1*, De Beijde Bij, Amsterdam, 1965, p163-164. Cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, *ibid*, p104.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

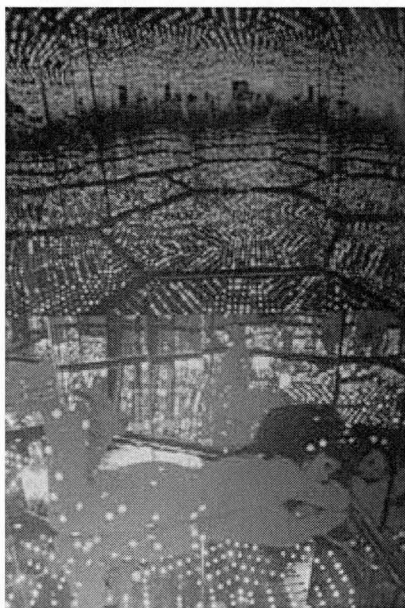


6. Yayoi Kusama, *Accumulation* furniture, 1961-62



Yayoi Kusama, *Accumulation* furniture, 1961-62

In a number of installations Kusama uses mirrors to extend the dots beyond the surface of a room. In 1966 she made a room with mirrors on all of the walls and the floor. These works seem to have two titles; either *Kusama's Peep Show* or *Endless Love Show* (1996). In this work dots of light from coloured globes in the ceiling are arranged in patterns, which are then reflected on the walls and floor. Infinity is caught; dots bounce off the surfaces of the room in this cycle of repeated repetition. As they do so they grow smaller and more compact, warping around the joins of mirror. The negative space grows tiny in the mirror as avenues of ceiling reach down through pathways of floor. Each of the dots has less significance when compared to the vastness of this infinity; through infinity they both exist and do not exist, if one is there or not there, there will be many regardless.



7. Yayoi Kusama, *Endless Love Show* (1996)

Kusama connects infinity with nothingness. In response to her initial experience with the red flowers she writes that in being 'buried in . . . infinitude' she is 'reduced to nothingness.'⁴⁷ Perhaps the only way to reveal nothingness is to use its opposite – something. Perhaps the only way to do this is to make so much of something (in a repetitive, consistent manner, able to be associated with infinity) that it can then also become descriptive of nothing. Because nothing and something are made to parallel each other in this work, each could be said to have less significance. In matching opposites; complexity and simplicity, infinity and nothingness, inside and outside, one could be said to have lost what makes it distinct from its other. In placing her body in the room of mirrors it becomes as if it is one of the many dots - able to be repeated. The extent to which her image is repeated brings less significance to her actual body.

Most of the writing on both Mendieta and Kusama discusses their experience of indistinct edges as a negative experience related to the difficulty of their lives.

⁴⁷ Kusama, Yayoi., *Waga tamashii no henreki to tatakai* (*Odyssey of My Struggling Soul*) in *Geijutsu seikatsu* (*Art and Life*), Tokyo, November, 1975 p96-113, cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, *ibid*, p119.

However, both artists tend to reveal a positive as well as a negative experience of this in their work. Kusama has written about this, explaining that she was 'panicked' by the idea of becoming nothing' and that she 'was often troubled by a thin silk greyish-coloured veil that came to envelope'⁴⁸ her. However she also refers to 'obliteration' as 'the only way out;' she talks of the possibility of being able to 'obliterate ourselves in love' or of becoming 'part of the unity of the environment.'⁴⁹

What interests me in Kusama's work is that she uses dots in order to obliterate her body and the environment around her, to merge them into each other. I respond to her observations about the space between inside and outside. Through this observation she makes work, which reflects the ways in which these spaces can be seen to exist within one. The distinguishing factors about these three spaces become less distinct when the middle ground, instead of dividing each side, takes on the elements of both. It is the possibility of this interconnectedness that compels my research. The impulse to create work that is almost not there, that glides into your awareness, where the edges merge into the surfaces of the space they are in. To give in to a middle point where internal desire and external pressure may be experienced as the same. As each cancels the other out, both lose their relevance.

Doris Salcedo

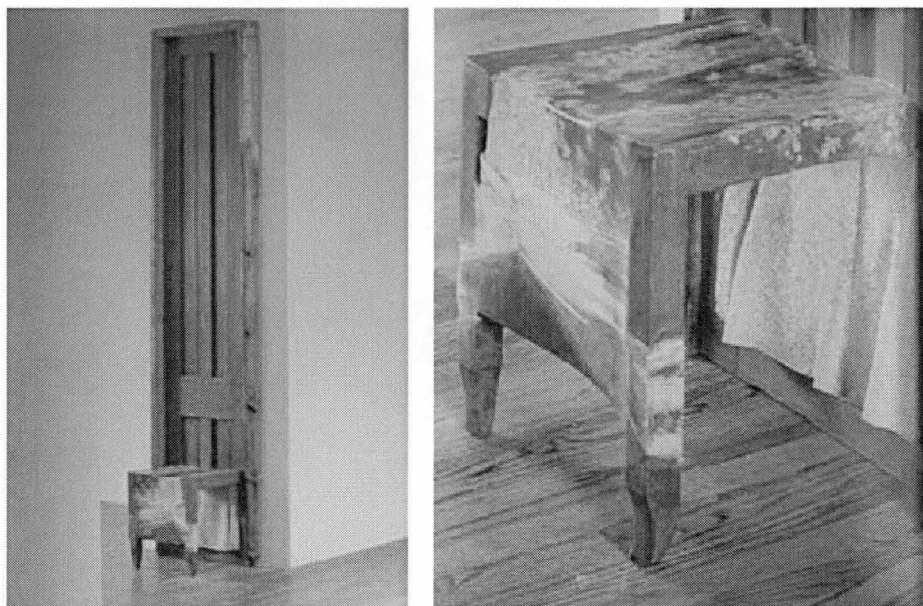
Doris Salcedo makes works where the body has vanished; there is no separation between domestic furniture and clothing, which, while it is suggestive of a body, is without its substance. Her work refers to stories of violence. Like her work, in the act of violence, there is no place for the victim to be. Salcedo's work is suggestive of an experience

⁴⁸ *ibid* p119.

⁴⁹ Kusama, Yayoi., *The New York Free Press and West Sode News*, New York, 15 February, 1968, cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, *ibid*, p112.

of non-existence and silent compliance, the feeling of becoming part of the environment. The body has become its edge in her work, it is no more than its clothing, it has become compliant to the needs of another. It suggests the experience is like that of an automaton, of being not really there, of following out orders.

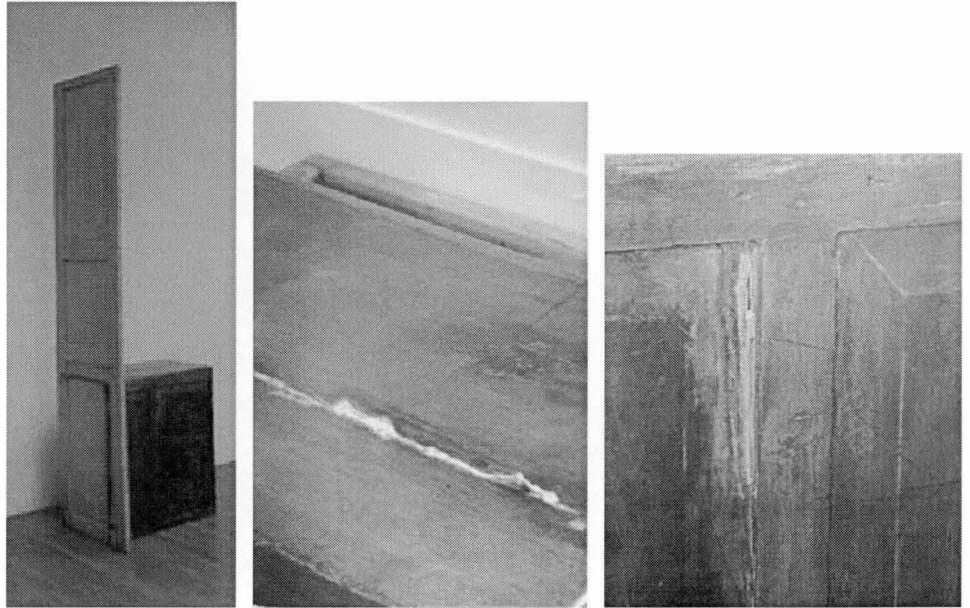
A dress, which is part of an installation titled *La Casa Viuda I* (1991-1994), is folded around the seat of a chair, the arms wrapped around the legs; the skirt appears under the chair as if it exists inside both chair and door. It conforms to the curves and the structure of the furniture. It has the form of a dress without this form being entirely its own. It is ripped, tucked into and wrapped around the contours of the structure that shapes it. There is a scraping of fabric in places. Fragments of lace are held together by what would appear to be nothing other than a trace of its previous form. It appears as a ghost or an essence, perhaps more its environment and situation than it is itself. Because of this it finds itself able to flow through form, to fall apart and hold itself together at the same time and to wrap itself, paper thin, in order to become the form of another. The door, which slices through this unusual conglomeration, is disruptive, unresponsive to this bending of will; the practice has proven unsuccessful.



8. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda I* (1991-1994)

In *La Casa Viuda II* (1993), the second in this series, a door also disrupts the completeness of an object, another piece of furniture, a cabinet. At first glance it is easy not to notice the changes made to the cabinet itself. The references to the human body seem so much a part of it that they are easy to skip over. Implanted in the top surface is a long narrow bone, as if the backbone of the cabinet, its knobles and ridges curve as if they belong to the grain of the wood. On the door a zip connects with a join, the edge of its fabric coincides with a bend in the wood; it is as smooth as if it was arising out of murky water. On top of the fabric is a coating, thick and gummed up, forming a translucent and cracked skin over the wound like red of the tartan fabric. The half opened zip alludes to a gash or an opening if one is to think of clothing and body to take on the connection that is implied in the work. Body and environment, object and place have become indistinguishable – one is the other in a way that the association with each is reliant on the other. In merging bone, clothing and furniture the work seems to ask what is clothing? What is body? What is the external environment to the body? And then to answer by collapsing these

distinctions. One thing exists inside the other. Through fragmentation there has come to be a combined unification.

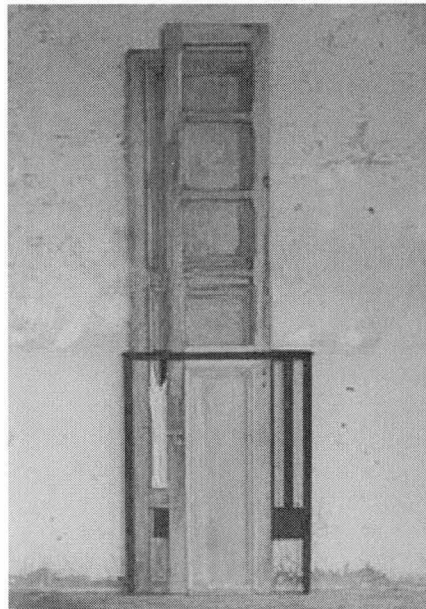


9. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda II* (1993)

The viewer joins momentarily with *La Casa Viuda III* (1994) on their journey through the passageway it is installed in. They are able to stand inside the space where a bed is suggested to be, to join the one portrayed in a position of no escape, a position of entrapment against two walls. Jammed, as the furniture is jammed inside each other, stuck between these walls, between two spokes of a bed frame, between two doors, which are also stuck inside each other, is a white dress. It is scrunched up and cut to fit exactly into this small section between the doors and the beam of the bed frame. This beam of wood cuts off the neck hole that is curved which allows it to resemble the oval of a face. The inseparation continues to take place with the viewer, whose inclusion takes place in the vacant space of the bed. Everything is stuck inside each other; nothing is able to move freely or function normally. There is the sense that there is no way out.



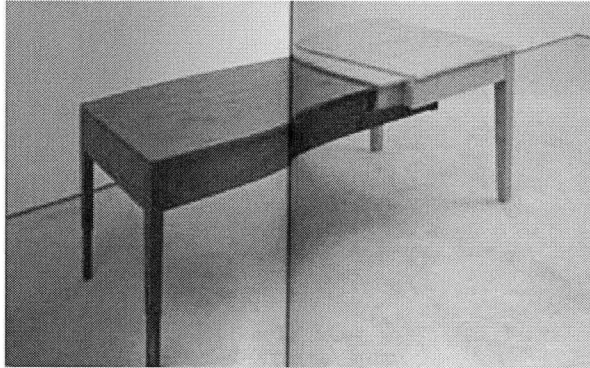
10. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda III* (1994)



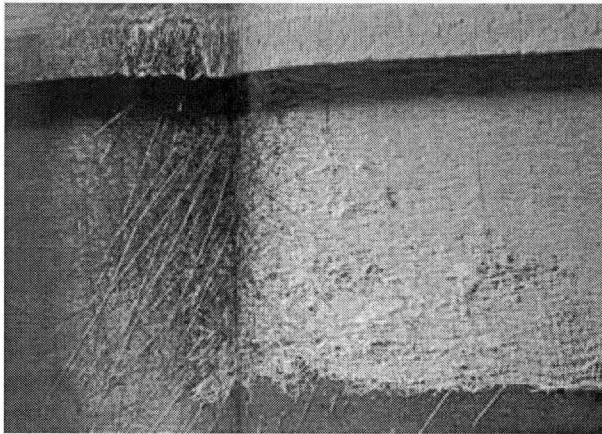
Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda III* (detail)(1994)

One of the stories Salcedo retells in her work titled *Unland the Orphan's Tunic* (1997), is of a child who watched her mother being murdered in their kitchen. From that day she has worn a tunic her mother made for her before she died. The memory of her mother could be seen to be kept alive in the cloth, her body reduced to fabric and the memories this allows. In this work, cloth appears to hold two table halves together, keeping each half from falling over. The cloth, as if her mother, stretches out from one side;

however, it cannot overcome the rift as the markedly different heights between the table halves reveals. With all its care and detail, with human hair stitched as if memory, the gap still exists.



11. Doris Salcedo, *Unland the Orphan's Tunic*, 1997



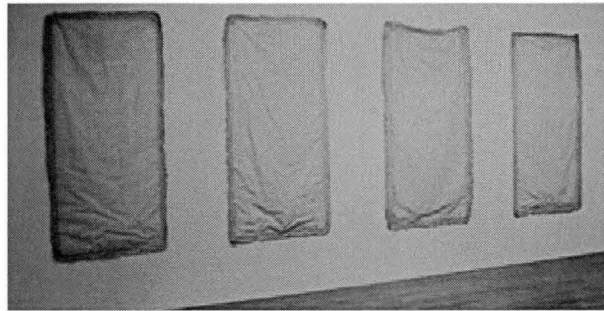
Doris Salcedo, *Unland the Orphan's Tunic*, detail, 1997

What I respond to in Salcedo's work is that the edge of the body is suggested by the clothing that surrounds it, not the body itself. The clothing is fused into the furniture, its fabric stitched through drilled holes. She has positioned the clothing and furniture in such a way that they appear to exist inside one another. I recognize Salcedo as a key artist in this research because of her use of cloth in describing the edge of a body. The clothing is empty. It is the remnants, the structure of what has been; what has worn it has left. As with Mendieta and Kusama's works, to present the edge of a body is to reveal how someone can connect with their surrounding influences. The state of

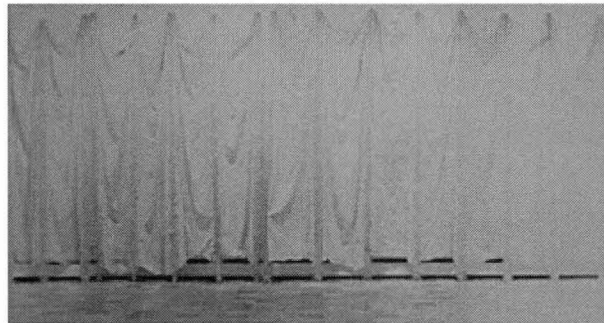
mind the work seems to be suggestive of appears to make possible a necessary transcendence over whatever a physical experience may be.

Eva Hesse

Eva Hesse could be seen to evoke an association between her works and the body. In coating fabric with fiberglass and latex Hesse makes material appear as if skin. It is translucent, it glistens, buckles and bulges in the way skin might, it becomes heavy and sags. The dry, textured feel of the fabric becomes smooth as if skin. In *Aught* Hesse lets the weight of the fiberglass and latex drag the fabric out of their frames.



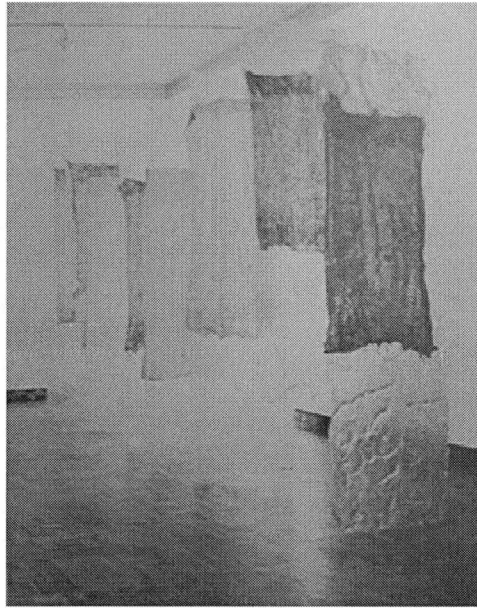
12. Eva Hesse, *Aught*, 1968.



13. Eva Hesse, *Expanded Expansion*, 1969

Contingent has been made with the same materials. It is hung in such a way that the edge has become an object. Skin, in being itself in this way and not able to be identified by that which it contains, becomes less of an edge and more its own object. It does not give boundary to something as it is simply itself. In being itself it can be viewed as less confining. In seeing it as its own entity it is less restricting than it would be if it were to incase

something.



14. Eva Hesse, *Contingent*, 1969

Hesse writes of art as that which comes of nothing, that occupies a space that is not definable.⁵⁰ It can perhaps only be placed by saying what it is not. Within space it both arrives out of it and leads back into it. It is from 'between'. She explains it in perhaps the only way one can, as 'Not painting, not sculpture. It's there though. I remember I wanted to get to know non-art, non connotive, non anthropomorphic, non geometric, non, nothing, everything but of another kind, vision, sort . . . freedom, discipline.'⁵¹

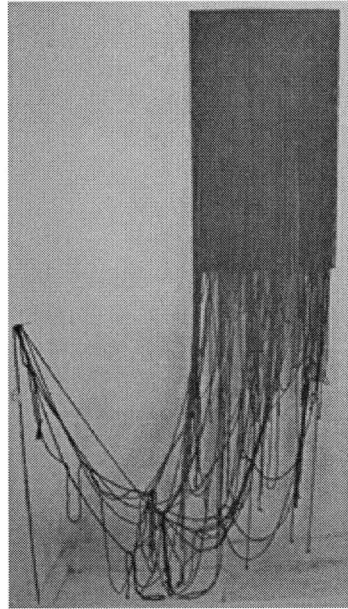
In reading excerpts from Eva Hesse's notebook it is interesting to find almost all her writing speaks in paradox. She writes in note form:

'how to achieve by not achieving? How to make by not making? It's all in that./it's not the new. It's what is not yet

⁵⁰ catalogue for art in process IV exhibition Finch college Museum of art, Contemporary Wing cited in Hesse Eva., Serota Nicholas., ed., *Eva Hesse: Sculpture*. Catalog of an exhibition held at Whitechapel Art Gallery, Rijksmuseum Kroller-Muller, Kestner-Gesellschaft, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1979, no page number given.

⁵¹ Ibid.

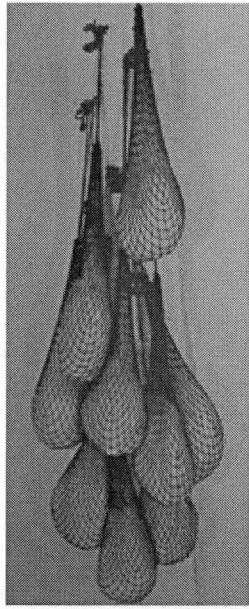
known, thought seen touched – but really what is not. And that is.’ In discussing the content of her work she writes; ‘it’s the total absurdity of life . . . Absurdity . . . has to do with contradictions and oppositions . . . I was always aware that I should take order versus chaos, stringy versus mass, huge versus small, and I would try to find the most absurd opposites or extreme opposites.’⁵²



15. Eva Hesse, *Ennead*, 1966.

These works appear to be about the body but the materials and the fragmentary nature of the work allows us to recognize its contrast. It brings humanity to what would appear cold and inanimate. It enables us to lend a softer eye to the basic matter of an everyday environment. To see these works is, perhaps, to see something of ourselves outside of ourselves. In *Unfinished, Untitled or Not Yet* the clear polyethylene material that is in the net has weights in them to hold it down. The polyethylene is moulded by the netting as the netting is also moulded by the polyethylene. It stretches in the way skin might around the weight of flesh.

⁵² Hesse from Yale Notebook 1958-59, cited in *Eva Hesse: Sculpture*, Ibid.

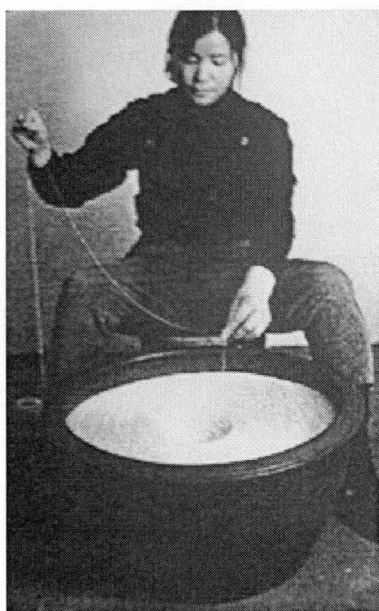


16. Eva Hesse, *Unfinished, Untitled or Not Yet*, 1966.

Hesse's works could be seen to be in the position of paradox that she writes about, It extends the time which most would give to paradox or to a perceived contradiction. Absurdity is a position out of which work can arise.

Influences in relation to materials and processes:

In approaches to art making I have, for a long time been influenced by Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy and Hans Haacke. Because of their materials and processes involved in making I have also looked at artists such as Anish Kapoor and Wolfgang Laib in the way that they have used loose powder in their work. I have been influenced by the way Han Mung Ok uses loose threads and speaks about the experience of making her sometimes methodical thread work as a way of being able to escape the pressures of modern day living.

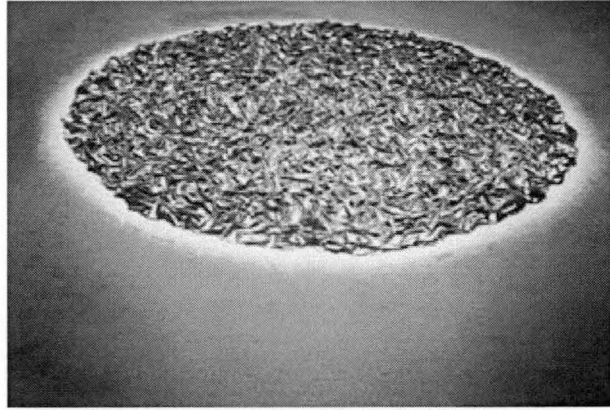


17. Han Myung-Ok., Artist in her studio, 1995

Section 4: Studio Research

Background to Studio Research

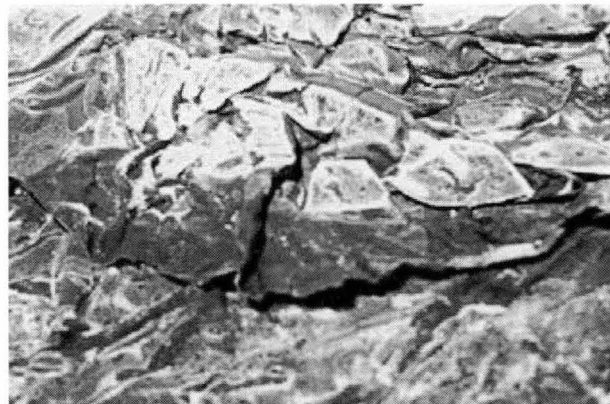
Some images of previous works using salt



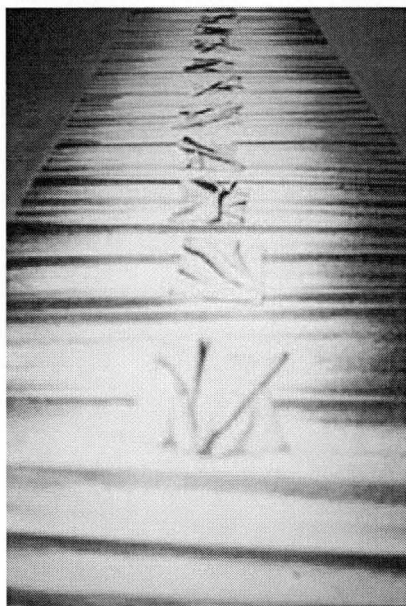
Pooled Salt, salt on fabric, last installed 2001.



Pooled Salt, (detail), salt on fabric, last installed 2001.



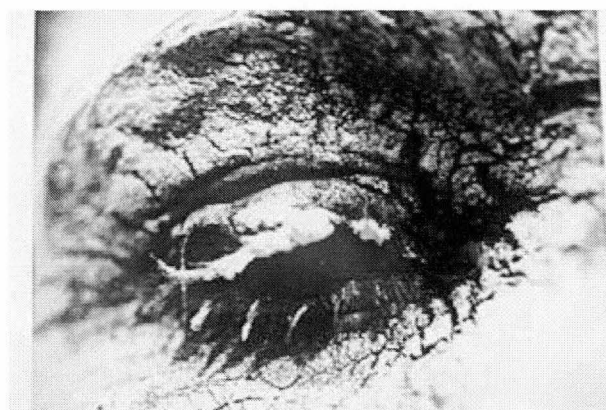
Untitled, baked salt and fabric, 1997



Untitled, baked salt and fabric on top of loose salt on plastic, 1997

The material itself and what it was capable of doing was what drove my research at this time. In these images made with salt I baked the salt with fabric for a long time. This was so that the salt crystals would melt together and the work would hold its form. It was also less likely to attract water and dissolve its form in that way.

Some images of previous explorations in flour and its texture:



Untitled, 1995, media: photograph of flour on top of cocoa on face; the cocoa was a non-toxic way to make the cracks in the flour more visible. Photo: Jesse Reynolds

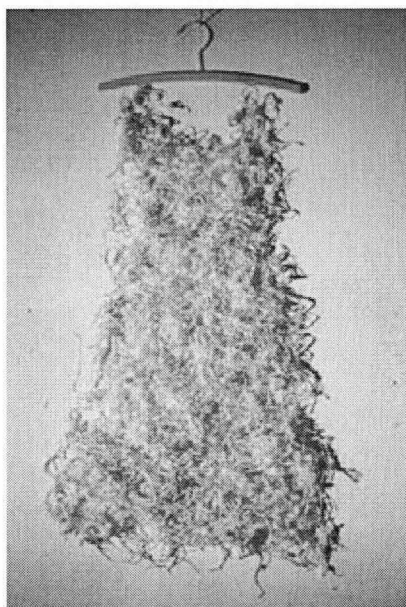
Some images of previous explorations in textiles and clothing:



Dysfunctional Table Cloth, stripes of fabric lying unfixed on a table, 1999,



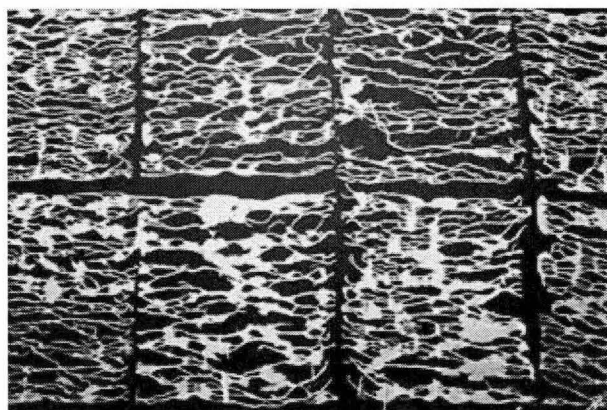
Dysfunctional Table Cloth (detail), stripes of fabric lying unfixed on a table, 1999,



Dressed, tissue paper and found object 2001.



Dressed (detail), tissue paper and found object 2001.



An image from the process of making the texture of the tissue paper for *Dressed*.

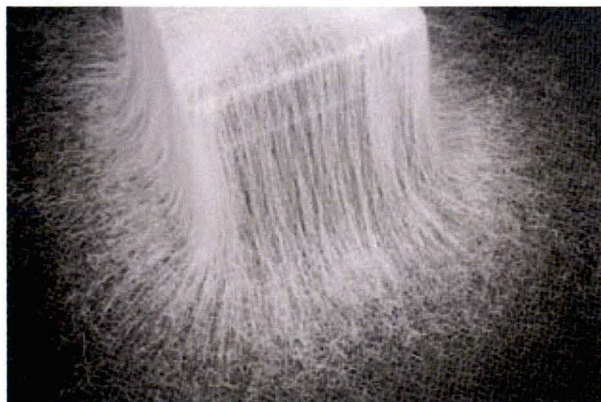


Untitled, dye on cotton wool.



Falling Thread, thread and found object (chair), last installed 2001.

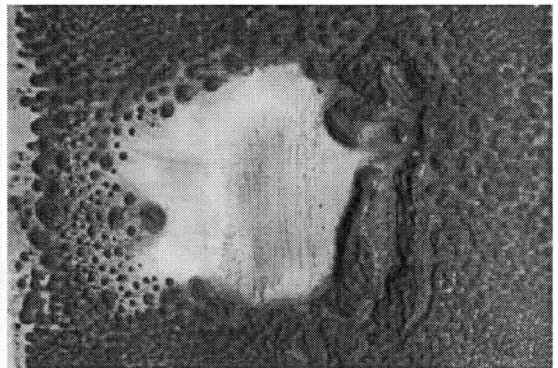
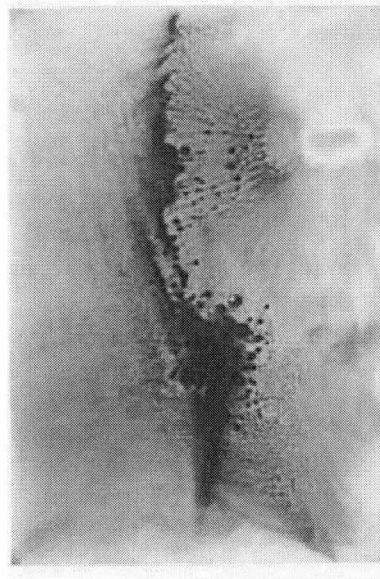
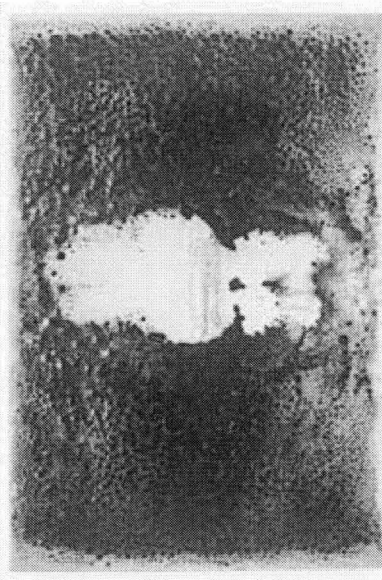
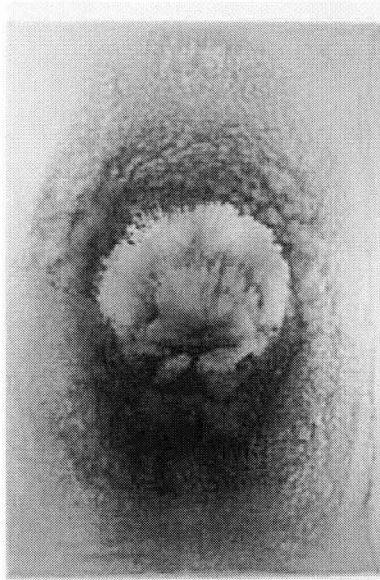
The experience of the process of making *Falling Thread* seemed to lead to a sensation of presence and absence, which is also what I hoped the work would evoke for a viewer.

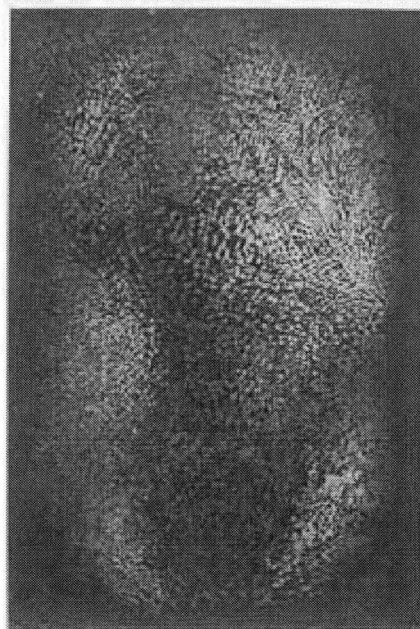
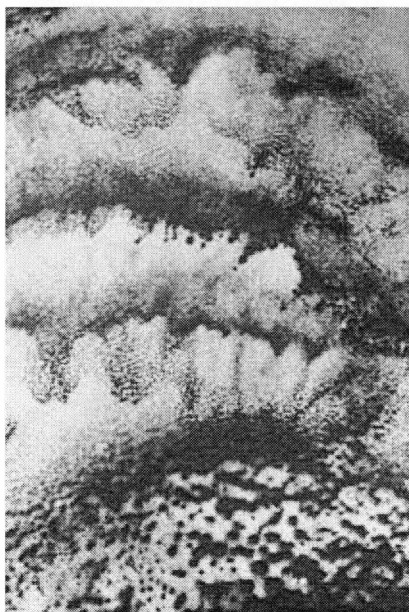
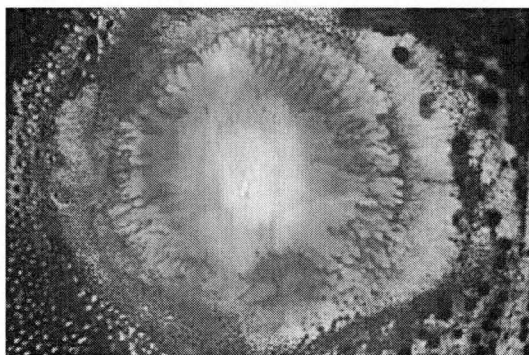


Falling Thread, (detail) thread and found object (chair), last installed 2001

Some images of previous explorations in vibration:

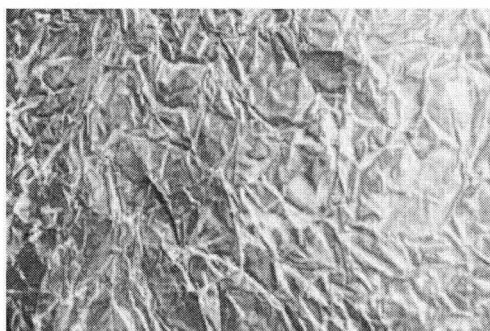
These works refer to violence and its reverberating effects. The works were made by banging on a sheet of metal repeatedly for a certain amount of time. The powdered charcoal and rosin (tree sap) that I put on the metal formed itself into various patterns and mounds. I then heated the metal in order to melt the rosin and set the work into mounds.





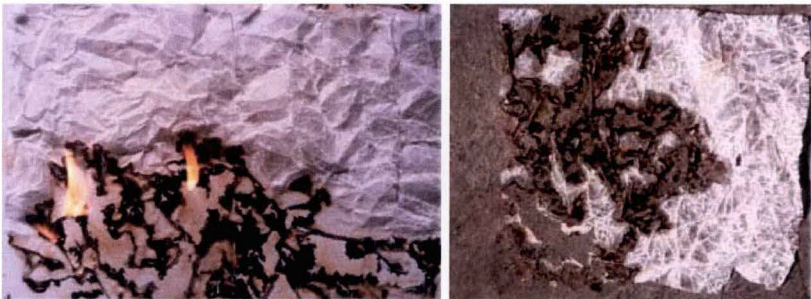
Banged Charcoal (series), 2002.

In a series of works titled *Tissue Candles*, I looked at tissue paper as a material made to be skin-like because one puts it against one's skin. I made them translucent, wrinkled and skin-like by covering them in wax.



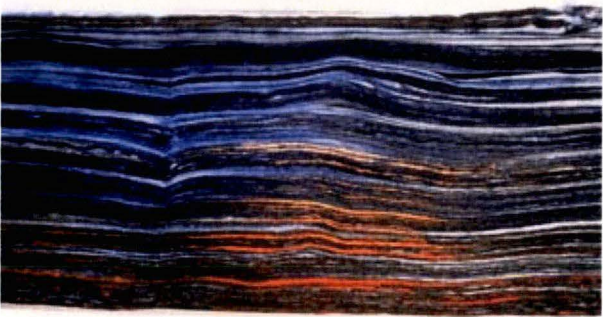
Tissue Candles (series), tissue paper and wax, 2001.

I burnt the tissues and wax as candles. The charred remains left the outline of wrinkled paper and melted wax.



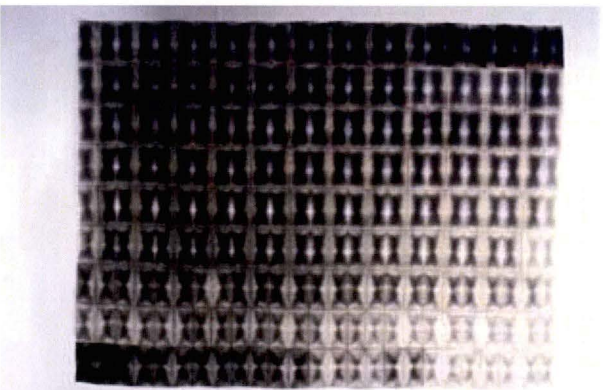
Tissue Candles (series), tissue paper and wax, 2001.

Previous explorations into liquid and fluidity:

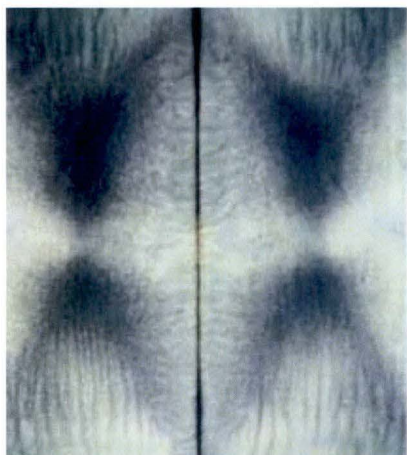


Tissue Books (series), tissues and ink, 2001.

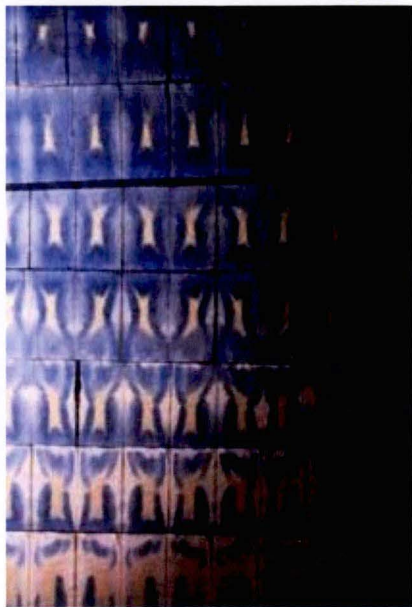
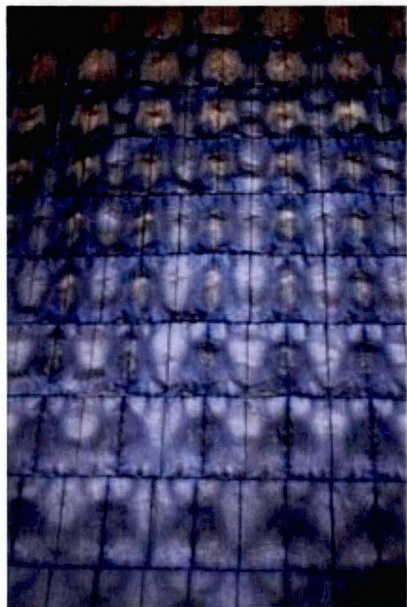
I placed a packet of tissues into black ink to reveal the way in which it filtered through the layers.

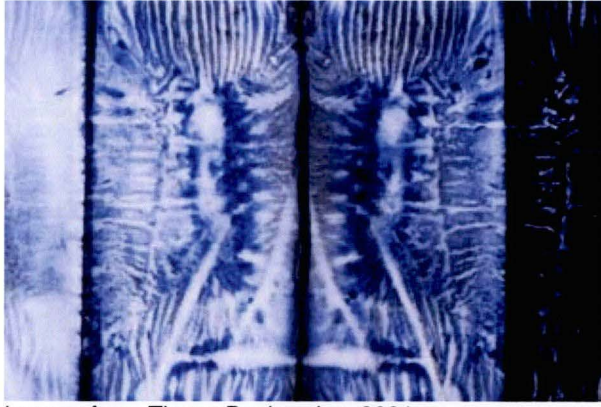


A Box of Tissues, this is one of the *Tissue Books* opened out to show the layers of filtration, 2001.

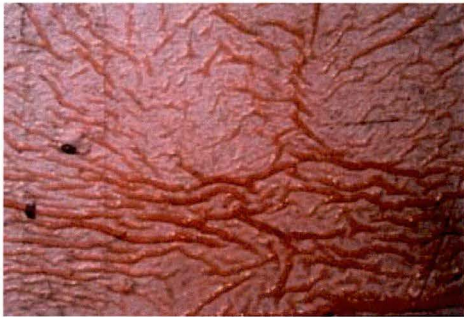


Tissue Books (series), (detail), tissues and ink, 2001.



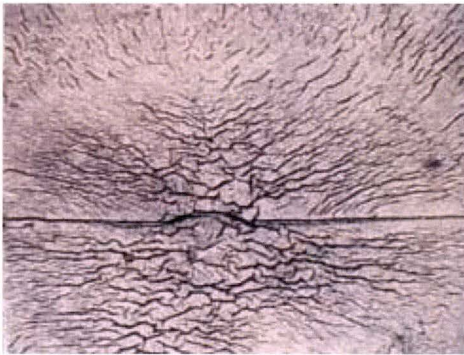


Images from *Tissue Book* series, 2001.



Untitled, tissue paper, ink and water, 2001.

I poured water and ink onto single tissues and watched the way in which the liquid pumped its way vein-like beneath the tissue paper.



Untitled, tissue paper, ink and water, 2001.

Section 4: How the project was pursued (works developed during my candidature)

Phase 1:

Selection of Materials

Oil

The materials I chose in order to investigate my basic premise have a connection to the skin; in particular, I became interested in those that come through the skin. Oil was one such material; I selected linseed oil because of its drying properties. I left large containers of it to form skin. This mass of oil was then able to spill, roll, drop and wrinkle in ways that were pleasing to play with, and it continued to remain whole because of a thick layer of dried oil. This layer of dried oil gradually transferred itself to the oil still liquid at its centre like the skin of the body. This liquid surrounded by a very pliable coat allowed the oil to be runny while still maintaining itself as a whole. It was a bit like thick mercury. These properties were subject to time as the longer it evaporated the less pliable it became. I began to think of how to time the drying of the oil in order to present it at what I thought to be an optimal stage understanding that this would make it an ephemeral work.



Oil and salt on fabric, 2002



Oil and talcum powder on fabric, 2002

Talcum Powder

I incorporated talcum powder with the oil to indicate the moment when the oil reaches the exterior of the body, the point where the exterior affects self to an extent that makes a point of becoming necessarily identifiable. The smell of drying rancid linseed oil and the intense perfume of a cheap talcum powder, together, made a smell so intense and repulsive I did not think anyone would spend time in the exhibition. For this reason I stopped making works with oil and I began to substitute cornflour for talcum powder. I have no images of these works, and I did not store them, again because of their odour.

Cornflour

Corn flour has a consistency similar to that of talcum powder. I also think of it and work with it as a material that crosses the inside-outside divide in the

form of food. To the cornflour I have also added a small amount of talcum powder. By incorporating materials that are associated with both the outside and the inside of the body I aim to suggest the experience of being uncertain about what is inside and what is outside, of the two coming together in some way and each being less distinct.

Fabric

Fabric in the form of clothing becomes part of the transition between inside and outside. I have used fabric because of its many qualities that are similar to skin: touch, flexibility, durability, the way it wrinkles and folds, stretches and contracts, protects and breathes. It could be said that we use fabric to lessen the differences between our bodies and the world around us and to soften the distinction between inside and outside. In the same way I want to use fabric in my work to soften the sensations and experiences of inside and outside and the contrast between each. I have incorporated fabric into works using flour and talcum powder, and works using salt.

Salt

I became interested in salt as a material that is able to pass through the perimeter of one's body as perspiration. I explored the properties of salt as a transitional element, which is able to become both a solid and a liquid and then re-crystallise on surfaces and materials where it knits itself according to the forms it grows onto.

As salt is a material which passes through the skin, I have used it to move through fabric, crystal building on crystal as it climbs up peaks in the fabric. In moving through this edge salt contradicts fabric as an edge in the same way it contradicts skin as an

edge.

Water

I used pigment in order to reveal the ways in which water flows through material altering its position in such a way that negative and positive become almost matched. These passages of movement and change become recorded in the pigment. As a powder, black oxide gives itself to the form of the water and the mode of its movement. It becomes aligned to an edge that has no permanency. It is an edge that has formed out of the flow of fluid. I make a link between this and the way in which liquid moves through skin, the impermanency and adaptability of skin.

Introduction to processes of making

In the initial phase of my research into these materials I set up a deliberately quasi-scientific methodology. I focused on repeating experiments, slightly changing variables in order to find out more about the properties of each material. By making only slight changes I was able to pin point what it was that had a specific effect on a material, be it a change in hand movement, a different brand of material or stronger concentration of a material. By employing only the slightest of changes I found the causes of certain effects to be traceable. Recording experiments with photography was one of the ways in which I was able to review and trace those processes in a visual way. I did not begin recording experiments with photography until a few months into the research; earlier experiments are recorded only as notes and sketches. I was keen to do this because I often link the method of making with the intended meaning of the work. I took up an offer from another student to make a documentary of the

making of my work. This enabled me to record some of the processes I was using at the time that may not have been easily recognised if one was to view only finished work.

Phase Two

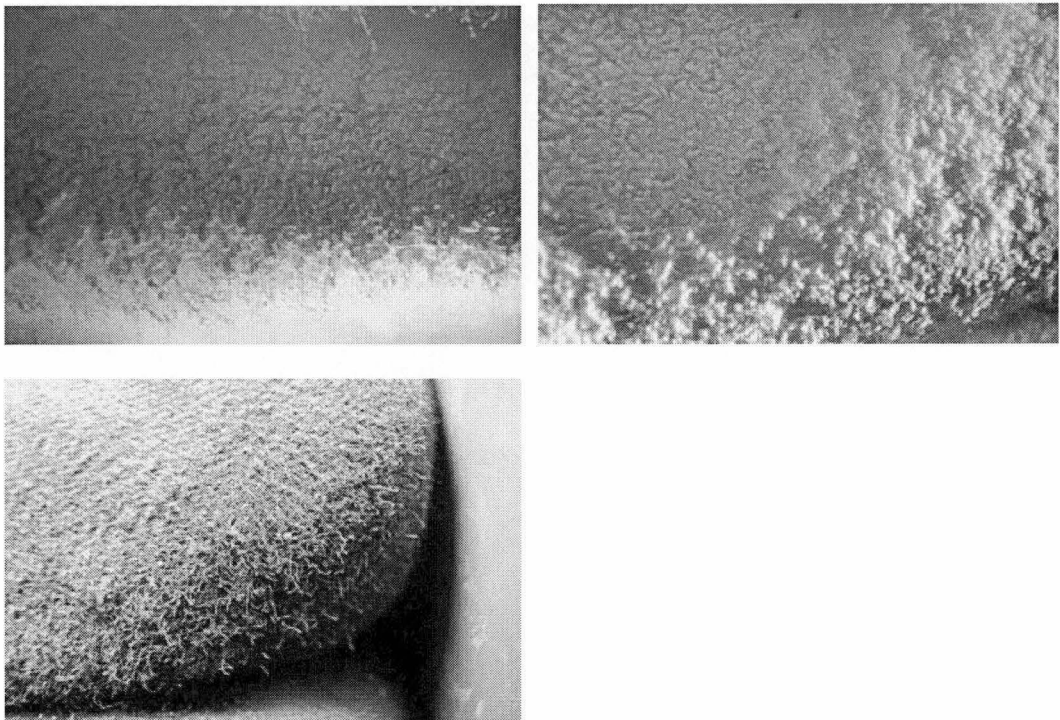
I have divided the description of this phase into three sections of writing, which feature the main materials I have used in my exploration. These are flour, salt, and coarse pigment in water.

Flour

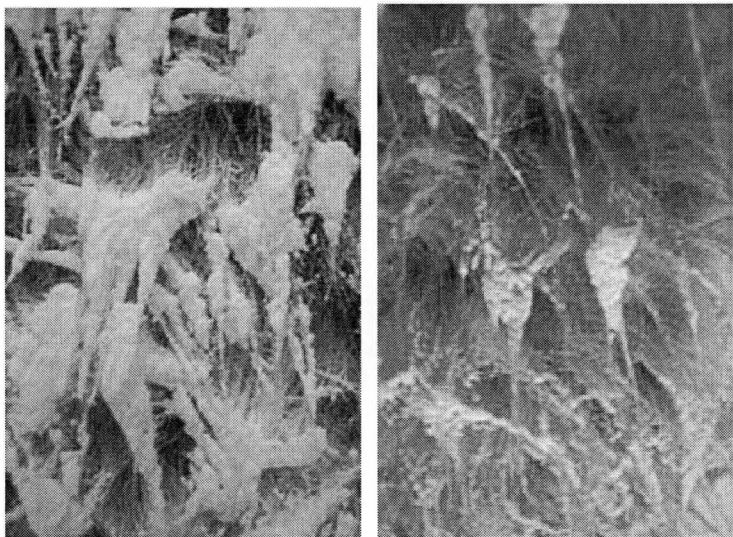
Observations From Initial Experiments in Flour:

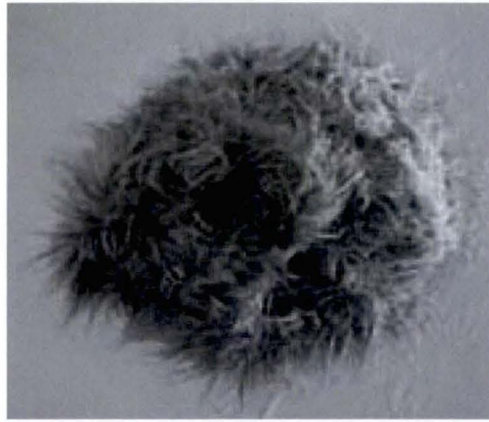
My first experiments with sieved flour (corn flour and talcum powder) involved the way it settled on the floor, fell around folds in fabric and collected on tendrils of fabric. I focused on methods of sieving it onto structures made of fabric and wood; and also sieving it directly onto the floor. What attracted me to the process of sieving was the texture it created in the flour as it fell into itself. It is a texture that in some way describes that which it is falling around. In the process of sieving flour, it fills the air and spreads into the surrounding area in a subtle gradation that gradually transfers to the environment it settles into. It is my aim for the material to become descriptive of indistinct edges in this way. I observed the way flour clings to the nap of fabric and builds up as it falls over folds. It builds a texture that forms itself according to the folds and sweeps of the fabric. Ruffles become smoothed by layers of powder; valleys reflect more than the slopes; finer powder clings to scraggly fabric without weighing it down. I explored this characteristic with thicker fabric, such as fake fur, on which I was able to build a webby maze of wormlike structures as the powder clung to

its scraggly ends.

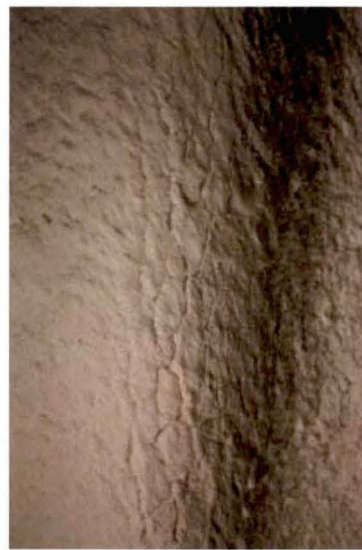


Images showing the way flour fell on fabric, 2002.

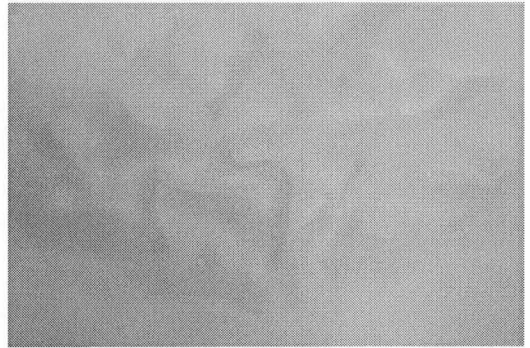
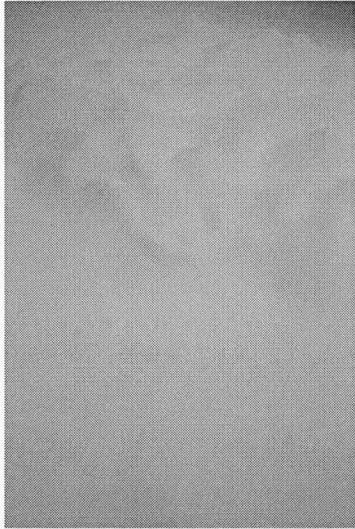




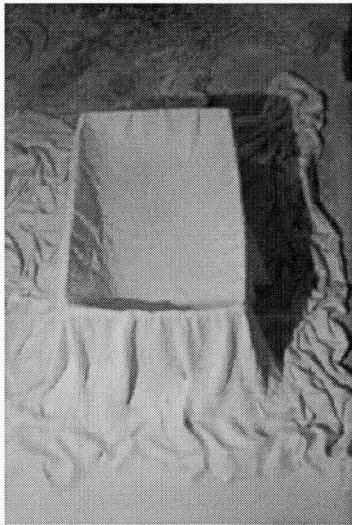
Further explorations of the above on fake fur, 2005



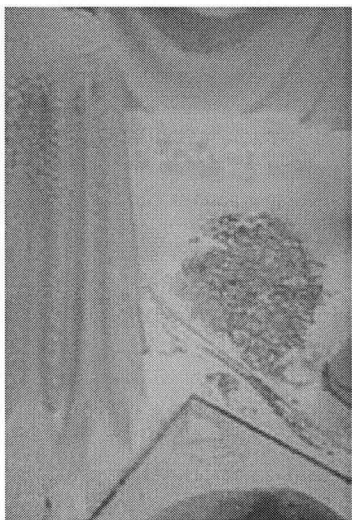
I explored the way in which flour fell around folds of fabric, 2002

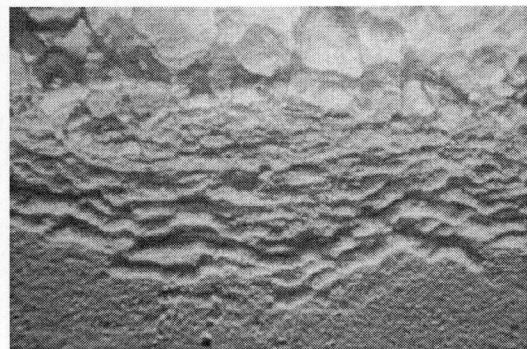


I sieved flour over fabric to make a smooth skin-link surface, 2002

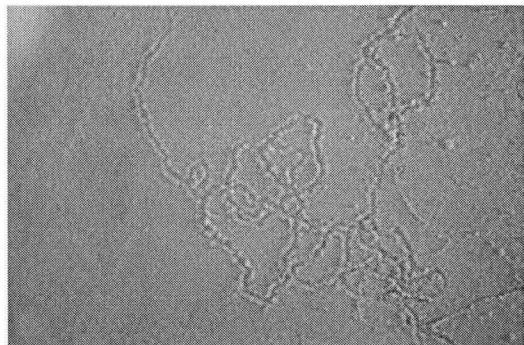
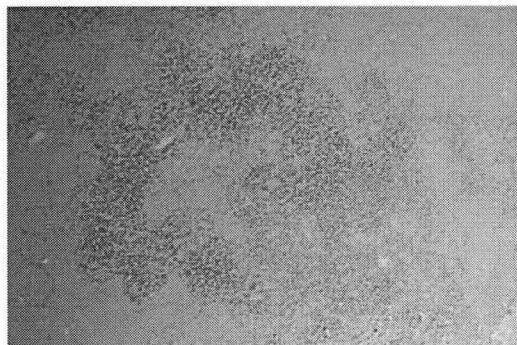


I built up flour over various objects and fabric, 2002





I became interested in the ways of applying flour between object and floor, 2002

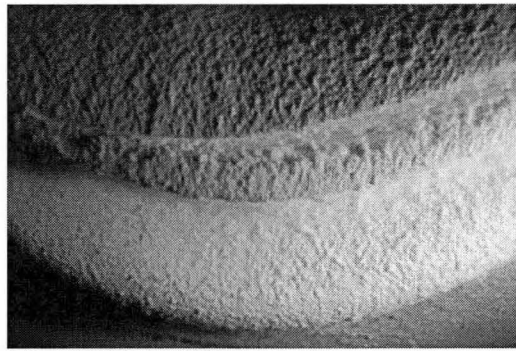


Insect trails left in flour works became a part of making, 2002

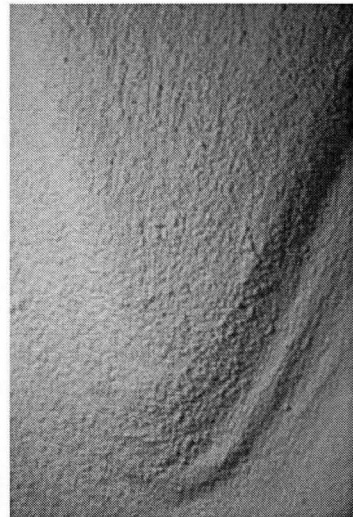
Selected Intermediary Works in Flour:

Development of *A Moment Ago 1 and 2*

The flour is an unstable border. If you touch it, it comes off on you. I aim to encourage an uncertainty about surfaces in this way. It is likely to stay as it is only in a controlled environment such as a gallery. Cornflour falls in a similar way to talcum powder, clinging to the nap of fabric similar to the way talcum powder falls on skin.



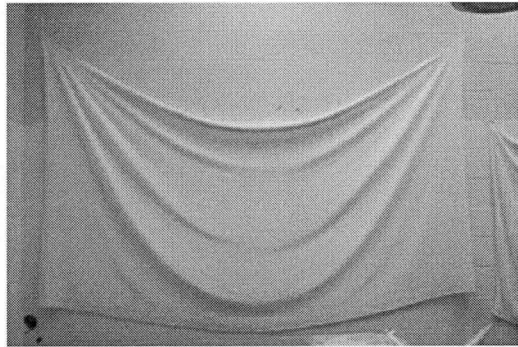
Flour on fabric, 2002



Flour on a towel, right: detail, 2002.

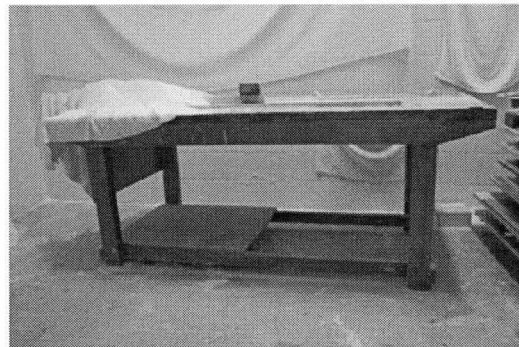
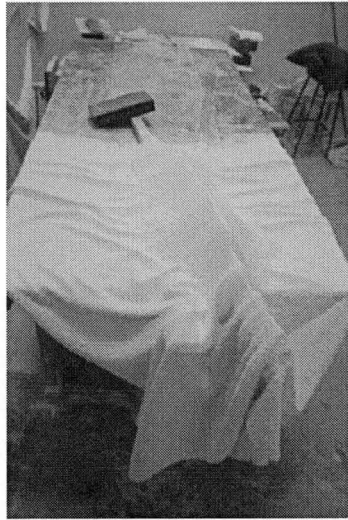
I intended the work to be expressive of the way skin cells are shed into the space outside the body, breathed back into ourselves, scuffed against towels, washed down drains, swept aside as dust in our living environments, worn against our skin in our clothes. An edge that contains elements of each

side can be seen to be as much a transitional space, a facilitator, an in-between space as it is a separator, definer and container as some hold it exclusively to be. Thinking of skin as a paradox in this way acknowledges the multiplicity of its abilities to protect, facilitate and provide transition



First making of *A Moment Ago 1*, 2002

To bring attention to impermanence I built flour forms on structures that were visibly fragile. In my first installation of *A Moment Ago* I hung a part of the work off the edge of a table and supported the other end of that section with a brick. The brick stopped the wood, fabric and flour structure from falling off the edge of the table. The title *A Moment Ago* was intended to suggest the possibility of collapse in the work. The work explored the precariousness of inside and outside and the possibility of their dissolution.



Development of *A Moment Ago*, 2003

Rest

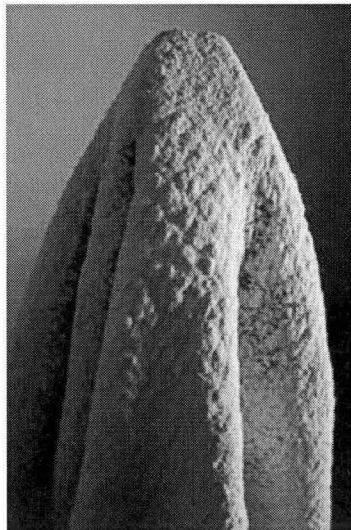
I wanted to explore the idea that a position between opposites could be a position one could remain in, as a position of rest.

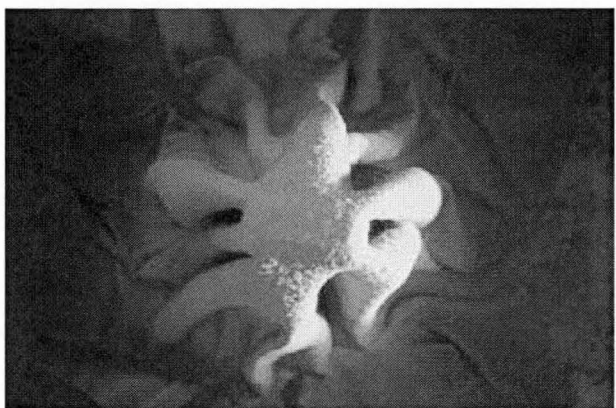


Rest, found object (cushion), fabric and flour, 2005

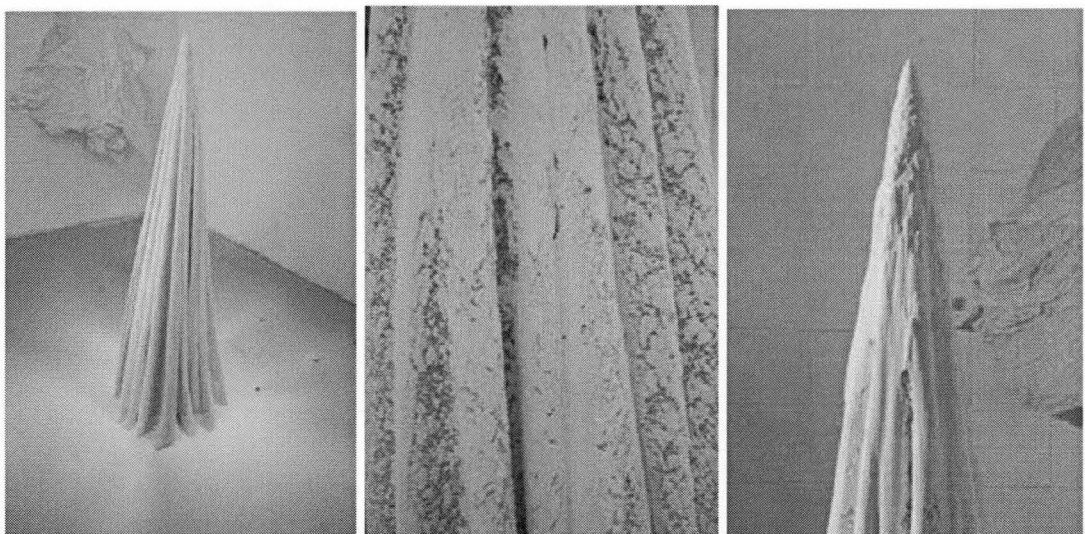
Development of *Where Something Becomes Nothing*

I experimented with building peaks on top of a single point of fabric. The resulting texture describes the form it fell onto; made by clumps sinking into air filled powder and puffing up the particles around it; depressions whose deepness forms according to the slope of the form it falls around.

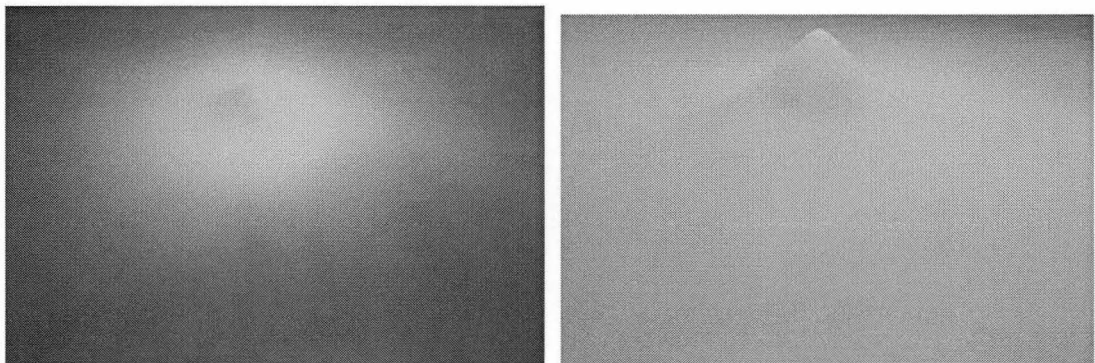


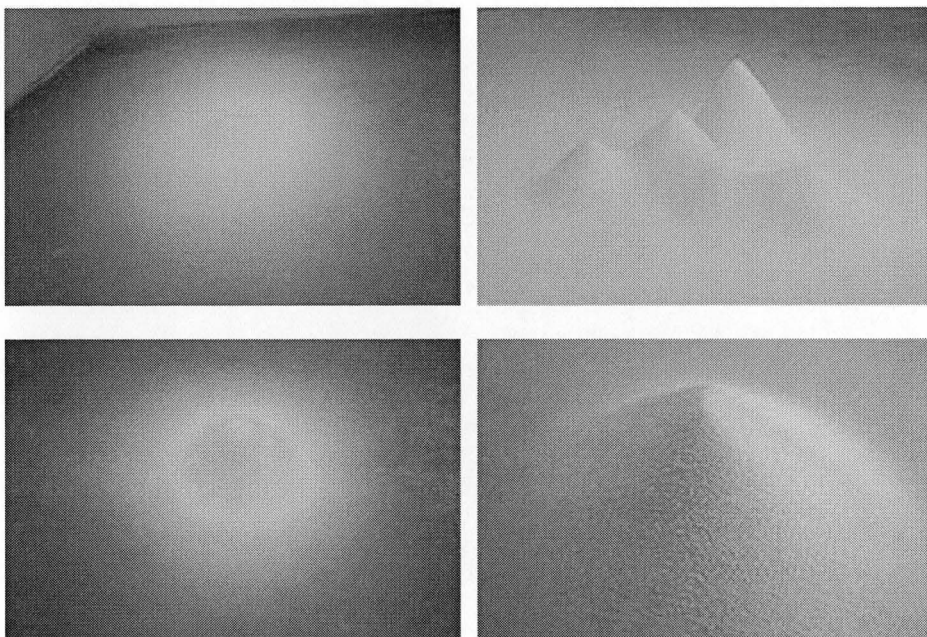


I explored the way the texture of the flour built up around one single point in fabric, 2004.



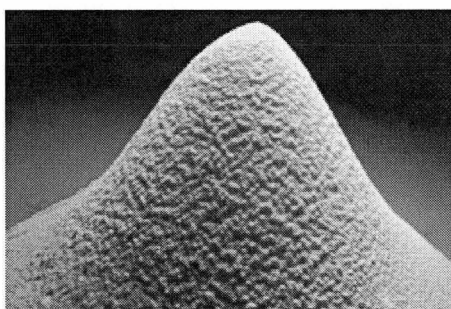
I became interested in the way the flour spread across the floor after it fell down folds in the fabric peaks, 2004.





I then explored the way this fell by sieving directly onto the floor. 2004

At first a little uncomfortable about the simplicity in my method of making I became most interested in a single pile of sieved cornflour. As simple as it was it required a patient pause between each tap of the sieve in order to be able to build it to the height at which the texture would be most seen.



In the inevitable collapses I looked at the rhythm in the way that the mounds fell apart. Perhaps this was as a result of the process of having slowly built them up.



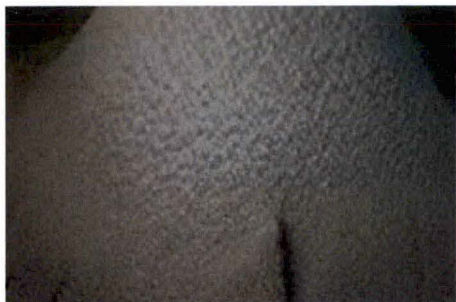
A collapsed mound of flour, 2004



A collapsed mound of flour with another mound sieved on top of it, 2004

I put pigment and pigmented flour over the peaks so the texture and its pattern would be more viewable.





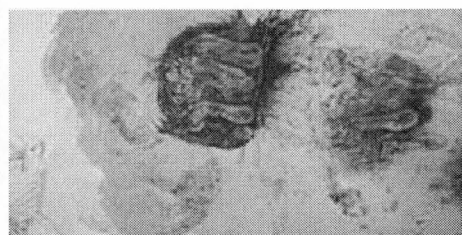
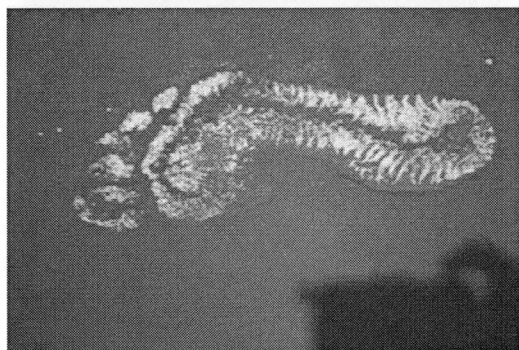
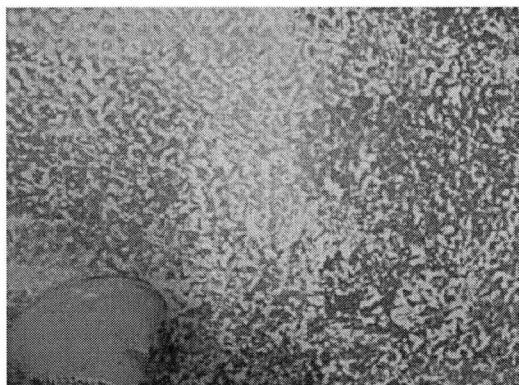
I continued to explore the subtle gradations of sieving onto the floor. The result of this was that I came to use it as a way of softening the white of the walls by making a gradation between the walls and the floor with the colour of the flour.



Development of *With No Edge*, 2005



Development of *With No Edge*, 2005



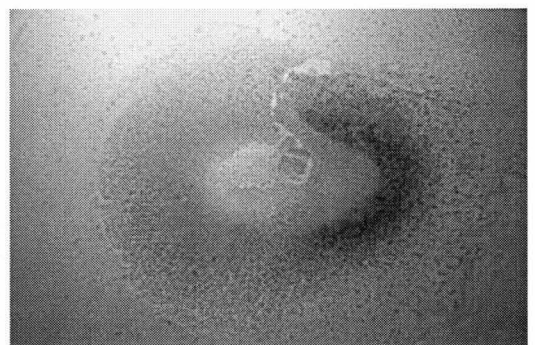
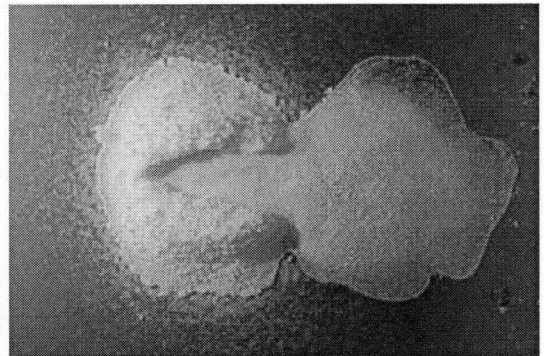
I worked at getting a certain texture in footprints of powdered charcoal, 2003

Salt

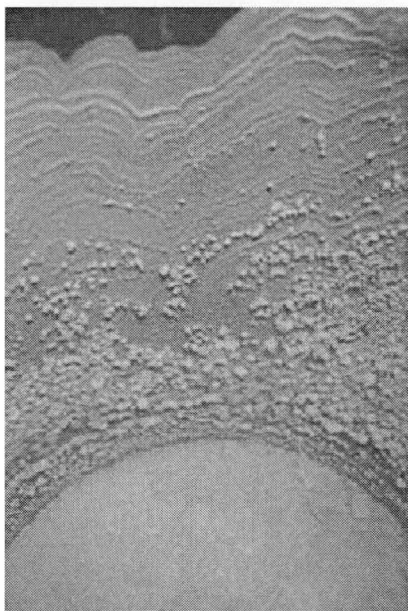
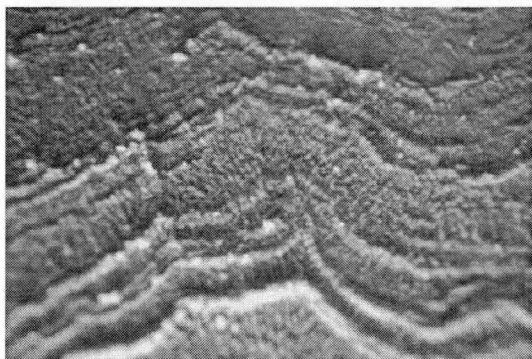
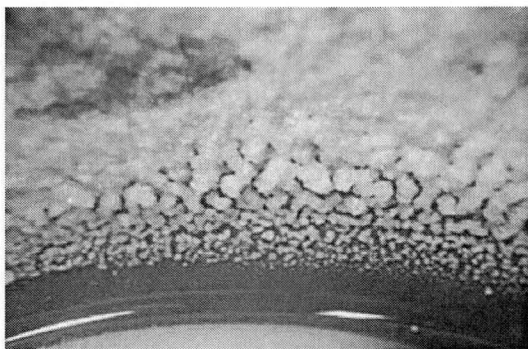
Observations from Initial Experiments in Salt

I worked at ways of using salt and water to reflect their methods of moving through the skin. I did this by pouring boiling water into a pile of dry salt. The water was boiling in order to dissolve the salt. When the work recrystallised as it dried the crystals that formed appeared to emphasize any difference in height as they grew upwards. This enabled the way in which the water traveled through the salt to become more viewable. Forms such as rivulets became more obvious. The edge of the salt became surrounded by a cloud-like skin of fine crystals that grew outwards until the salt had dried. I worked at refining the making of these works into one simplified and well-practiced movement. Buckets of dissolved salt grew rings of crystals around the liquid's edge. I continued to feed them, rim grew

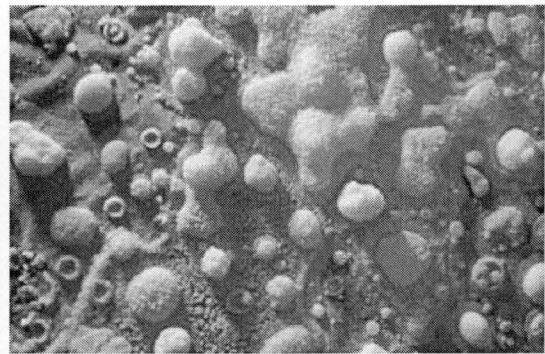
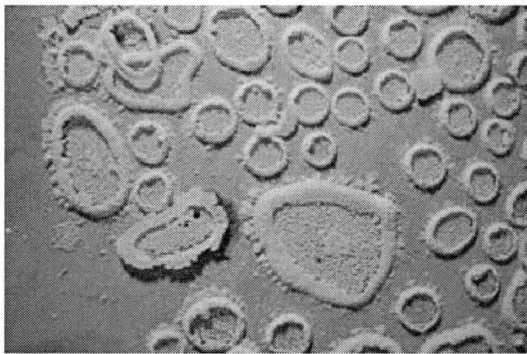
over rim until they reached the top and gathered producing large lumpy mounds. I packed clothing with damp salt and used the fabric to mould the salt. The salt then crystallised on the outside of the fabric. I researched written material on how to grow such things as salt gardens and coloured crystals. However, I found a greater freedom in continuing my own experiments. I looked at clothing and crystalline salt as if part of the body as skin may be. I presented this in a way that appeared peeled off like a discarded snakeskin.



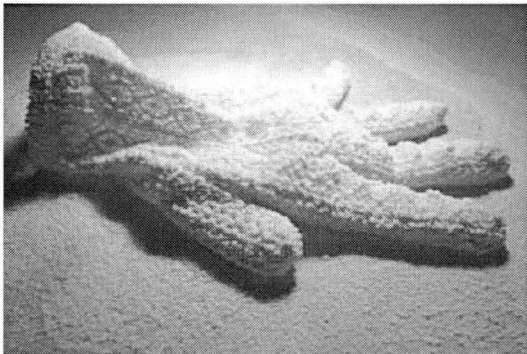
Images show the result of pouring boiling water into salt and letting it crystallise, 2002.



Salt growing around the rims of buckets, 2002

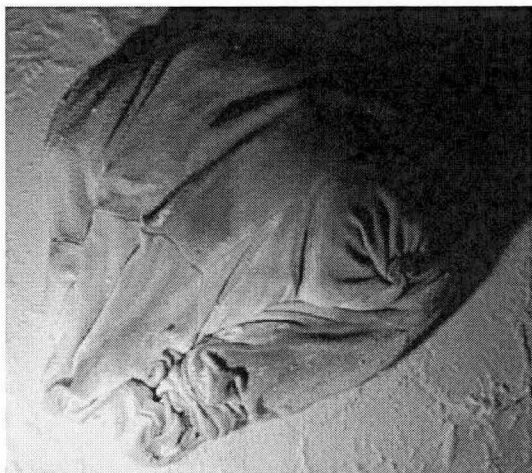


I explored the way the salt crystallised around the surface tension of droplets of dissolved salt, 2002.

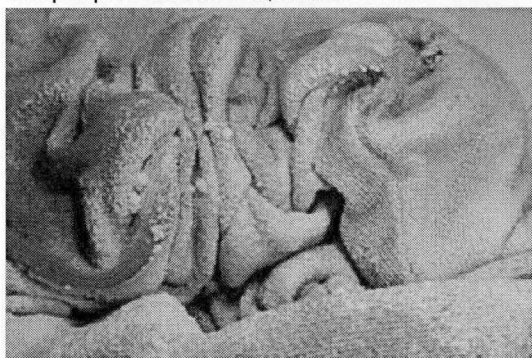


I packed found clothing with damp salt, 2002

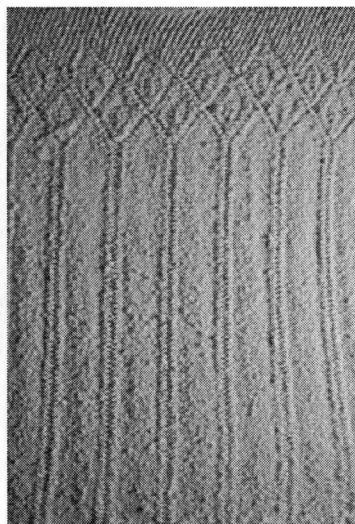
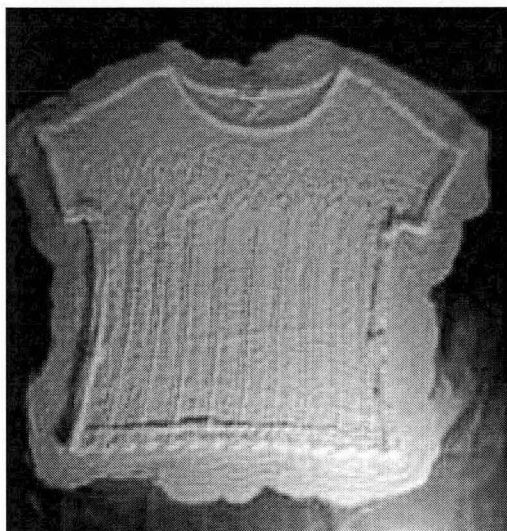




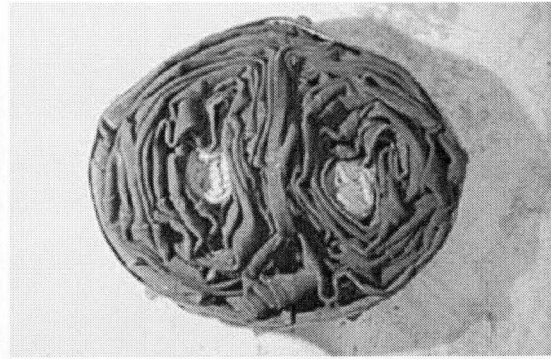
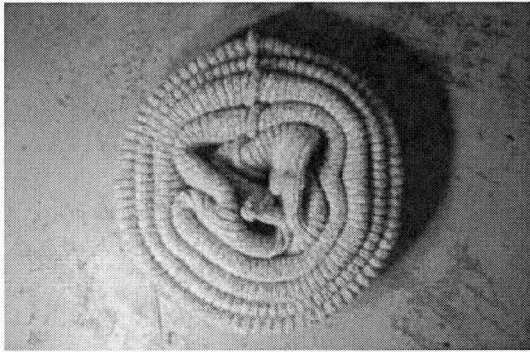
Jumper packed with salt, 2002.



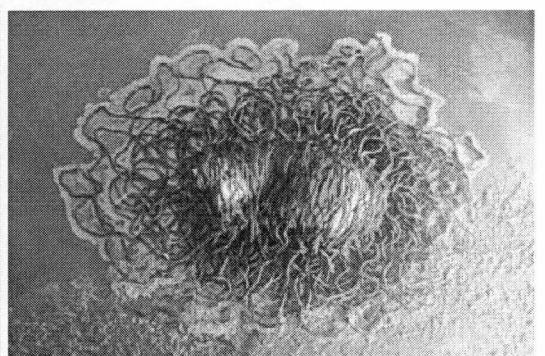
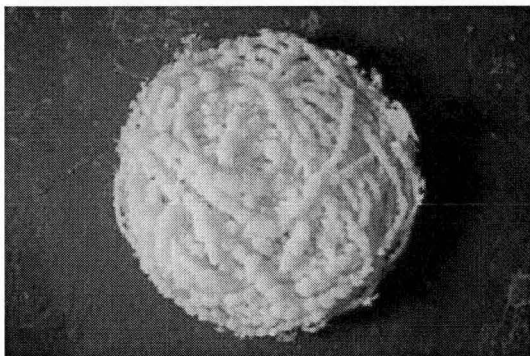
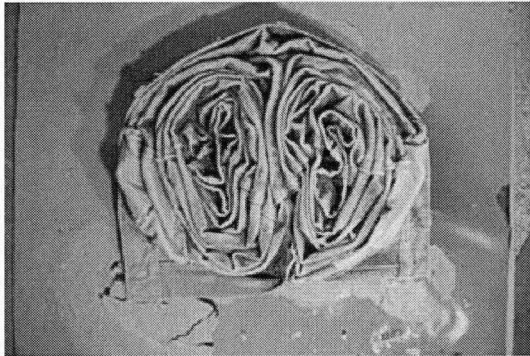
Detail of above.



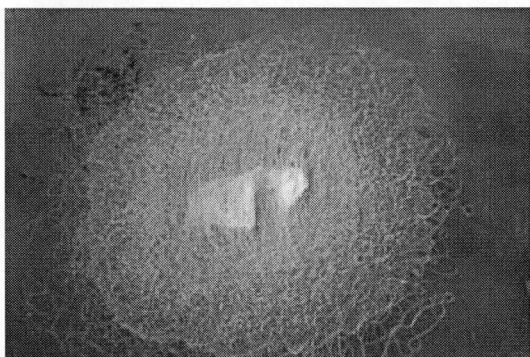
Found t-shirt and salt. Right: shows the way in which the salt crystallises according to the weave of the fabric.



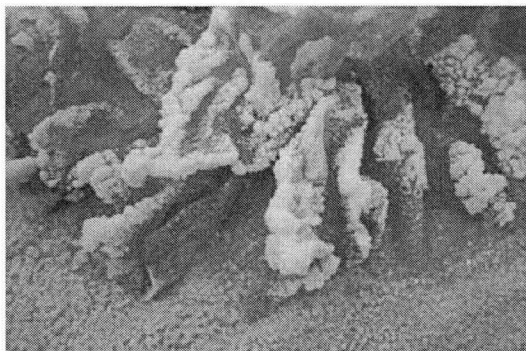
Found materials (hat), (Jeans and socks), 2002.



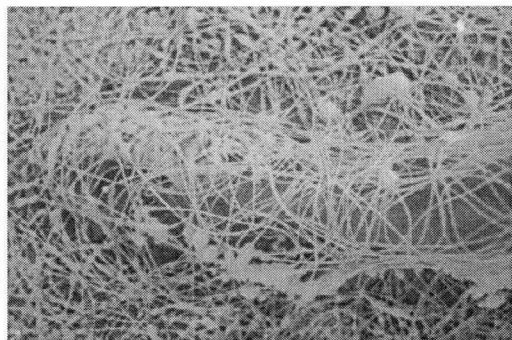
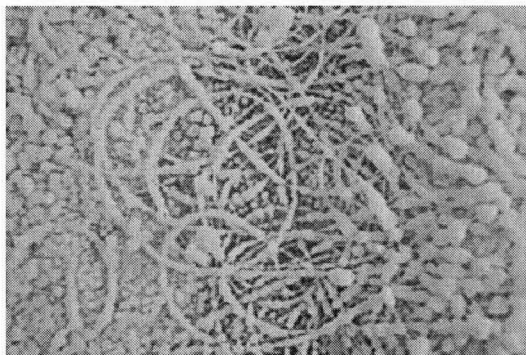
Salt on wool, 2003.



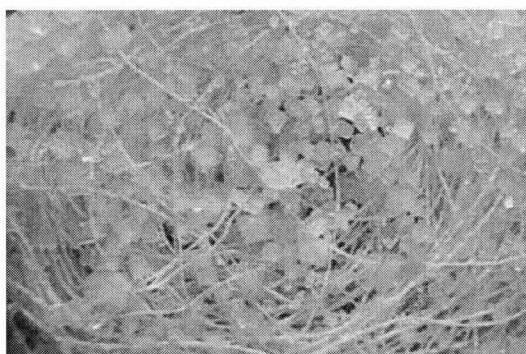
Salt on thread, 2003.



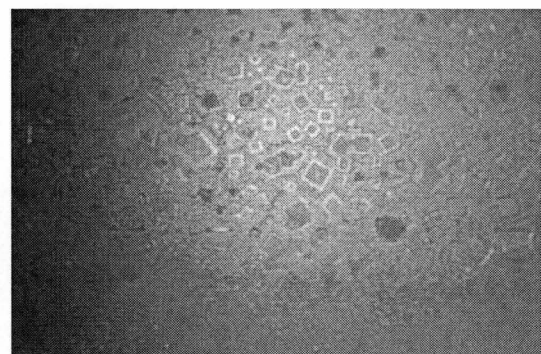
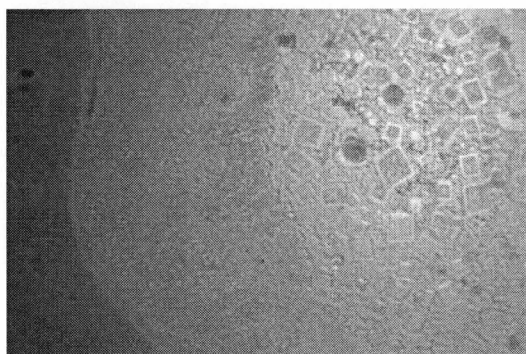
Salt crystals rising to the peaks of fabric. 2003.



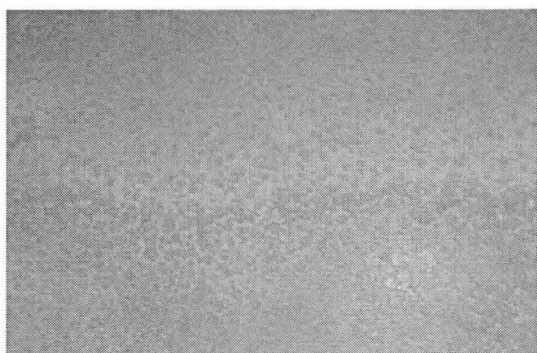
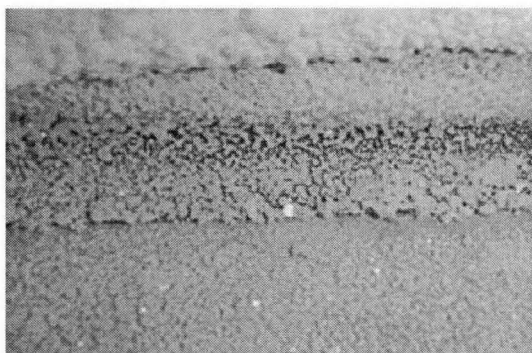
Salt crystals grown on thread that was above water, 2003.



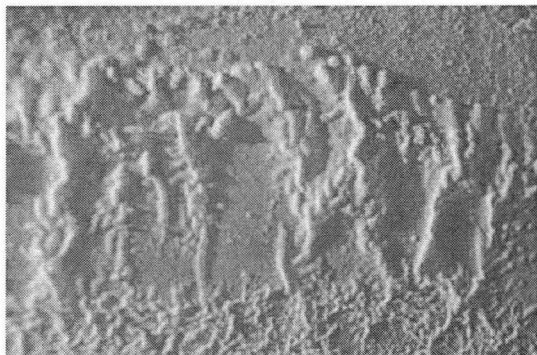
Salt crystals grown on thread underneath water, 2003.



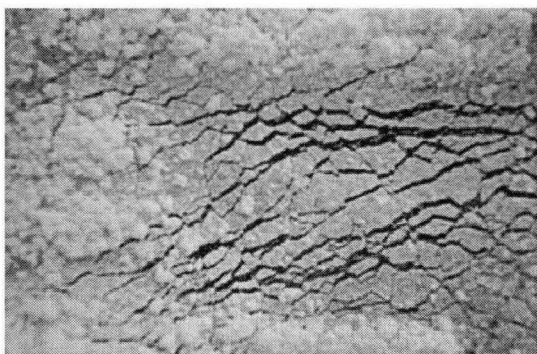
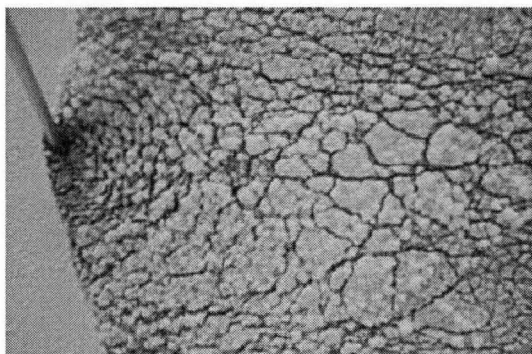
Salt crystals on glass, 2002.



I recorded some the ways in which salt spread around the edges of salty liquid, 2002.



Salt wrinkling as it grows, 2002.



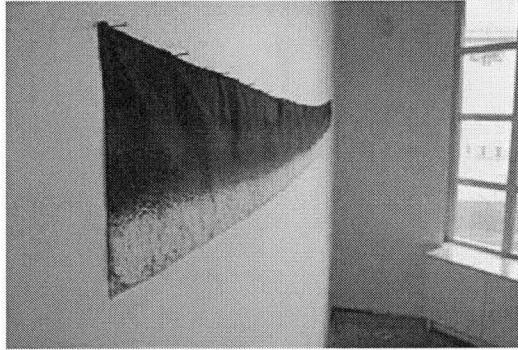
I stretched fabric to break the salt and record the movement of the stretch, 2002.

Selected Intermediary Works:

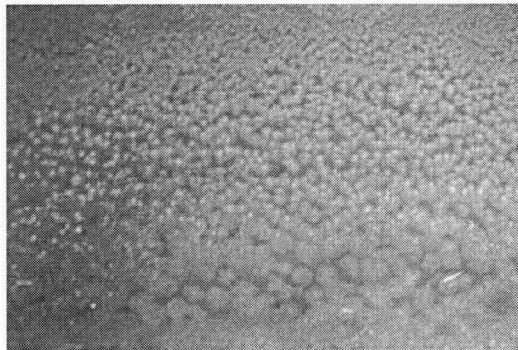
A Moving Line

A Moving Line, consists of a long strip of black fabric, which I placed in a pool of salty water. The salt crystallised up the fabric. The work is the result of a moving edge; the upward travel can be seen in the type of crystal formed. It is an edge that is susceptible to change, within a humid environment this line may continue to move upwards; if wet it may dissolve off the fabric changing the record of its movement. The work has a reference to the

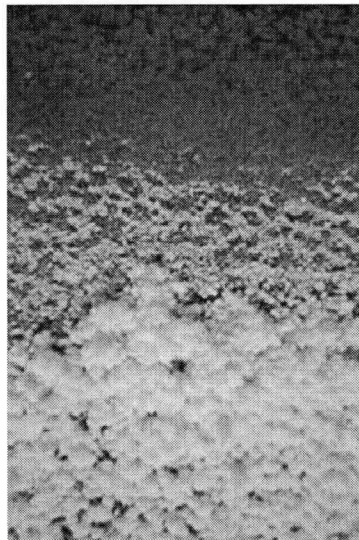
permeability of skin and to the transition and temporality of edge. The salt in the fabric is the trace of one material seeping through another and leaving the residue of its movement.



A Moving Line, salt and fabric, 2002.



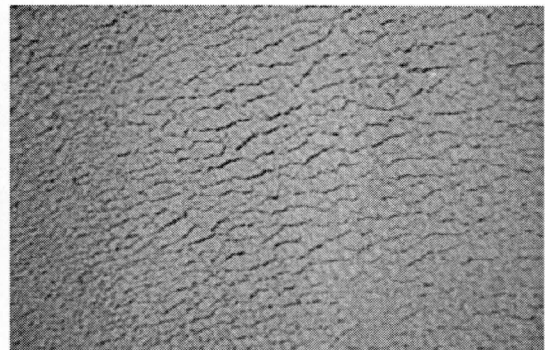
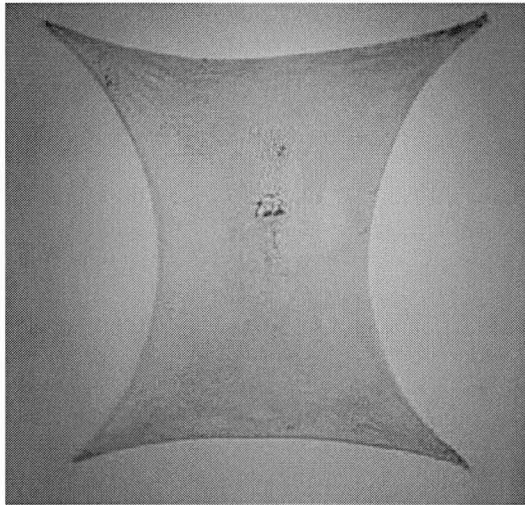
A Moving Line, (detail), salt and fabric, 2002.



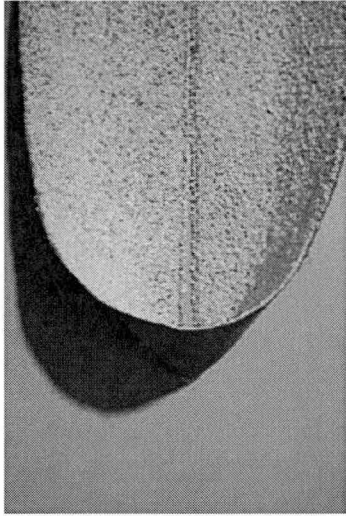
A Moving Line, (detail), salt and fabric, 2002.

In the exhibition *A Moving Line* I made a number of other works that formed the basis of my exploration with salt. This involved various methods for

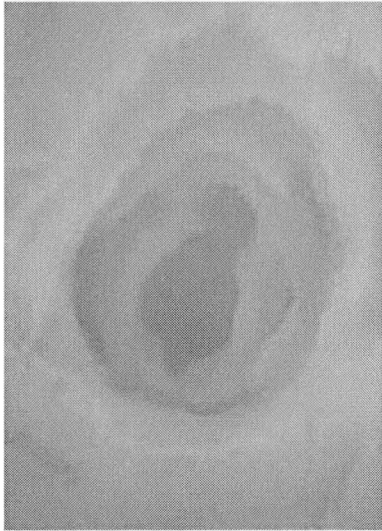
crystallizing salt onto fabric. One way of doing this was to lay fabric on top of beds of salt so that salt would seep upwards and crystallise onto its surface. I also applied dissolved salt and water to the fabric; each new wash seeped into and dissolved some of the previous application in unexpected ways. I explored the way in which salt crystals emanate around areas of wetness. I broke and stretched thickly crystallised fabric. The cracks appear similar to wrinkles in that they describe the stretch they were made by; they show where the force is greatest and increase according to the thickness and translucence of the salt producing a skin-like appearance. I wanted the show to reflect the experimental nature of my research. I was not aiming to present very resolved work at this stage as may be seen in the images.



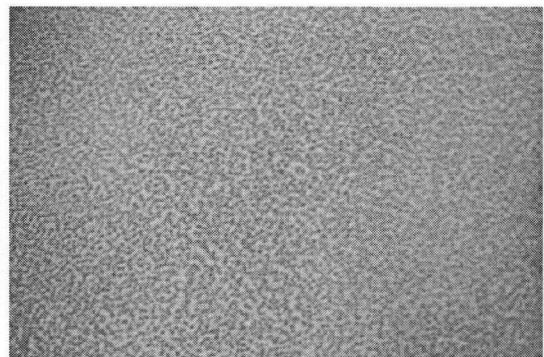
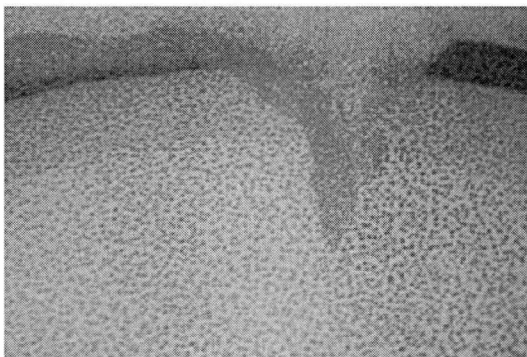
Untitled with details of cracked salt and stretched fabric, 2002.

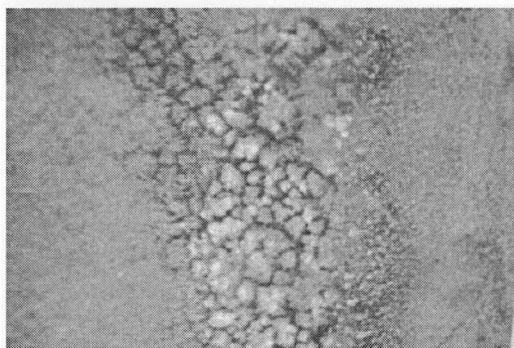
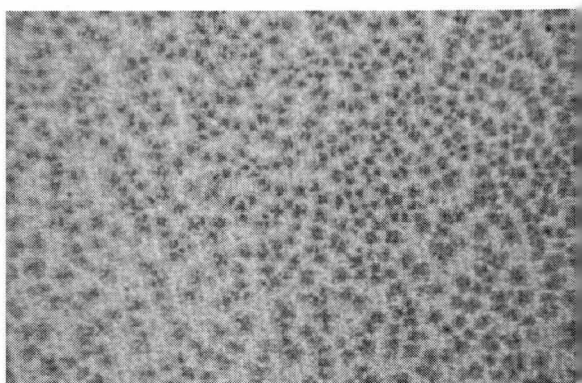
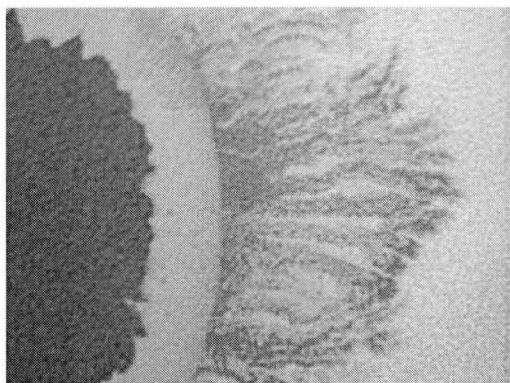


These *Untitled* works show the highly reflective crystals that grew underneath the salty water, 2002.



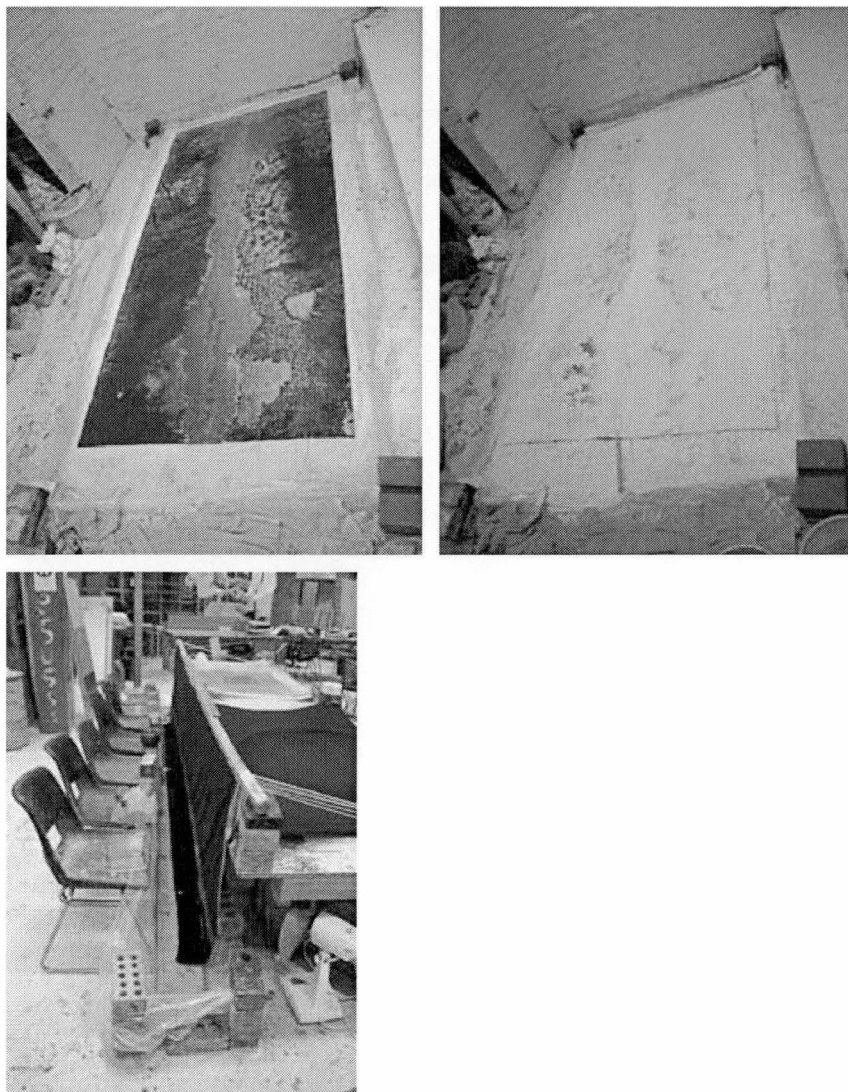
Untitled: showing the result of continually re-wetting an area of fabric with dissolved salt and water, 2002.





Images show some of the kinds of marks made by crystallising salt onto fabric in different ways, 2002.

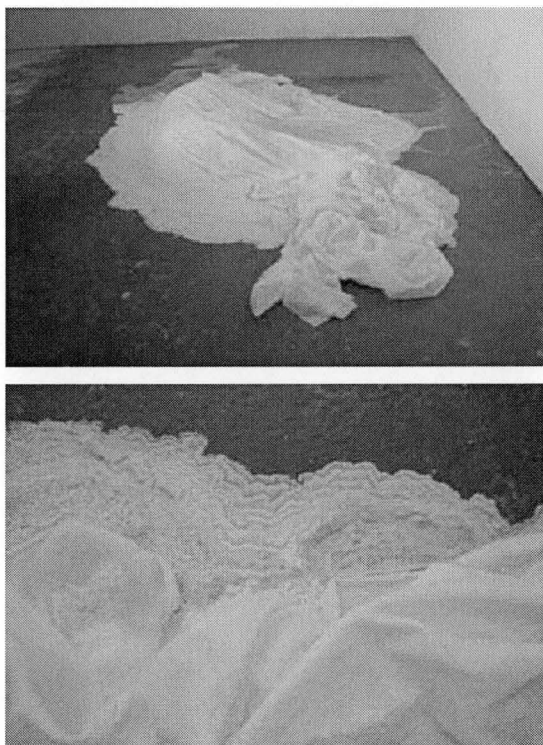




The above images show the making of some of the works for *A Moving Line* show, 2002.

Body of Salt

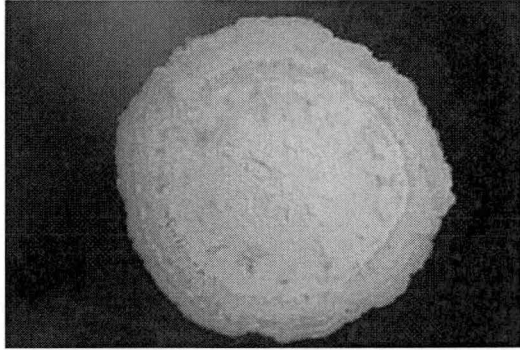
In a less successful passage of study I brought salt and fabric together into a body-like form. I used hot water repeatedly and at regulated intervals to erode the centre of the figure and produce stratified encirclings of the figure's exterior. Upon reflection I felt such obvious reference to a figure overly specific and perhaps less successful. From here I decided to reference the body with less deliberate analogy.



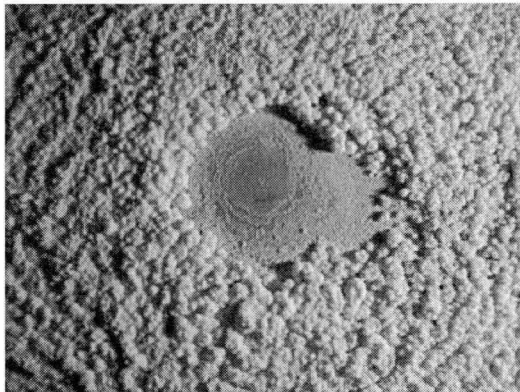
Against

In two works made for a group show titled 'Timepiece' I used salt to record the interrelation of edges. I used salt to crystallise the flow of progression and change. I made the work with repeated applications of salt dissolved in water. As the liquid dried, crystals formed, rising on existing peaks and spreading outward from the edge of the liquid. Each application grew another ring. At the meeting place, where one ring became overtaken by the next, small beads of crystals grew, collecting where the former rim had been broken. The process involved a slow and measured dripping of salt solution so as not to dissolve the crystalline structure I had established. As time was a significant element in making the work the experience of making the work was that of time's relevance and insignificance canceling each other out because of the slow pace of drying and wetting work and the patience involved in dripping slowly enough not to dissolve crystals

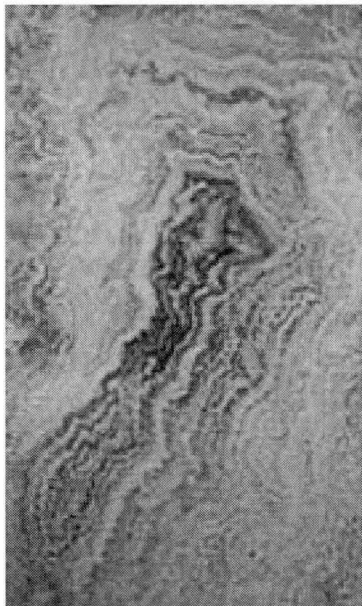
already established. The process evolved over a period of roughly one year though upon reflection there would have been much faster ways of producing a similar work. However, the process and experience of making the work as I did was one of my motives for making the work.



The first stage of growing the salt. for *Against 1*, 2003

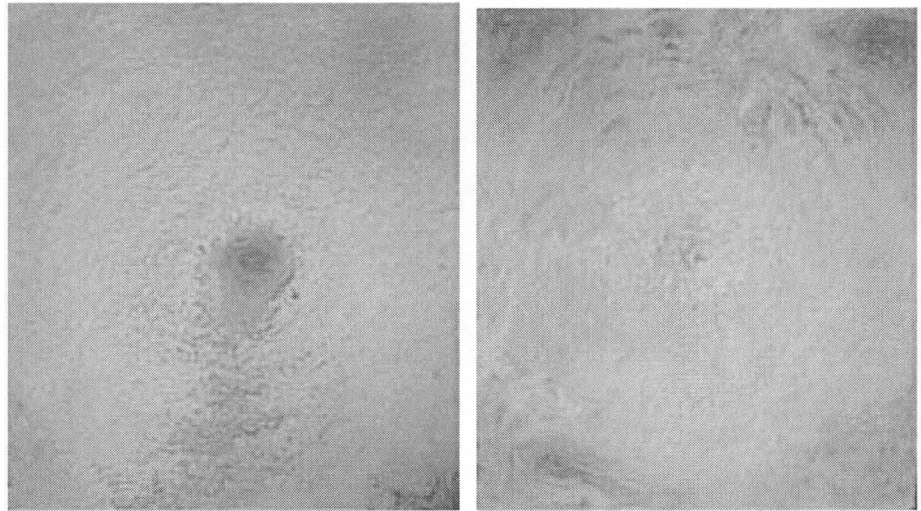


Against 2 (detail), 2004.



Against 1 (detail), 2004.

An edge within a gradation of edges becomes less of an edge. It is possible to see it either as an edge or a gradation. It is possible to point to one of the lines and say, 'the circle begins and ends here.' However, each line in detail is a gradation of salt, which is a transition between one ring and the next leading to the edge of the image.



Left: *Against 2*, Right: *Against 1*, 2004

Development of Empty Cloth

I became drawn to the idea of empty cloth. This was a way of making an edge become less of an edge by not being an edge for anything other than itself. In my experiments with salt and fabric I had found that salt was a material that would stiffen fabric. If I let the fabric and salt solution dry in certain ways I could use the salt in order to mould the fabric.

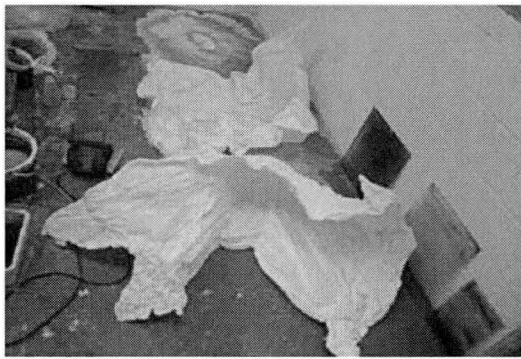


Fabric holding its form because of the way in which the salt has crystallised onto it, 2002.

When I tried this on larger forms I spent a few weeks building up the salt so that it would be strong enough to hold its form. I built up the salt by repeatedly soaking the form with salt solution and letting it dry out.



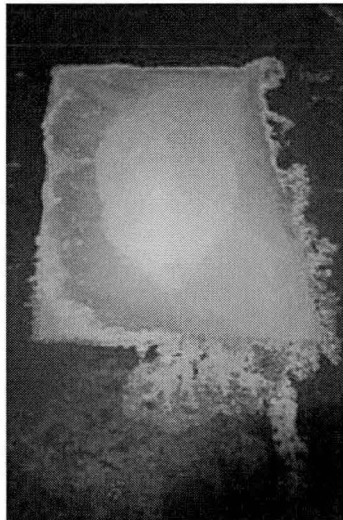
Works in the process of being made. Here I used crystallising salt in order to mould fabric, 2004.



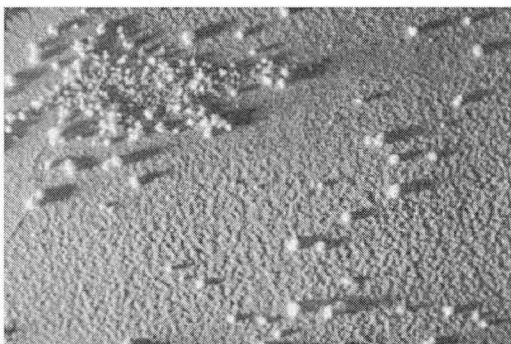


Images of fabric that was able to hold its form because of the salt which I crystalised onto its surface, 2004.

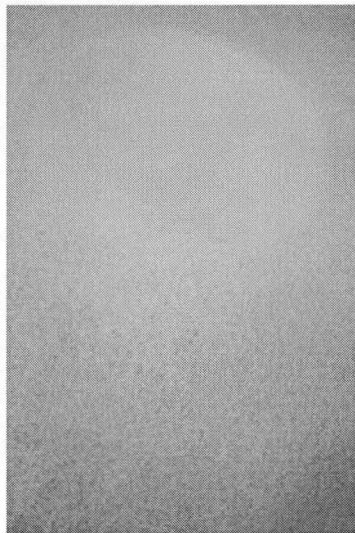
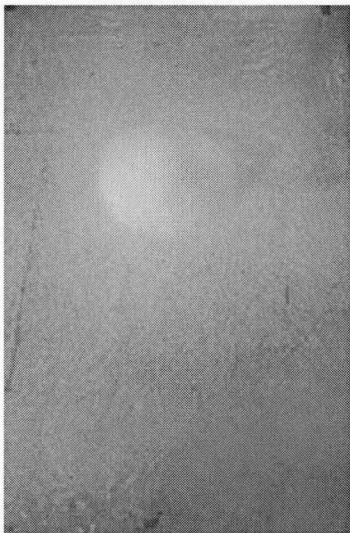
Because I wanted works to show the way in which salt spreads outwards around the surface it is on I returned to other methods of investigation. I made mounds of salt and covered them in sheets of fabric or loose threads. I then saturated the salt with a spray bottle to allow the salt to grow over the fabric form and spread outwards across the floor. This was a repetitive process. The result was not, for me, interesting enough for me to warrant the time I spent in spraying water by hand so I stopped making this kind of work.



Spreading Salt 2, fabric over salt, 2004.



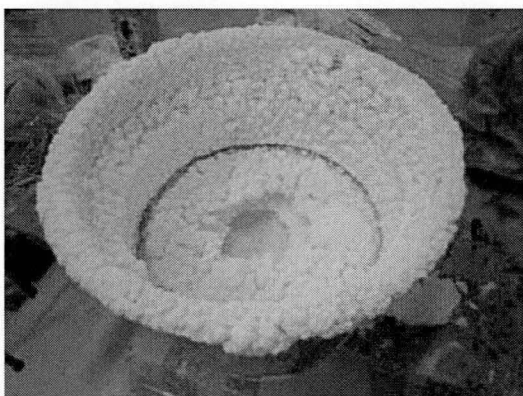
Detail of above, 2004.



Spreading Salt 1, loose threads on salt, 2003.

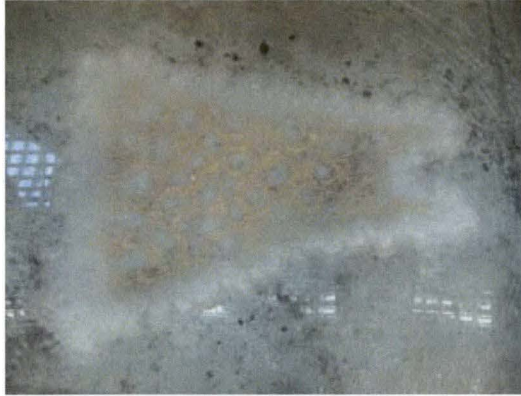


Detail of above, 2003.

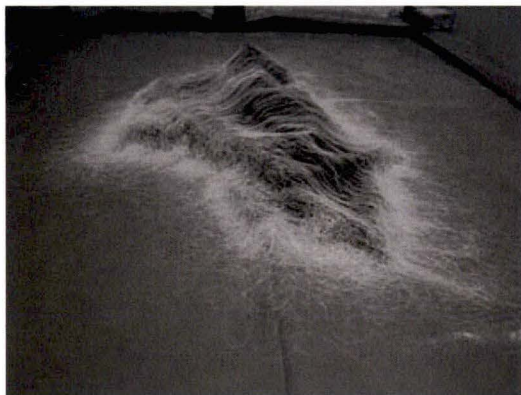
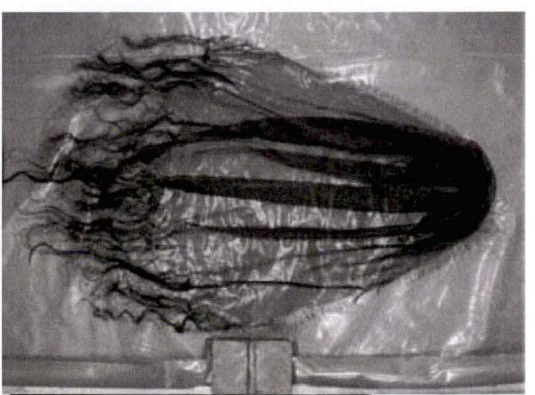


I continued to grow salt on some of the buckets over a period of a few years, 2005.

In order to show the passage of salt growing away from fabric I arranged threads or a piece of perspex. I wanted to create a sense of the material spreading and seeping through. I wanted to present the traces of flow.



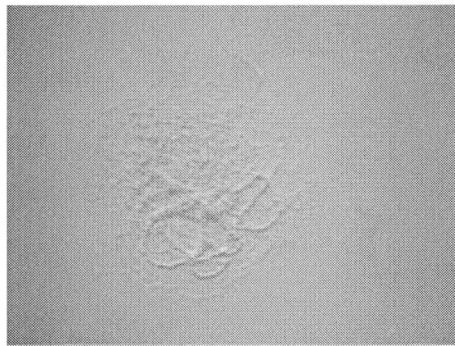
The foundation of *Empty Cloth 1* with its first stage of salt growth, 2005.



The basis for some of the *Empty Cloth* series. Top right: the foundation fabric for *Empty Cloth 2*.

Development of *Thread/Wall* works

Towards the end of my research I became most interested in producing a work that might not be immediately seen. As I was making thread and salt works I was thinking of ways that I could blend my works into the environment more than I was doing. I was using white thread to blend in with the colour of the salt. I knew the gallery floor was going to be dark so I started thinking about ways to put the thread onto the gallery walls. Because of this I decided to place thread directly into the paint of the wall.

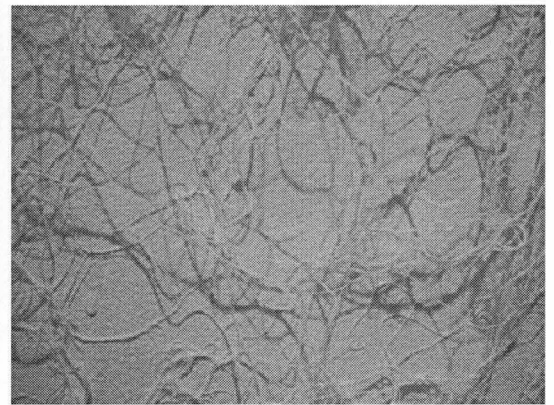


First test, thread, glue and paint, 2005.

My method for getting the threads onto the wall was to make it on the floor, soak it in dilute wood glue and then after it was dry, re wet this structure onto the wall.



Images of some works before they were glued, 2005.

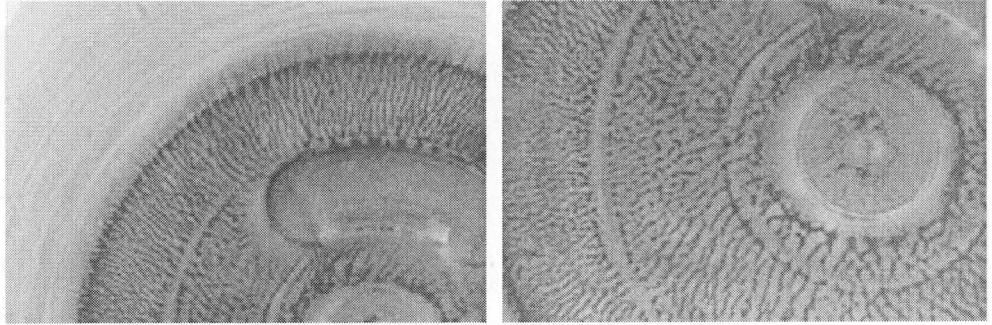


Images of my initial tests with threads on the wall and inside the wall paint, 2005.

Water

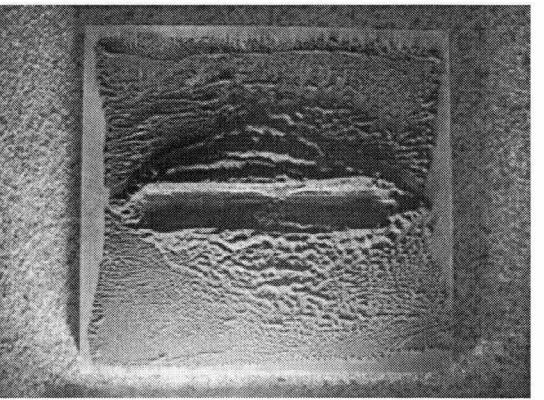
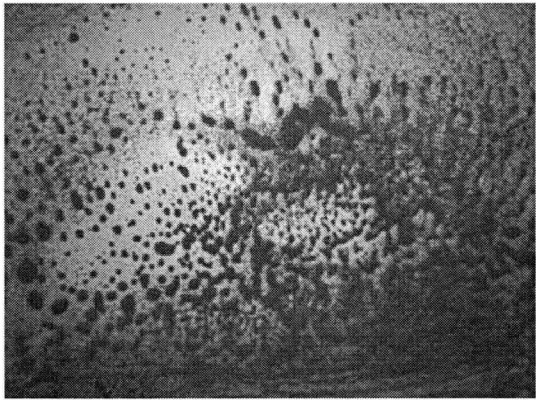
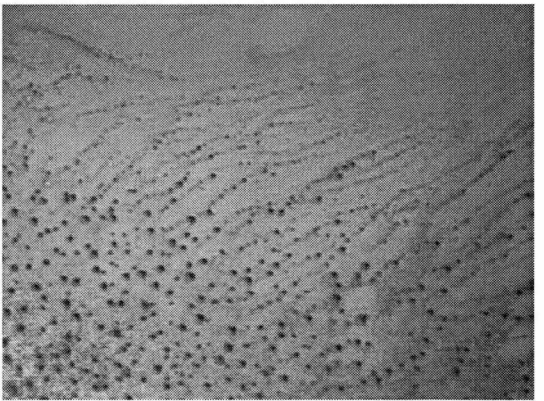
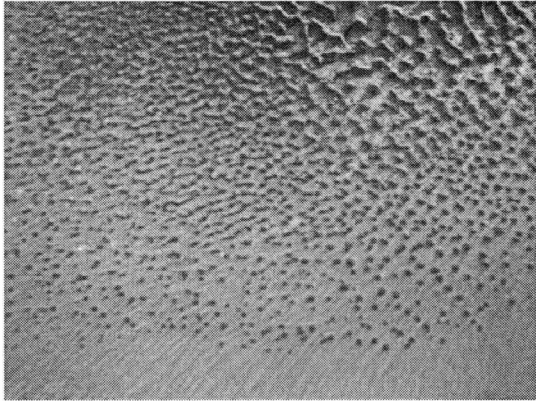
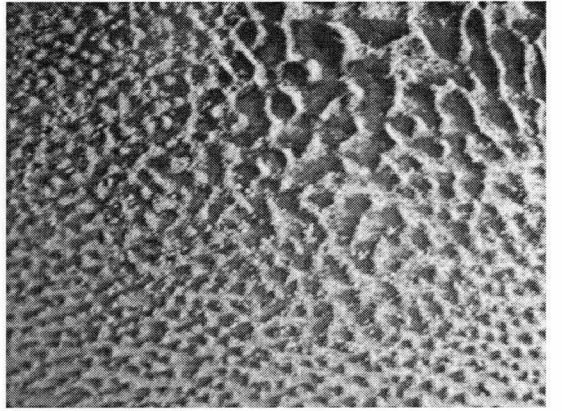
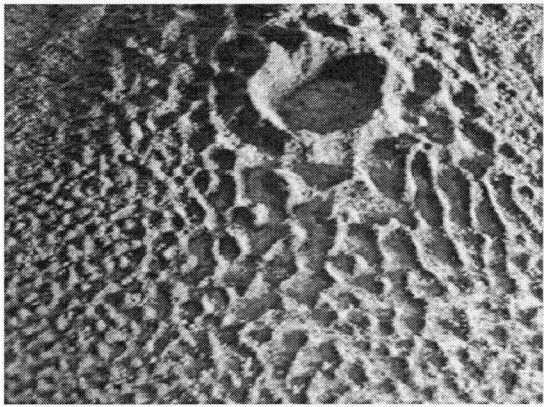
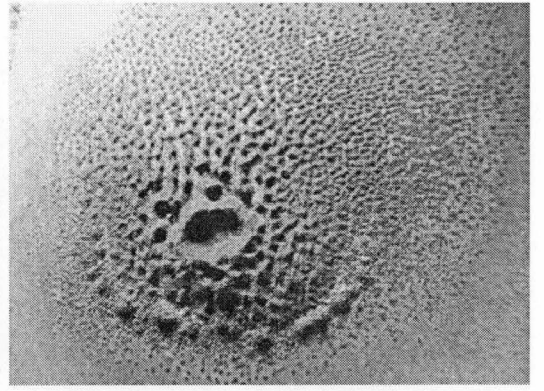
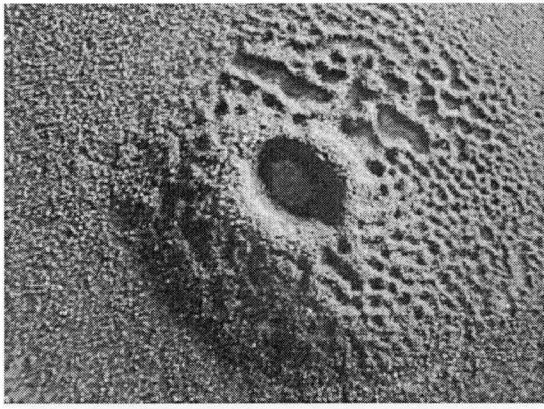
I have used pigment to reveal some of the ways in which liquid can move through solid. The processes involved in my experiments with pigment and water was a process that I noticed by chance. A ripple-like formation appeared in the bottom of a bucket I tripped over on my studio floor. In the bucket I had a small amount of fine powdered charcoal in shallow water, which gradually rearranged itself into what seemed to me to be a curious shape as the water rocked back and forth. The pattern was in some ways familiar; it was similar to those seen many times in the natural environment like the pattern left in sand by water. Its pattern was in some ways symmetrical, elongated, arranging itself according to

the structured manufacture of the bucket. I spent time playing with these marks, kicking in short, rhythmic, taps; kicking so hard water splashed all over the floor; adding more water and decreasing the water level of the bucket, placing more sediment in the bucket and taking it out again.



Black oxide powder, water, bucket, 2002.

I developed this process out of a method I was using at the time to make some works made with ground charcoal. *Trace* was a group show in which I presented the tail end of this exploration that I had been working on during my honours year. The method of making these works also involved vibration. For most of these works I used a stick to build the powder into mounds. The mounds that formed reflected the way in which the vibrations had traveled through the powder.



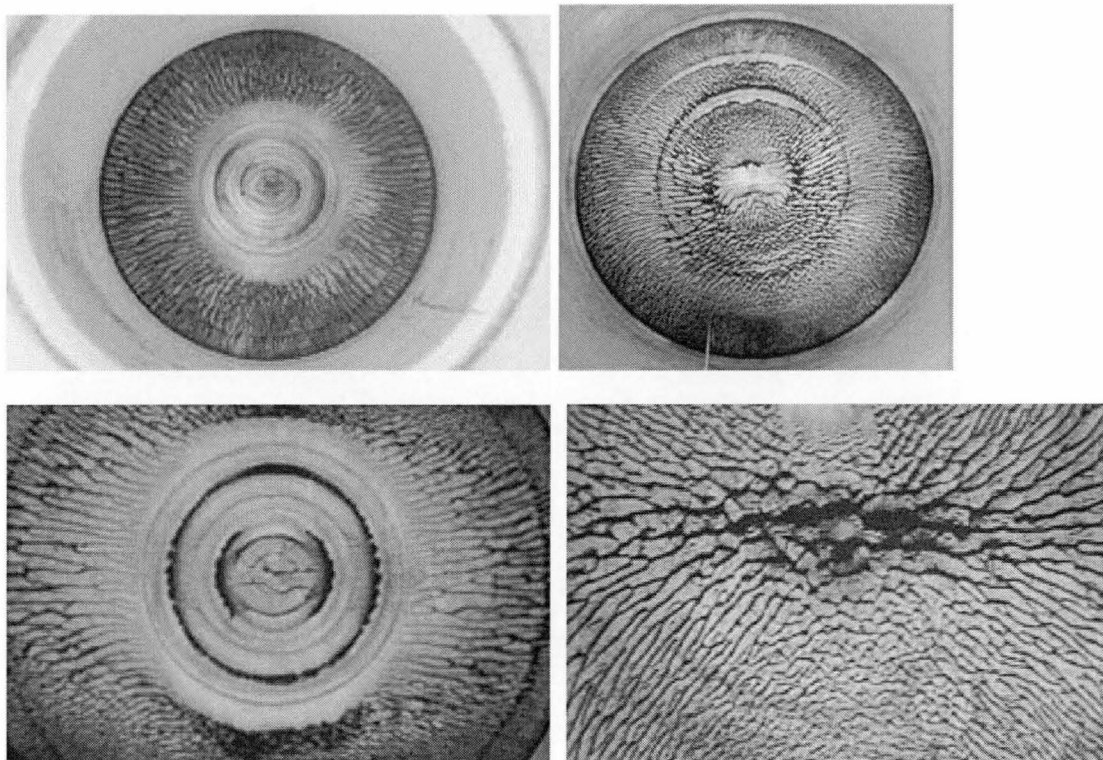
Images from *Trace* exhibition, 2002.

Bottom of the Bucket

I produced an exhibition of the work from this time titled; *At The Bottom of the Bucket* to encourage viewers to see into what appeared to some as an arrangement of buckets and nothing more. I chose buckets to work with for a number of reasons. I wanted to experiment on a number of different kinds of plastic forms. The pattern became more obviously geometric when around a circular form. A bucket was a manageable size and suited the process. I looked for buckets with different bases; some had nodules and ridges; some rose smoothly in the center or towards their walls; some had concentric rings. Each of these changes created different sorts of pathways of water through pigment. My purpose for doing this was to find out what sort of shape best suited my project. The work for this show was not fixed. With any movement the pattern would change. As a record of this some buckets have the fingerprints of curious hands in the oxide pattern and one bucket was knocked over during the course of the show.



Bottom of the Bucket, installation, found objects, water, black and red oxide, 2003.

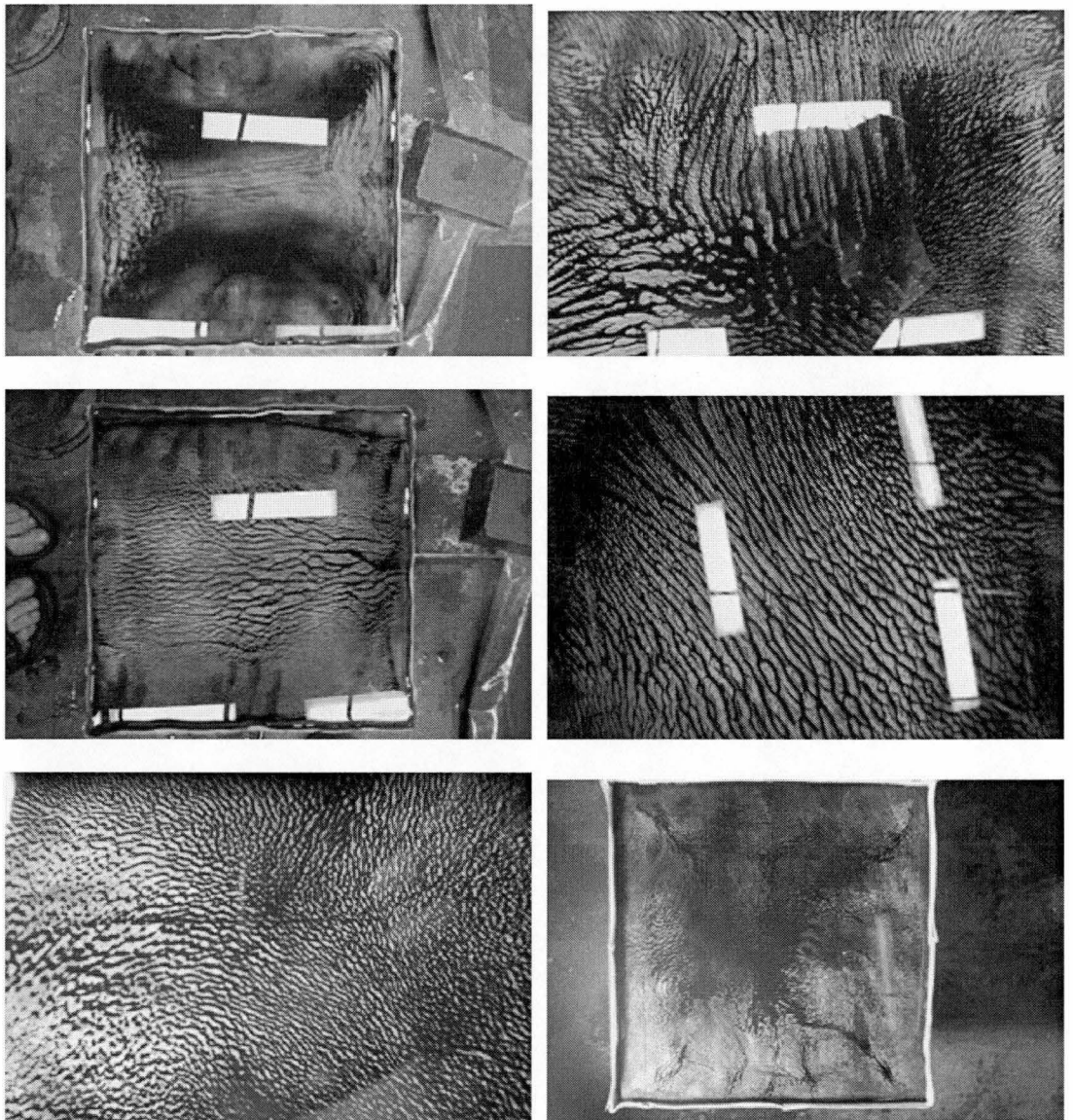


Details from inside some of the buckets. I also took the images displayed in *Liquid Through Solid* from works in this show, 2003.

Experimentation on 2D Surfaces

In this process I experimented with a number of materials such as various types of paper and plastic and a number of methods for creating movement in water. Most of these experiments failed. One annoying aspect of adapting the process to a 2D surface was that I found I had to feel agitated in order to make the work - *work*. Feel agitated in order to make agitated movements in order to make particular marks. No matter how much I prepared and planned it was often only after stints of around 18 hours that I could get annoyed enough to make an image work in terms of composition, pattern and detail. The action required to make the image I desired comprised the tiniest shuntings I could do with as much speed as this restriction of movement allowed for. The agitation of it being close to what I wanted but not quite fuelled speed and containment of movement to occasional satisfaction. More

commonly it was unsuccessful, which increased my initial dissatisfaction; however it was a dissatisfaction I needed to complete the works. The product I intended with the technique was visible but the composition generally failed. My method then was to stabilize this movement for as long as possible with the chance that some may work.



Images of some of the work about fluidity that I trialed on 2D surfaces, 2004.

As I worked I followed the courses the water made through the powder and the lines that found their shape from this shifting. I became interested in the dual movement and direction of patterns crossing over each other. Channels of

water cut through banks of oxide as the water flowed over bubbles that were caught underneath paper, got confused as they came against dead ends where the oxide was its thickest and sped off the edge of the paper in colliding rivulets. The marks that were left behind were the traces of this movement. I was particularly interested in the smooth gradations between different types of marks. I observed how the different kinds of movements created different kinds of marks; kicking created startled lines and faster shuntings created a chunky, sporadic composition. I allowed my curiosity to affect my movements, which in turn produced marks that changed according to my interest. Some worked under water but did not survive the drying process.

Between Kicks

I worked at making a video of the movement of the sediment patterns on the bottom of a molded container. I planned to call it *Between Kicks* to bring attention to the process and to that which can occur between action. This was to be a photographic animation of the impression resulting from the action of kicking the container. Because a lot of the movement occurred while the water was rocking, most of the resulting footage turned out too disparate and jerky to follow. I could not film what was taking place underneath the rocking water because the reflections were too distracting. After these additional experiments I finally returned to the images I had taken from the *Bottom of the Bucket* show. Because the detail in the work can only be seen when it is enlarged I decided to present these reworked images projected onto a wall. The initial concept of *Between Kicks* is a work I still want to pursue when I have the time to resolve the methods involved in making it.

The Ephemeral Nature of my Work

Within ephemeral processes I have explored some of the myriad ways in which order and chaos unite, contradicting a constructed sense of their opposition. Ephemerality has been

a way to contradict a fixed notion of 'edge' in my research, bringing into focus the understanding that nothing is forever and predictably able to continue to be fixed. I am interested in making works with indistinct edges such as works made of salt which spreads as it dries; works made of flour that become part of you as you touch them; objects that turn into pools of water in a damp climate. The exploration of the edge is central to my understanding of ephemerality and of the processes I craft in order to present my investigations. With ephemerality I have been able to physically explore this idea of 'the edge' in my research.

The works remain close to the possibility of accident. I work with a possibility of failing in the making of the work, of the works not appearing in the way in which I have written about them. In order to take the work where I want it to go I find I have to not be afraid of the possibility of them falling apart; this also means they may be more likely to. The work has to come close to the possibility of collapse in order to achieve the effect I want.

Conclusion

Constructing the external world to reflect an internal state can be seen as a way of lessening the extremes which may be between inside and outside, the metaphysical and the physical, the imagined and the real, that which is remembered and that which is being lived. In my practical work I seek to lessen the differences between inside and outside by drawing reference to that which is between inside and outside in order to provide a transition.

The direction in which I have aimed this research is that of the possibility of a thought to dawn and grow in the direction natural to it; to the possibility of initiating a thinking that does not become quickly disposable because its value lies in its difference to what has gone before or to that of simply providing more variation. It is directed towards the possibility of providing a smooth enough transition to encourage thought to do this instead of being reactionary.

I explored the project with various materials in order to reflect the various forms of transition that occurs between inside and outside. Salt is excreted in the form of perspiration. Thread and fabric become a part of the transition between self and world. I used pigment in a way that shows how liquid finds its way through solid. Like salt, flour traverses inside and outside in the form of food. I blurred the distinction between inside and outside by incorporating talcum powder with ingestible flour.

The main questions that have compelled my research have been: what distinctions can be made between inside and outside? How do these distinctions come to be understood? What are the ways in which one may defend and communicate through one's exterior? Is one contained by one's exterior? What is it that separates opposites such as internal and external?

The final works center around the possibility of extending difference into a transition. I have looked at the edge of the human body in order to explore that which could be seen to encompass one's most significant points of transition between difference.

I seek to identify the paradoxical nature of a transition wherein the interconnectedness of opposites can be revealed. I have researched ideas that suggest that a transition incorporating elements of opposites does more than to 'simply' divide them. In my research into related ideas I came to relate an edge to paradox to draw attention to the way in which opposites do coexist. I aim to draw attention to the way in which naming a position of an edge as a boundary or recognizing it as a place of transition becomes a matter of opinion. It is perhaps more convenient to name an edge or view it as a divider than recognize its other roles such as that of facilitator between opposites. An edge may be seen as encompassing a position that incorporates elements of opposites. Because of this I have chosen, in this research, to present ways by which an edge can be seen or experienced as a position of transition so that this function of an edge does not become overlooked.

Works that may arise out of this research

Because of the difficulty of putting together the work in this show I want in the future to simplify the work I make. This is because of the amount of unpredictability in discovering the new environmental conditions of a gallery such as airflow, which determines the drift of falling flour. Though it is a simple thing it can dramatically change the appearance of a work. There is a need for a broad range of skills in making this kind of work. They are not always easy to predict and are sometime beyond my ability or require knowledge that is out of my reach at short notice.

I now want to reduce the number of skills required to put together a piece of work so that each of the skills will become more practiced. Because of the number of hurdles involved in producing ephemeral work such as getting enough time in a gallery to make it and dealing with unexpected things such as mice walking across flour works creating larger holes than the texture of the flour (as happened in this show), I have decided to make some more permanent works. I intend to draw on the research I have undertaken during this candidature. I intend, in the future, to make work that continues to explore an element of transition between internal and external.

List of Plates

(of works other than my own)

Section 1: Final Works

1. Franz Ehmman, an image from the installation titled *The Blue Room of Humanity*, 1997, cited in Ehmman, Franz., *The Blue Room of Humanity*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia, 1997.

Section 2: Central Argument

2. Andy Goldsworthy, *Untitled*, The artist lay down as it started raining or snowing, waited until the ground became wet or covered before getting up, Tewet Tarn, Cumbria, 5 March, 1988, cited in *Andy Goldsworthy* (photographs and text), Viking, Penguin Books, London, 1990, no page number given.

3. Vito Acconci., *Trademarks*, cited in O'Dell, Kathy., *Contract with the Skin: masochism, performance art, and the 1970's*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

4. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville, *Closed Contact* (series), 2002, no page number given.

5. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville., *ibid.*

6. Jenny Saville and Glen Luchford, Saville., *ibid.*

7. Khalil Rabah, *Half Self-Portrait* (live work).

8. Gustave Courbet., *Man with a Pipe*, 1849, Montpellier, Musee Fabre 77, cited in *Courbet's Realism*, Fried, Michael.,

Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1990, p77.

9. Francesca Woodman, *Space (squared)*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1975-76, cited in *ibid.*, p74.

10. Francesca Woodman, *Space (squared)*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1975-76, cited in *ibid.*, p76.

11. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, Roma, May 1977-August 1978, cited in *ibid.*, p108.

12. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire, Summer 1980, cited in *ibid.*, p147.

13. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, Italy, May 1977-August 1978, cited in *ibid.*, p114.

14. Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1975-76, cited in *ibid.*, p60.

15. Francesca Woodman, *House #3*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1975-76, Photograph, cited in Woodman, Francesca., Sollers, Philippe, p58.

16. Francesca Woodman, *House #4*, Providence, Rhode Island, 1975-76, cited in *ibid.*, p59.

17. Gustave Courbet., *The Painter's Studio*, detail of central group, 1854-55, cited in *ibid.*, following p222.

18. Pieter Laurens Mol, *The Ideal Place: the focus of extremes*, cited in, cited in *Art & Design Magazine*, *The Ideal Place*, edited by Nicola Kearton, 1995, p66.

19. Pieter Laurens Mol, *The Ideal Place: the focus of extremes*, cited in *Ibid.*

20. Sally Smart, *Unique Interior* (with hair), 1997, (detail) synthetic polymer paint on canvas with collage elements 247x214cm, cited in : *Sally Smart: The Unhomely Body series, Femmage, Shadows and Symptoms series*, Sally Smart, Melbourne, 1999, p7.

21. Sally Smart, installations from *The Unhomely Body Series*, installation view, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne, 1997, cited in *ibid*, pp2-3

Section 3 : Related Art Practices

1. Ana Mendieta, *Untitled (from the Silueta series)*, 1976, color photograph documenting *Silueta* on beach with red pigment, Salina Cruz, Mexico, 20 x 16 in. courtesy The estate of Ana Mendieta and Galerie Lelong, New York.

2. Ana Mendieta, *Untitled* (earth body with tree and mud), Old Man's creek, Iowa City, Iowa, 1997.

3. Ana Mendieta, *Untitled* (earth body work with cloth, Oaxaca, Mexico) 1977. Collection of Raquel Mendieta Harrington.

4. Ana Mendieta, *Untitled* (from the Tree of Life series) Old Man's Creek, Iowa City, Iowa, 1997.

5. Yayoi Kusama, *Dots Obsession*, 1998, Inflatable vinyl environment, Dimensions variable, the artist in installation, The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, *ibid*.

6. Yayoi Kusama, *Accretions and Compulsion Furniture*, c. 1962-63, Sewn stuffed fabric, furniture, household objects, paint works in progress, the artist's studio, New York. Cited in *Yayoi Kusama*, Hoptman., Laura, Tatehata., Akira, Kultermann., Udo, 2001, Phaidon Press Ltd, London.

7. Yayoi Kusama, *Kusama's Peep Show or Endless Love Show*, 1966, mirrors, coloured lights, 210 x 240 x 205 cm, Installation, Castellane Gallery, New York.
8. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda I*, 1992-94, Wood, fabric, 258 x 39 x 60 cm, Collection, Worchester Art Museum, Worchester, Massachussets.
9. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda II*, 1993 – 94, Wood, metal, fabric, bone, 260 x 80 x 60.5cm, Collection, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.
10. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda III*, 1994, Wood, Fabric, 2 parts, 258.5 x 86.5 x 6cm; 83.5 x 86.5 x 5cm, Installation, 'Crodida y Crudo,' Musco National Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, 1994.
11. Doris Salcedo, *Unland the orphans tunic*, 1997, Wood, cloth, hair, 80 x 245 x 98cm, Collection, Fundacio 'La Calxa,' Barcelona.
12. Eva Hesse, *Aught*, 1968. Double sheets of latex, stuffed with polythene sheets, metal grommets. Four units, each 198x101.5, cat. No. 33, cited in Hesse Eva., Serota Nicholas., ed., *Eva Hesse: Sculpture*. Catalog of an exhibition held at Whitechapel Art Gallery, Rijksmuseum Kroller-Muller, Kestner-Gesellschaft, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1979, no page number given.
13. Eva Hesse, *Expanded Expansion*, 1969. Fibreglass and latex on cheesecloth 305x457x610, three units of 3, 5 and 7 poles each, cited in *ibid.*, no page number given.
14. Eva Hesse, *Contingent*, 1969 Fibreglass and latex on cheesecloth. Eight units, each 289.5 – 426.5x91.5x122, The National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, cited in *ibid.*, no page

number given.

15. Eva Hesse, *Ennead*, 1966. Dyed string and painted papier mache 91.5x56x3.8 (board) cat. No. 12, cited in *ibid.*, no page number given.

16. Eva Hesse, *Unfinished, Untitled or Not Yet*, 1966. Nine dyed net bags with weights and clear polythene 183x61x35.5 cat. No. 9, cited in *ibid.*, no page number given.

17. Han Myung-Ok., Artist in her studio, 1995, Courtesy the artist.

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Curriculum Vitae

Biographical Notes

1974 Born, New Zealand
1985 Arrived Australia

Qualifications

2002-2006 Doctorate, Tasmanian School of Art

2001 Bachelor of Visual Art (first class Honours),
University of South Australia

1996-2000 Bachelor of Visual Art, University of
South Australia

Solo Exhibitions

2003 *Bottom of the Bucket*
Entrepot Gallery

2002 *The Moving Line*
Curated by Emma Redfern
Entrepot Gallery

2002 *Indent*
Culmination of the City of Adelaide
Award
11 Leigh St
Adelaide

Selected Group Exhibitions

2004 *Timepiece*
Curated by Maria MacDermott
CAST Gallery, Hobart

2002 *Trace*
Curated by Lea O'Loughlin
Adelaide Central Gallery

2001 *What Do You Do if Your Clothes
Catch On Fire?*
Curated by Bridget Currie and Andrew Best
J111 Gallery
Adelaide

Awards and Prizes

2002-2006	Australian Postgraduate Award - Doctorate of Fine Art, Tasmanian School of Art
2001	City of Adelaide Award: Helpmann Graduate Exhibition First prize
1999	Annual Art Purchase Prize (2nd prize), UNISA Library

Residencies

2001-2002	Visiting Artist, University of South Australia
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Collections

University of South Australia Library, Whyalla Campus
Private Collections

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Stephanie Radok, *Hit Me With a Flower*, *The Adelaide Review*, April 2002
Noel Frankham (image) *Issues and directions in Australian Art and Design Schools' Student work 2000-01 Craft Art International* Vol no 52
Wendy Walker, *Moments of Surprise*, *The Advertiser*, 12 Mar 2001
Stephanie Radok, *Art School Dance*, *The Adelaide Review*, Jan 2001
Stephanie Radok, *You Had To Be There*, *The Adelaide Review*, Jan 2002
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