



Fugitive Identity: An Abstraction of Persona
through the Mask, Camouflage and Material Assemblage

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Tasmania, April 2021.

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I would like to acknowledge the exemplary guidance and support of my supervisors, Dr. Meg Keating and Paul Zika, throughout a long and colourful candidature marked with many challenges. My deepest respect and gratitude.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Llewellyn Negrin for her insightful and generous assistance with the final stages of the exegesis, and Natalie Kluss for the final proof reading.

I would like to acknowledge my family, especially Daphne, Sally, River and Mia as well as my sisters for their support and faith throughout. And Emily, for her encouragement throughout the final stages.

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Abstract

This research project explores, through a studio-based investigation, a condition of identity that is fugitive in nature – that of a persona – the experience of shifting and mutable roles and contexts framed as an array of literal and metaphorical masks. This condition is explored through a body of work that employs lenticular stencils, termed ‘masks’, to produce disruption patterns that encourage an active and dynamic interplay with the observer, resulting in a tension between the virtual, the real and the actual.

An analysis of the mask and strategies of masking (covering, modulating, protecting, dissimulating etc.) are located and discussed within a range of art practices, where the mask is observed to be a material-semiotic actor in a network of relationships that enables the *performance* of camouflage. Camouflage is introduced and observed as the strategic relating (an active process) between an entity and the parts of the world to which it belongs or dissociates; a fluctuating of the senses between sharpening and blurring that produces an experience of the world that is particular and partial – an *umwelt* as defined by Jakob von Uexküll. This framework proposes that identity is not to be understood as a static, fixed entity but rather as the product of a series of events or performances that are constantly in flux, as defined by Giles Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* (1993).

The practical investigation moves through a series of experiments that explore dimensionality within a painting-based practice, employing strategies such as masking, stencilling, cutting, layering, reflecting and repeating; moving from a single picture plane through to multi-dimensional and assemblage-based works that employ heterogeneous materials and

processes focused on the kinetic movement and proprioception of the observer¹. This investigation is contextualised through the environmental assemblages of Robert Rauschenberg, the lenticular optics of Victor Vasarely and Lincoln Austin, the persona of Andy Warhol, the technological assemblages of Ivan Navarro, and the camouflaging strategies of Lee Yong Baek, amongst others. It proposes a practical methodology of heterogeneous assemblage, as defined by Manuel DeLanda, in which simple interactions between limited components can produce an infinite array of complexity and potentialities.

This has resulted in a body of work employing machine-cut layered stencils, described as lenticular masks, that interfere with human gestalt perception, producing a real and granular encounter with emergence; a becoming real through the interaction of systems, one territory opening onto another, moving from a representation of camouflage towards an active and dynamic performance of camouflage. The shifting apprehensions of pattern recognition in the final works allow for a new understanding of identity; one that is in a state of active camouflage, a fugitive in the mask of a persona.

¹ The proprioception of the viewer can be extended to include touch; whether that be the sensation of the foot on the ground as the artwork is navigated, or the tension between touching or not touching the artwork itself.

Glossary of Terms

The terms within this glossary will be expanded upon throughout the thesis, in both the writing and through the artwork. I will be employing these terms in a particular way, summarised below and contextualised with each other. The standard Oxford definitions of these terms have been employed as the reference.

Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs: their behaviour and their interpretation. Semiotics suggests that things are *coded* along different lines and derive meaning through their relationship to each other e.g. painting can be analysed and coded as a material process, as a performative act or expression and as an interpretation of the painting's content. Each codification relies on the other to construct its 'meaning'.

Expressivity

Whilst expression can be understood to be the intentional display of meaning, such as with an actor, *expressivity* has the capacity to discuss the unintentional qualities of a particular thing or event, such as the hardness of an edge or the frequency of a colour. Expressivity can perform along genetic, material, linguistic and semiotic lines or codes.

Code

A code is a system of rules, a deterministic pattern, that transforms information of one kind into another, as with a painting system, an algorithm, genetics, physics, vision, language etc. A nuance of codification is that the model precedes the real. For example, the deeply codified gesture of a 'brushstroke' precedes an actual brush stroke. The code of the algorithm precedes its execution. Our daily lives can be understood as coded; they operate within

deterministic patterns of work, rest, reproduction, health, money etc. The code of the human is that of the *person*.

Person

The term person signifies someone, anyone, a human being. However, the word *person* originates from the Latin word *persona* which literally means *mask*, the role played by an actor. On the one hand a person is the model and on the other hand a persona is the mimic. Either way, a person is a representation of a human, a simulated identity, a *simulacrum*.

Simulacrum

A simulacrum is an image, model or representation of something or someone – it implies likeness and similitude. Jean Baudrillard in *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981, p.1-11) makes the distinction that a simulacrum is a copy of something that has or had no original – such as with a persona, a representation of identity that has no original on which it is based. Giles Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* (1968, p.17) uses the term as an affirmation of the potential of the repeat that is built on pure difference, or *dissimilarity*.

Dissimilation / Dissimulation

Dissimilation is a linguistic term, though used metaphorically within the writing, to describe how similar sounds in a word can change over time, such as with colonel being pronounced 'kernal'. *Dissimulation*, on the other hand, describes the concealment or misleading simulation of one's thoughts, feelings and character; it is to *dissemble*.

Simulation

Simulation is the imitation of a process or situation. Baudrillard (1981, p.1-11) suggests that through a *precession of simulacra* (of copies based on copies based on copies etc.) humans

have replaced reality with symbols and signs; that we have replaced reality with an imitation, a simulation. Imitative representation of the real is also known as *mimesis*, which is also regarded as one of the branches of *camouflage*.

Camouflage

Camouflage is coded along expressive, behavioural and kinetic lines, and can be (mostly) divided into three similar yet fundamentally different branches called *crypsis*, *mimesis* and *motion dazzle*. *Crypsis* is the capacity for something to blend or be blended with its environment; to be cryptic, hidden and indiscernible – such as with colouration, a cryptic question, or sleight of hand. *Mimesis* is the capacity of something to appear as something else (such as with mimicry and masquerade) or to be overlooked (such as with disguise). *Motion dazzle* employs kinetic confusion (often through high contrast lines and patterns) to produce visual disorientation, making it difficult to judge the exact direction, speed and proximity of an object or thing. In each case, to be camouflaged is to be hidden in plain sight – yet discoverable through different ways of seeing and analysis. In some cases, as with predator and prey, camouflage can trigger evolutionary arms races of detection and evasion, of surveillance and dissimulation.

Gestalt

Gestalt, originally from the German, is a nuanced word that approximately translates as the ‘form of the whole pattern’. Gestalt perception describes ways of seeing, specifically, the tendency for organisms to perceive meaningful wholes before they perceive component parts. Other principles of gestalt perception as described in the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychological Terms* (1994) include: figure-ground relationship, proximity, similarity, continuity, closure and connectedness (Banerjee, 1994, pp. 107-109).

Assemblage

An Assemblage² is something composed of heterogeneous (diverse) components that appears as a whole, like a person. It is something that is more than the sum of its parts. An assemblage is the antithesis of an ideal whole or totality, such as a ‘god’ or a ‘country’. An assemblage can be understood, at least partially, through an analysis of its components, partially through the properties and capacities that *emerge* from its component’s interactions, and partially through its potentialities.

Potentiality

The open-ended possible states of a system (such as an assemblage); the virtual potential of something; the possibilities of becoming.

Umwelt

Umwelt, originally from the German, describes the world as specific to a particular organisms’ sensory awareness of it. Umwelt thus stands between environment and imagination, as a partial and limiting “shell”³ that is represented via the organism’s sensory capacity. This encodes and determines its semiotic understandings of the world it inhabits, and describes the entity’s given limits, or simulation, of its experience in space, time and content⁴. Gestalt perception is here understood as a result of the human umwelt – what stands out to human vision may be blurred to the vision of a different species or thing. Therefore camouflage, too,

² Specifically, within this research the definition offered by Manuel DeLanda in *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (2006 pp. 10-25)

³ The term was made concrete by German biologist Jakob von Uexküll (1864-1944) in his book *Umwelt and Innenwelt der Tiere (Environment and Inner World of Animals)*. It describes the given limits of an entity’s experience in space, time and content: ‘The phenomenal world of the observer, however, is also its *Umwelt*, and is therefore subject to the same kinds of limitations as any other *Umwelt*. There is no absolute space and time surrounding all living things. All reality is subjective’ (Stella & Kleinser, 2010).

⁴ The term entered into the English language through ethology (the science of animal behaviour) and semiotics as a technical term. John Deely in his paper titled *Umwelt in Semiotica 2001* states that “Umwelt, an apparently German term, has become in fact a technical term within semiotics, and is also destined (such is my guess) to become a term of general use in philosophy and intellectual culture.” (de Gruyter, 2001, p.125)

is interpolated with *umwelt* as *the* mode of relating with others of the same or overlapping *umwelt* – of becoming visible or invisible against the backdrop of near infinite *umwelts*.

Beyond visual perception is the auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile and (critical to this research) the *proprioceptive* senses that represent the human *umwelt*. The *kinaesthetic* or *proprioceptive* sensory apparatus of the human governs and represents the position and movement of the body (and limbs) in space and in relation to other bodies.

Void

A void is an empty space, the emptiness itself, the absence of a thing. It precedes a thing, can be filled by a thing, and remain after a thing. A void is understood within this research as a physical, mathematical, conceptual or theoretical emptiness – something approaching an hallucination of Hilbert Space⁵. It can also be understood as the negative space of a stencil, fertile and full of potential.

Force

A force is a strength, or energy, that moves a thing. Force produces and becomes a vector, a scalar and a tensor. Quite simply, a force is the push and pull, an exertion, a coercion, a compulsion and a stressor. A force can be something physical, mental or ideal – and is employed in all these way through the research. In my *umwelt*, force is an exerted power or influence that governs the direction and magnitude of a vector.

Vector

⁵ Hilbert space, or Phase Space, is a space of infinite dimensions and infinite potentials that was coined by mathematician and quantum theorist John von Neumann in *Mathematical Foundations of Quantum Mechanics* (1932). The distinction between phase space and that of Cartesian, Euclidian or even standard topological space is that phase space measures dynamic systems. It is the space in which all possible states of a system are represented, each degree of freedom. It is a space of systems (processes) rather than a space of objects and distances. For example, phase space can measure the potential movement, energy, force and dynamics of a ball bouncing on concrete in one space.

A vector is a quantity having both direction and magnitude, especially as determining the position and movement of one thing in relation to another. Multiple vectors begin describing a network – a vector field. A vector is a carrier, it is loaded. In my umwelt, a vector is a cutting line of the stencil, the gestural arc of a spray can in my hand. It is the visualisation – a kinaesthetic synaesthesia – of myself in relation to something else.

Filter

A filter is a thing. A device. My gas mask is a filter that removes impurities from the air, and my stencil is a filter that selectively absorbs paint as it falls towards a surface. In each case the vector of a thing is interrupted in its flow by a filter. A mask filters thing out, even as they filter into each other, incrementally. A filter can be applied as an effect. In my umwelt, a filter is a mode of orientation, it blends things, it has a surface, it has shape. A filter is a device that shapes and orients forces, producing vectors.

Introduction

This research project explores, through a studio-based investigation, a condition of identity that is fugitive in nature – that of a persona – a personal and collective experience of shifting and mutable roles and contexts that are experienced and framed as a literal and metaphorical array of masks – a masquerade. Employing a studio-based methodological framework centred on masking, camouflage and assemblage, my works seek to explore the construct of identity through the literal, metaphorical and metaphysical properties of persona, demonstrated through the artworks as presented in the examination exhibition. A key strategy in developing this aim has been to introduce camouflage as a medium of belonging and relating and apply this to a practical methodology that explores the contingency and interaction of material components, towards an assemblage of the mask that enters into a logic of self-organisation and becoming.

My artistic practice prior to this PhD project, sets the basic parameters for the evolution of the studio-based investigation⁶. The content and conceptual aspects of my practice (2004-2012) have been focused on media, masks and camouflage, specifically in a political and protest-based context, which has been executed via the mediums of spray paint, stencils and various substrates including aluminium, clear acrylic sheets and walls. A critical part of this practice has been the role and representation of my persona via the entity, Jamin. The term ‘persona’ originates from the Latin, meaning literally ‘mask, or character played by an actor’ (*Oxford Dictionary Online*, 2019, persona entry). Jamin is a persona, a mask, an actor.

⁶ The reader is encouraged to investigate my 2008 MFA thesis *Dissent and Critical Opinion: A Visual Language* (Kluss, 2008), though it is not required to understand this thesis, and any shared terms and concepts will be expounded within this volume. In short: this MFA thesis made a material stake in political protest painting through stencil art and spray paint. The project resonated strongly with Marshal McLuhan’s *The Medium is the Massage*.



Figure 1: (left) Benjamin Kluss, *Sedition 2005* (Panel 5 of 6), 2005, spray paint on board, 120 x 120cm.

(right) Benjamin Kluss, *Sputnik I Returns*, 2018, ACP, wood, spray paint, 125 x 125 x 5cm.

Within this research project, the prior intent of my practice as an artist has been disappeared, or at least, dissimulated within the new work. This takes place through a deliberate shift away from representation (and away from Jamin) towards abstraction. In the past work (Fig.1, Left), there is a literal representation through self-portraiture, as well as a representation of my critical opinion, voiced and delivered through deliberate semiotics, at times didactic or ambivalent. In this research project (Fig.1, Right), my persona is abstracted from the simulacrum, and developed as a performative act of camouflage that is experienced by an audience as they move around the work. This dissimulation, this disguising of Jamin's content and form, is yet another mask – framed as a kind of self-portrait or model of the self. Rather than an empty model, this 'portrait' performs as a model of the real, shifting and mutable, a disguise that reveals its own authenticity through the interpolated swing of the encounter itself. It is a pushing and a pulling that resolves itself through an encounter with the work.

The work employs a deliberate slippage between human and non-human entities; between the person and the mask, between the artist and the art. The artist is understood to be as much a component in the assemblage of the artwork as the artwork is a component in the assemblage of the artist. Equally, the mask is considered as much a component in the assemblage of a person, as a person is considered a component of the mask. These sites of slippage have encouraged a discussion that moves from artist to artwork and from persona to mask in a manner that is occasionally mutable and interchangeable.

Chapter 1 opens with an exploration of the fugitive nature of my own identity, made visible through a discussion of the concept of persona, and the various masks that constitute my 'self'. It proposes that the mask is a dynamic technology of representation, employed in a performative relationship with a cast of material-semiotic actors. This is discussed through a range of theorists, including Giles Deleuze (1968), Jean Baudrillard (1981), Efrat Tseëlon (2001), and Bruno Latour (2005).

In the second section of chapter 1 the focus shifts to camouflage, moving beyond the mask itself to examine what it does and how it operates, i.e. how it *relates*. This is discussed through contemporary camouflage theorists including Neil Leach (2006), Roy Behrens (2009) and Hannah Rose Shell (2012). The distinction I make in this research (to avoid unwanted semantic collapse between masking and camouflage) is that the mask is a medium of representation through which we relate, and camouflage is a medium of relating itself. The mask is framed as a filter, whereas camouflage is framed as a vector that cuts across filters.

The third section of chapter 1 applies a 'new materialist' framework of assemblages, as proposed by theorists Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987), Bruno Latour (2005) and

Manuel DeLanda (2006), to the development of a practical methodology for the project.

Assemblages, as with masks, challenge the essentialist thesis; that is, the pre-supposition of original identities and forms. Assemblages can describe entities of diverse components and at a variety of scales providing pathways for navigating multiplicities, bifurcations, heterogeneities and flux. This framework pays attention to the properties, capacities and tendencies of the component parts, their interactions, and any emergent properties that they may produce. I have adapted DeLanda's (2006) ontological framework to my own artistic process to compliment the mechanics of masking and camouflage which are presented as voids, forces, vectors and filters.

Chapter 2 discusses the evolution of the studio-based practice. This practice takes on a range of components (materials and methods) and gives them agency to evolve through a set of parameters or rules. This methodology, of rules-based evolution, seeks to uncover a ground for emergent properties – those properties that come into existence through the interaction of various materials and processes. Key practical strategies including masking, stencilling, repeating, layering, reflecting etc. are detailed and explored through the studio investigation as well as through key contextual artists including Andy Warhol, Leigh Bowery, Lee Yong Baek, Victor Vasarely, Ivan Navarro, Lincoln Austin et al.

Chapter 3 discusses the central works of the research project – the *Kinetika* series – developed as an outcome of the studio-based investigation detailed in Chapter 2. Emphasis is placed on the incremental and stuttering oscillations of materials and processes that produce the works, their connections to each other, and their evolutionary grouping; framed as individuals, populations, and umwelts. The ongoing potential of this methodology, whether literal or metaphorical is highlighted in the Conclusion. It is true of the artworks produced, that they bear significant resemblance to much 60's Op Art and that a strong case could be made for

that to be the primary contextual field of this research project. Indeed, much of this field of artistic endeavour is (and continues to be) an interrogation of human perception. However, the work of this project through virtue of its dissimilitude and disguise, has been arrived at through a different set of concerns as will be argued in this exegesis. In much the same way as a stick insect can look like a stick whilst being a radically different entity, this exegesis considers Op Art to be relevant in that it is visually similar and engages in similar tactics. However, the conceptual concerns of this project are not about optical effects per se but rather, an exploration of the fugitive nature of identity.

The conclusion presents a summary of the project aims, how practical investigation achieved them, and the findings, outcomes and contributions to the artistic field.

Chapter 1: A Fugitive Identity

“Every manifestation is authentic...

the mask reveals the multiplicity of our identity.”

Efrat Tseëlon, 2001, p.4

1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework of the project through an examination of the mask, camouflage and material assemblages. Critically, these areas of investigation are informed by my own artistic personas and the multiplicity of roles that I perform through them. This chapter illustrates how masking and camouflage are connected, what distinguishes them, and the range of material processes that affect their performance. This conceptual framework informs the studio-based investigation detailed in Chapter 2.

1.2 Persona and the Mask

My formative introduction to the concept of persona was through the work of Carl Gustav Jung (1969). Jung proposed that the persona is the mask or facade one presents to satisfy an event – the demands of a situation or environment – not as a representation of an inner identity but as a public mask that is worn. Critically, it is the capacity of the mask to be worn, and its presentation as an act, that distinguishes it from the concept of identity: the idea of a central and fixed self. ‘The persona is a complicated system of relations between individual consciousness and society’ writes Jung (1928, p.305), ‘fittingly enough a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and, on the other, to conceal the true nature of the individual’.

Within Jung’s writing there is a recurring motif of original or essential self; a self that wears the mask and performs the act. An alternative proposition is that the mask and the performance itself are indeed the true reality and that the concept of self and identity is not what it seems. For example, the child does not teach itself language from within, it participates in language as a thing that actually exists outside of it. My own interactions as an artist, such as with a spray can, equally do not come from within my identity but are performed as affirmative and productive actions in the world. It is an act, a performance. It is embodied and executed. It is the agency of the actor acting that produces actuality. In this way, agency can be thought of as a force, an intensive energy, with the potential and capacity to affect. In this way, the alternative model of identity suggests that it is empty, a void, from which comes agency or force, the direction and amplitude of which can be described as vectors, which meet and pass through a range of filters as they move out into the world. It is a process of inertia, force, change and inertia – the performance of the self.



Figure 2: (left) Andy Warhol, 1964, *Self-Portrait*, Silkscreen ink on acrylic paint on 4 canvases, each 100 x 80 cm;
 (right) 1986, *Self-Portrait*, Synthetic polymer and silkscreen ink on linen, 203.0 X 203.4 cm.

Andy Warhol exemplifies the role and representation of persona throughout his life and work (Fig.2). Catriona Black (2005) describes Warhol as occupying a 'land between reality and fiction, between private and public, where some people get lost' (Black, 2005, para.18). She describes Warhol as an artist who has found 'so many ways of hiding behind his own image' (ibid, para. 14) through visual tropes such as disguise, pattern, camouflage, shadows and costume, that his public persona may have become the man himself; that there is indeed, 'nothing beneath the surface' (Ibid, para.18). Warhol points relentlessly to this place of persona as being constitutive of the real human experience; mediated, exaggerated and proliferated through visual culture. We are so deeply situated within this Umwelt of mediated experience, that we collectively recall Warhol for his signature wig rather than his actual hair, blurring the distinction between the mediated and the actual. The performance of the mask is the authenticity of our experience. To suggest that there is a deeper, more authentic identity, is to suggest the performance of a different persona, the adoption of a new mask.

Efrat Tseëlon's book *Masquerade and Identities* (2001) provides extensive theorisation of the fugitive nature of identity that underpins my work in which identity can be understood as the assumption of a multiplicity of personas behind which there is no 'true' or 'essential' self (p.9). Following Erving Goffman's book *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) and its outlining of the social world as a stage (with performances and actors), Tseëlon argues that identity is a performance which is constantly evolving and never static. As she elaborates, 'the performative model obliterates the distance between the "person" and the "act". The act becomes part of the stylistic device that produces the substance: performance is identity' (2001, p.10).

Tseëlon describes how masking can be used as a 'technology of identity' as well as a 'means of interrogating it'. As she writes:

Masking is an extension of the notion of a performance. Like performance it evokes an idea of an authentic identity ('behind the mask' or 'behind the performance') only to dismantle the illusion of such identity. It is often used in the Bakhtinian carnivalesque sense of a possibility of being something other than what one is; as a dissimulation of authentic identities or a disarray of accepted roles (Tseëlon, 2001, p.9).

Tseëlon suggests that the terms mask, masquerade and disguise can be used interchangeably within a discourse, as their semantic distinctions collapse upon detailed examination – each sharing attributes of the other (Tseëlon, 2001, p.2). The language of the mask and of masking is used in an interchangeable way throughout this exegesis, with attention placed on masking as both medium and message, both material and semiotic. It is in these rich capacities of masking that I locate the artworks, the artist and the author, both within the research and the

practice. In turn, I present a multiplicity of personas that have been abbreviated and delineated in a judicial fashion for the exegesis.

The relationship between the performance and subjectivity has been elaborated by Butler (1990a, 1990b), who proposed that identity is constituted in time through what she terms ‘corporeal styles’ consisting of repeated and rehearsed sedimented public acts (bodily gestures, movements, enactments). The mask shares elements with these models: like the discursive it is ambivalent and contextual, and like the performative it signals transformation not fixity (Tseëlon, 2001, p.9).

I have a mixed cultural heritage of Australian, Indian, German, English, Portuguese and Irish origins. I experience a sense of both belonging and dissociation to terms such as white, black, brown, ‘person of colour’ and nationality. I was raised through childhood in various cities across Australia (Sydney, Darwin and Hobart) which has contributed to a dislocated sense of identity as it relates to place and community; not in a sentimental sense, but without a tangible and unitary representation of my identity. In turn, I have adopted conscious and unconscious strategies of performance (from childhood to present) where I modulate my appearance, accent, manner and style in order to belong or fit in, à la Erving Goffman’s *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Goffman’s likening of the social world to a stage is what I have considered standard – my identity has always been a performance. It has translated into my professional life as a (dis)array of roles; graphic designer, website builder, educator, academic, curator, stage builder, musician, DJ, producer, business owner-operator, street artist, muralist, set designer, festival manager, gallery co-ordinator etc. These double-lives produce a stuttering experience of shifting tempos and variegated flows. Australian artist and writer Adam Geczy describes ‘transorientalism’ as the flow of identities and identification in a globalised world, where:

Language, as with family, association, and memory, once presumed rooted in place are now forcefully floating identifiers, avatars of identity, but also subjective anchors that bind people to one another. The present moment brings home to use the extent to which identity is invented across the flows of time, place and language. Despite being invented, that does not make such identities any less authentic (Geczy, 2019, para.6)



Figure 3: Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2007, *Exhibition Catalogue*, Devonport Regional Gallery.

And so rather than a claim against authenticity, I make a claim for invention and performativity as the site of my identity. This is further exemplified within the expanded contexts of graffiti and street art, in which I have participated since 2004 (fig.3). In this field, persona has a highly evolved and cultivated role ascribed to the activities of its protagonists, most clearly demonstrated by the graffiti artist's pseudonym, moniker or handle. This

moniker is an assumed name under which an artist works – a persona. The artist will often use this name as a cypher in the form of tagging, as a signature added to an artwork. The pseudonym differs from the artist's original name and is most often adopted in order to hide their actual or legal identity. This adoptive moniker can be understood as a protective mask, enabling the wearer to avoid prosecution, as well as a theatrical mask that enables its wearer to perform in highly public environments. The persona of the graffiti artist is also a brand (or visual identity), such as with well-known protagonist, Banksy, employed as a strategy for attracting attention and generating mystique. It is common for the graffiti artist to also protect their identity with an actual mask.

Within my own expanded practice, I have adopted the moniker Jamin for activities associated with graffiti and street art. Over time, this mask has become conflated with my identity in the sense that I use the moniker in situations beyond its original context – as a name on social media, for official gallery exhibitions and as an everyday name with friends. The moniker is an alternative shortening of Benjamin (as opposed to Ben). Through these contexts, my personas perform like a series of fugitives or actors within a variety of social networks; masked and unmasked, masking and unmasking. The masks that I employ are both material and semiotic, both literal and figurative. This project seeks to extract and highlight one persona – that of the practice led researcher – whilst actively maintaining, deploying and engaging with a host of simultaneous and fugitive personas, a literal *dramatis personae* from a singular point of view.

My personas interact with a host of other actors, such as colleagues and collaborators, and perform on both social and material stages; involving even wider casts including things such as spray cans and walls. These kinds of interactions can be viewed through the lens of Bruno Latour's (2005) actor-network theory (ANT). Actor-network theory describes a range of diverse material systems (e.g. environmental, physical, thermodynamic, etc.) as well as a diverse range of cultural systems (e.g. psychological, evolutionary, social, etc). In other words, it can describe both phenomenal and noumenal factors, as well as human and non-human factors. According to Latour 'the human... cannot be grasped and saved unless that other part of itself, the share of things, is restored to it. So long as humanism is constructed through contrast with the object that has been abandoned to epistemology, neither the human nor the nonhuman can be understood' (1993 p.136). Latour goes on to discuss how the human and the non-human are not oppositional, rather they are intrinsically linked. Critically, in each case it is the performative capacity or agency that defines, or *is*, the actor. It is the variegated interactions between actors and networks, human and non-human, that give persona its

nuanced aspect; the materiality of the components combined and harnessed with the style of their performance. My varying roles perform one another (e.g. the studio artist ‘performs’ as academic writer) in a series of repetitions weaving in difference from one distinctive point to the next within networks at a variety of scales including the personal, societal and material.

Deleuze summarises this when he writes:

We have in mind the theatrical space, the emptiness of that space, and the manner in which it is filled and determined by the signs and masks through which the actor plays a role which plays other roles; we think of how repetition is woven from one distinctive point to another, including the differences within itself (Deleuze, 1980, p.10).

This conception of individuals playing roles behind which there is no ‘authentic’ identity resembles Baudrillard’s ‘Third Order’ of the precession of simulacra (1981, p.6), where he proposes that there is no longer any distinction between the represented and the real⁷; there is only the simulation, the always-already (in the sense of Derrida’s ‘hauntology’). Within this simulation, how do I locate such a fugitive as my own identity? As I examine the framework that supports my sense of identity, I encounter these simulacra; personas copied from personas, with little to no tangible sense of an actual or original identity; even the words that I would use to describe it, are copies of copies. However, what I can observe (despite the overwhelming sensorium of simulacra and simulation) is that there are patterns, configurations and assemblages. The model precedes the real. These patterns and configurations I can understand as a kind of multi-dimensional topology or phase space. I am a pattern, and I am part of a pattern, I am preceded, and I proceed. I am a multitude of points plotted on an abstract plane of multiple dimensions.

⁷ Deleuze and DeLanda use the term ‘actual’ to refer to the world of matter and energy – what Baudrillard terms the ‘real’. Deleuze would use the word ‘real’ to refer to Baudrillard’s ‘representations’.

In addition to those components of persona that I can perceive, are those that are indiscernible to me – those that are too small or too large for me to perceive at my own scale. For example, the bacteria within my body are actors that play roles within other roles, affecting my physicality and the timing of my actions⁸. Equally, within such processes as social media I am blind to all of the actors that frame and produce the experience of my online persona. These hidden actor-networks can be described as occulted; that is, beyond direct understanding, or not apparent to mere inspection, but discoverable by experimentation⁹. The term occult is uncommon in academia because of its association with magic and pseudoscience; however, it is still in use within the sciences, for example in an occult blood test, where the presence of blood in a stool sample is not apparent to inspection, but discoverable through scientific experiment. In such a way I can understand the construct of my identity through multiple personas, yet still be blind to many of the variables that actively constitute it. As Deleuze comments:

Repetition is truly that which disguises itself in constituting itself, that which constitutes itself only by disguising itself. It is not underneath the masks, but is formed from one mask to another, as though from one distinctive point to another, from one privileged instant to another, with

⁸ Seth Bordenstein and Kevin Theis in their essay 'Host Biology in Light of the Microbiome: Ten Principles of Holobionts and Hologenomes' (2015) argue for an expanded definition of 'I', of what constitutes the 'self' and 'identity'. They explain that in contemporary biological thinking 'Animals and plants are no longer viewed as autonomous entities, but rather as 'holobionts', composed of the host plus all of its symbiotic microbes' and that 'If the mind can affect the microbiome and the microbiome can affect the mind, it makes little sense to talk about who is in charge' – in other words, our co-evolutional microbes influence our 'evolution, our decision making processes, and even our physiology, anatomy, behaviour, reproduction, and fitness' (Bordenstein & Theis, 2015). These hidden forces are indiscernible, blurred to our vision, and yet they are constitutive of identity and behaviour.

⁹ Occult has its roots in the Latin *occultus*, meaning hidden, concealed, secret; however, the word has been conflated with magic, alchemy and astrology since the 1630's ("Occult", 2019). Prior to this time, the occult conveyed the concept of not being apprehensible by the mind.

and within the variations. The masks do not hide anything except other masks (Deleuze, 1980, p.17).

The fugitive nature of my identity is made apparent via these hidden or visible masks that swarm, compete and work together to produce and efface what I constitute as my 'self'. It is a dynamic and performative relationship between a cast of material-semiotic actors.

In summary, this section has outlined my understanding of persona, especially as it relates to the multiplicity of roles and performances that I inhabit, and their constitutive role in the appearance of my identity. I understand these personas to be literal and metaphorical masks. Through a materialist ontology, provided by assemblage and actor-network theory, I understand that these personas are themselves made up of components, both human and non-human, performing on a variety of stages (networks) and at varying scales; some perceived, some imperceptible. Through Deleuze and Baudrillard I have sketched a perception of the world as being composed of simulacra, a swarm of masks. In order to expand this enquiry, in the next section I will turn to contemporary understandings of camouflage as a system of dynamic relating; between belonging and dissociation.

1.3 Camouflage

For it is not that reality has been lost beneath a world of simulation.

Simulation itself has become the new realm of interaction.

Neil Leach, 2005, p.5

American artist and amateur naturalist Abbott H. Thayer (1849-1921), is often credited as the “father of camouflage” who alongside fellow artist George de Forest Brush (1855-1941) and their respective sons devoted many years observing and studying ‘concealing colouration’ in the animal and natural world, including Thayer’s theory on ‘counter-shadowing’ (known as Thayer’s Law) that proposes that animals are frequently dark on top with light under bellies as a means of concealment when viewed from a distance (Murphy et al, 2009, p175). This relationship between art and camouflage is expressed by Roy Behrens in an article for Tate, London in 2005, where he writes ‘when Thayer initially proposed the link between art and camouflage, he was not wrong. You could say they are twins. Or, in the words of Hugh B. Cott: “The one makes something unreal recognisable: the other makes something real unrecognisable”’ (Behrens, 2005). The mask shares attributes of both art and camouflage, performing a role that is both productive and effacing at once.

Another uniting feature of both camouflage and the mask is that they are concerned with the interactions of mind (psychological perceptions) and body (gesture and performance) and so can be understood as psychosomatic conditions. To be embodied on a stage is to perform an act where the very act itself is suggestive of charade, concealment or contrivance. The implication is that there is an audience or a viewer, a situation or event, and so in this project camouflage is presented as a dynamic medium of relating. It is framed as an adaptive quality or mechanism, rather than as an explicit type of printed pattern or highly specialised military

technology. In the sense that the mask has been introduced in the previous section as a medium through which we relate, camouflage is introduced as the strategy and mechanics of relating itself. Camouflage can describe the way the mask is placed and how it turns, how it becomes focused or blurred, and how it blends in or stands out from its environment or its subject. The mask is framed as a filter, and camouflage as a vector, an interaction, an abstract machine that cuts and draws edges, opening one thing onto another, dynamically creating and dissolving the perceptual boundaries of assemblages. Camouflage is a machine of belonging and dissociation, of the seen and the unseen.

Camouflage is a historically recent term, coined in 1914 by the French general and artist Lucien Victor Guirrand de Scovela (Shell, 2012 p.14) and adapted into the English lexicon soon after its introduction as a military strategy in World War I. However, camouflage as an effective strategy has always existed in the noumenal world and within human operations. The Online Etymology Dictionary (2016) says that the word camouflage originates from the French *Camoufler*, to disguise, preceded by the Italian *camufarre* (and French *Camouflet*) meaning 'smoke blown in one's face' ("Camouflage", 2016). Aristotle mentions the adaptive colour changing nature of the octopus (Aristotle, 350 BC) and Darwin again refers to it in his theory of natural selection from 1859 (Darwin, 1859). Hannah Rose Shell in her book *Hide and Seek* (2012) describes how the current term itself arose specifically from military technological advances and developing symbiotic relationships with counter technologies, especially those associated with optics such as the camera, the periscope and aerial reconnaissance (Shell, 2012 pp.77-127) as a 'body of interwoven scientific theories and artisanal practices' (ibid, p. 15). Shell goes on to suggest that 'camouflage unfolds in time and space, across disciplinary and discursive boundaries, as an adaptive logic of escape from photographic representation' (ibid., p.19). What we can draw from these understandings of camouflage is that it is highly concerned with perception and technologies of perception, and that it is spatialising; it is an

adaptive quality that creates perceptual spaces through its activities and gestures, rather than through its thingness. In other words, things are constantly concealing and revealing themselves in a broad spectrum of spaces (physical, social, political, chemical etc.) in relation to intention, desire, happenstance, artifice, survival etc. In this way, camouflage reveals itself to occupy the territory between belonging and dissociation as a strategic dynamic or modality of interaction.

An important aspect of camouflage is its direct relationship to *Gestalt*¹⁰ perception, which suggests that an organism has a particularly patterned way of seeing. An organism's gestalt perception is dependent on its particular sensory capacities. The defining principles of human gestalt perception as described in the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychological Terms* (1994) are the *figure-ground relationship*, which is the tendency for us to divide our view of the world into foreground (focus and belonging) versus background (defocus and dissociation); *proximity*, which is our tendency to group together things that are close to one another; *similarity*, our tendency to group together things that are similar; *continuity*, which is our tendency to see continuous and flowing lines before we see jagged and broken lines; *closure*, our tendency to organise incomplete shapes into whole or complete shapes; and, *connectedness*, which is our tendency to perceive wholes before their constituent parts (Banerjee, 1994, pp. 107-109).

¹⁰ *Gestalt* (from the German; literally, form or pattern) perception comes from the German school of *Gestalt* psychology, founded by Max Wertheimer (1880-1943) and its chief spokespersons Kurt Koffka and Wolfgang Kohler. *Gestalt* psychology discusses the perception of organised wholes, specifically as 'the visual pattern as a whole, which is not the aggregate of its parts' (Banerjee, 1994).



Figure 4: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Figure Becoming Ground*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

I understand my gestalt perceptions to be a part of the machine of camouflage, noumenal and phenomenal. Being both a perceptual and psychological term, gestalt can apply to visual situations (such as our tendency to perceive a painting as an image rather than as a collection of strokes and marks such as in fig.4), as well as to psychological situations (such as our tendency to perceive a person as a seamless identity rather than as a diverse host of personas, gestures and habits).

At the performative level, a complex system becomes its most foregrounded elements; it has a front face, and the rest of it (in partiality) is camouflaged to our senses. There is too much to take in. When gestalt fails, the entire seeming whole collapses into a bunch of constituent

parts. The assemblage remains in place, though no longer perceived as meaningful. These gestalt perceptions, governing the visible, the apparent, the hidden-visible and the unapparent (Fig.5) inform my understanding of camouflage as a situation in which some things are hidden but not in an active state of hiding, like a background noise. As Behrens comments:

An object's visibility is primarily dependent on the extent to which it stands apart from a setting or surrounding. Known as a figure-ground relationship, it underscores the notion that we only experience a "thing" in relation to other components (Behrens, 2015, p.1).

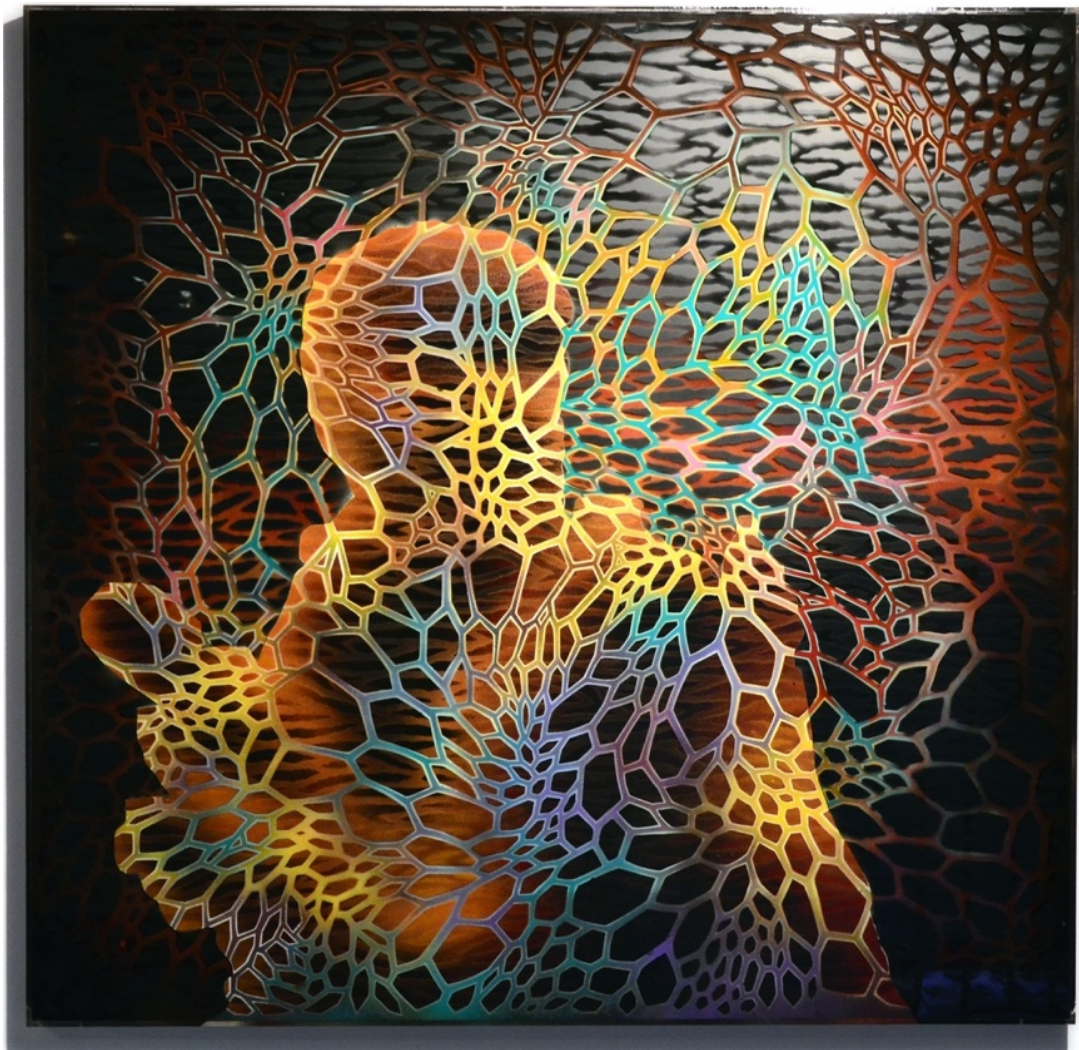


Figure 5: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Concealing Reveals Something*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

In his book *Camouflage* (2006), British architect, curator and writer, Neil Leach, describes the role of camouflage as key to human desires for connectedness and belonging, of conforming and blending in with our surroundings. 'Camouflage does not entail the cloaking of the self so much as the relating of the self to the world through the medium of representation,' says Leach. 'The role of camouflage is not to disguise, but to offer a medium through which to relate to the other' (Leach, 2006, p.240). He proposes that this desire to assimilate can be mediated through design – through art, architecture, fashion etc. The human desire to assimilate (and conversely dissociate) is a network of processes that extend from linguistic modulation through to socio-economic appearances and the codifications of sub-cultures through dress codes, activities and gestures. 'Human beings are to be recognised here as mutant creatures, who are constantly evolving, and forever devising new strategies for dealing with their ever-changing material conditions' (Leach, 2005). This interpretation of camouflage situates it as a network of processes that are interwoven with the assemblage of the mask and persona as outlined in Chapter 1.1. As Leach suggests:

Camouflage can therefore be read as an interface with the world. It operates as a masquerade that re-presents the self, just as self representation through make-up, dress, hair style etc., is a form of self representation. But this need not be a temporary condition. The surface masquerade may have a lasting impact on questions of identity. Far from denying any true sense of self beneath, it may actually contribute to a sense of self. Camouflage should therefore be seen as a mechanism for constituting human identity through the medium of representation (Leach, 2005, p.7).

To summarise, in this section I have framed camouflage as a network of processes, a system of dynamic relating between things, an adaptive mechanism and an abstract machine that cuts and draws edges, opening one thing onto another. Camouflage is understood as performative and spatialising; it inhabits and creates spaces through its activities and gestures, rather than through its thingness. Leach describes camouflage as a 'medium through which to relate to the other' (2006, p.240) and Shell describes it as unfolding in 'time and space, across disciplinary and discursive boundaries, as an adaptive logic of escape from... representation' (2012, p.19). Whilst Leach focuses on the social and Shell on the photographic, I have focused on the psychosomatic experience of camouflage; the psychological gestalt perception of the individual as a critical function that accounts for the hidden-visible, the apparent, and the invisible (alongside the actual, the real and the virtual). These understandings of camouflage as a medium of relating have been employed as a studio-based strategy (Chapter 2.3.7) that describes a shift away from representation towards an abstraction that is performative and spatialising through its activities and gestures, and which seeks to engage the gestalt perceptions of the viewer through an active and dynamic system of relating.

In the next section I will return with greater detail to a discussion of assemblages in order to bring clarity and understanding to the practical strategies that follow in Chapter 2. As previously discussed, the mask can be understood as an assemblage, and camouflage relies upon the relating between assemblages to perform its function.

1.4 Assemblages

Assemblages, as put forward by Giles Deleuze & Felix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) and further expanded upon by the extensive work of Manuel DeLanda, have been employed within this research as a tool for deconstructing, understanding and navigating entities (such as the mask) in complex relationships both within systems (such as camouflage) and as systems themselves (such as identity). DeLanda in *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (2006 pp. 10-25) offers a refined definition of assemblages that posits that entities on all scales are best analysed through their components, with each component itself an assemblage that may have different temporal and spatial scales. The components of an assemblage are heterogeneous and include both material and semiotic expressions, each with individual characteristics and dynamics, which DeLanda characterises along two axes, the x being material-expressive axis and the y a territorialising-deterritorialising axis (ibid., p.12). Components are also defined by their exteriority, i.e. by their ability to be unplugged, exchanged or replaced. Their role within a larger assemblage does not define them (as with interiority) (ibid., p.11). A third axis defines processes of coding and decoding by specialised expressive media such as genetics or linguistics (ibid., p.13) – or in the case of artworks, forms, colours, semiotics etc. Assemblages stand as distinct from Hegelian ‘totalities’ (ibid, p.10), in that the component parts are not fixed, and there is no essential form towards which the assemblage is heading, nor from which it came. In turn, the interactions among the components of an assemblage may be indeterminate because of complex effects and causal mechanisms making the behaviour of the assemblage difficult or impossible to calculate (ibid., p.12).

DeLanda’s theory of assemblages places the operations of actual individual entities in close proximity to Bruno Latour’s account of actor-network theory, where the smallest (indivisible)

components of an assemblage are the actors and larger assemblages are the networks in which the actors perform; critically, it is this performative capacity or agency that defines an actor. In turn, networks can be actors themselves in larger networks (Latour, 1996, p.5).



Figure 6: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika II: B*, MDF, paper, LED light source, 270 x 360cm

Assemblages are emergent entities that can combine with other assemblages to form even larger assemblages that are also emergent; a process of emergence, the becoming of entities through the interaction of assemblages (DeLanda, 2006, pp.18-19)¹¹. For example, in my own art making context the deployment of diverse and heterogeneous components, such as MDF panels, paper and lights (as in fig.6) results in a larger assemblage that does not exist in any concrete or specific way without those smaller components (assemblages in their own right) that compose them. The new assemblage emerges – becoming an actual and specific entity –

¹¹ DeLanda uses the example of a group of farmer's markets (emergent from the activities of specific farmers and their farms) that can combine with a distribution market to form a larger assemblage such as that of the supermarket, which is an entity that is emergent from the smaller entities and does not exist in any concrete or essential way without them.

through its components. Emergence then is a spatio-temporal occurrence that is happening, an abstract event¹² that is productive and creative. Deleuze and Guattari poetically describe this:

The abstract machine begins to unfold, to stand to full height, producing an illusion exceeding all strata, even though the machine itself still belongs to a determinate stratum. This is, obviously, the illusion constitutive of man (who does man think he is?). This illusion derives from the overcoding immanent to language itself. But what is not illusory are the new distributions between content and expression: techno-logical content characterized by the hand-tool relation and, at a deeper level, tied to a social Machine and formations of power; symbolic expression characterized by face-language relations and, at a deeper level, tied to a semiotic Machine and regimes of signs (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.63).

In this way an assemblage of masks emerges as an event, a produced illusion exceeding its own strata, an actor in the network of culture and society – productive and creative. The mask is a physical object and a technology that characterises face-language interactions, tied to a regime of signs. The interactions of the mask can be characterised as camouflaging – a relating between entities of belonging and dissociation. Within the practical investigation, the concept of the assemblage is made transparent via the often-visible interactions of material and expressive components; such as mediums, materials, activities, gestures and performances. As new materials and expressive components become available and integrated into the system of the artwork (e.g. the spray can or laser cutting machinery such as in fig.7) bifurcations occur

¹² This 'event' is nuanced in that it describes 'the forces in their various relationships to a proposition or phenomenon, and the genetic (expressive) relationship that determines these forces' (Hart, 1993, p. 31).

– expanded systems and combinations of components that surface to form new assemblages with emergent properties of their own – i.e. they produce an illusion that exceeds their own strata. As with *Gestalt*, the newly foregrounded elements jump forward.



Figure 7: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika II* in production at the UTAS School of Architecture, Launceston

Architect Louis Kahn (as cited in Martínez, 2018) would tell his students ‘If you are ever stuck for inspiration, ask your materials for advice’. The indeterminacy of the proposition suggests a myriad of outcomes beyond the obvious. It is this less deterministic approach which Manuel De Landa (1999, p.10) describes as enabling a ‘process which is even more intimately connected with the emergence of novelty keeping the world from closing: the spontaneous formation of “machinic assemblages” of diverse elements’. Within the practical investigation, a deliberate experimentation with diverse materials and processes is employed, a material drift on the lookout for bifurcations, emergent properties and ‘machinic assemblages’. Painting substrates are interchanged from canvas to plywood, to aluminium, to steel, to

acrylic sheet, to brick etc. The substrate itself is disrupted and reconfigured through processes such as shaping, cutting, bending, folding and fabricating. A variety of painting techniques are employed, e.g. brush strokes, diffuse sprays, hard-edged sprays with stencils or through can control, drips, pours, splatters etc. The modality of painting is re-coded through the deployment of different tools such as knife, jigsaw, drill, sander and CNC Router. Other materials have also found their way into my studio processes, such as found objects, mylar and electrical components. It is in pursuit of destabilising the apparent essence of things, that a playful re-configuring of materials, taken out of their original context, opens onto new practical territories and endless potentialities. Each process, experiment and iteration produces a different interactivity, a new distribution of content and expression.

These studio aims of indeterminacy and heterogeneous assemblage are primarily concerned with processes and events – they incorporate things that are in a state of flux, within a nexus of interactions. In the words of theoretical physicist Carlo Rovelli in his book *The Order of Time* ‘Fluctuation does not mean that what happens is *never* determined. It means that it is determined only at certain moments, and in an unpredictable way. Indeterminacy is resolved when a quantity interacts with something else.’ (Rovelli, 2017, p.78-79). In other words, a thing takes on its determinacy or identification only through a specific interaction with another thing. The indeterminacy of the actor’s persona resolves through an interaction with a mask, with a stage prop, with another actor etc. The quality of a paint stroke resolves through a specific interaction of hand, tool, paint and surface. It is the resolving of determinacy to which I liken Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘immanent plane’ of becoming (Deleuze, 1987, p.78); that is, determinacy resolves from within the act – *is* the act – not something separate, transcendent or pre-determined.

In this section I have outlined a non-essentialist approach to things and events (specifically materials and processes) via the language of assemblages as put forth by Deleuze, Guattari, DeLanda and Latour. Assemblage theory looks first to the component parts available to a system, and to the processes and strategies that enable those components to relate or interact, making it highly suitable for a discussion of the key strategies that are concerned with indeterminacy, bifurcation and emergence. Because assemblages are rhizomatic – open ended, topological and of diverse connections – rather than hierarchical, this methodology has allowed the practical investigation (detailed in Chapter 2) to move through playful and experimental configurations of heterogeneous components, processes and strategies. What distinguishes this research is the situating of this knowledge within the practice, as praxis. This occurs both within and outside of the confines of the studio – opening up new material-semiotic distributions and territories in which to examine the fugitive nature of identity. On a practical level, studio-based actors such as spray cans, aluminium composite panels and power tools perform in the larger networks and stages of the artist and artworks themselves, encoding their presence and performance within the larger assemblages as embodied gestures and material traces. These encoded performances are detailed within the practical strategies outlined in Chapter 2.2.

1.5 Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the key theoretical framework for the practical investigation. As I have argued, my identity is a fugitive within this research; a persona, a mask, an actor. I perform an array of roles within and beyond the context of this research; of these roles, two are located here: the author and the studio-based artist. My aim is to represent my identity, in the fashion of self-portraiture, however I am foiled by the multiplicity of personas that I inhabit and enact. Image and representation collapse into a precession of simulacra; an ambiguous contemporary experience of signs, masks, copies and simulations. I psychologically experience gestalt perceptions that locate my experience as a seeming whole, and yet I am aware that my perception is partial, I am blind to many parts. I have a body and sense my environment, and yet I am aware that my senses produce an *umwelt*, a shell around my experience, and that there are many other environments that exist, both human and non-human. What is blurred to me and what is sharp makes up the abstract machines of camouflage, cutting and drawing their way across the territories of my belonging and dissociation. I am an event within a topology of events. I am a vector of my own invention.

In the following chapters I discuss how these ideas have underpinned the evolution of my studio-based investigation.

Chapter 2: A Swarm of Masks

*“Deleuze claims that matter is in continuous variation,
so that we should not think in terms of forms as moulds,
but rather in terms of modulations that produce singularities.”*

Adrian Parr (2010, p.158).

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the experimental component of this research, developed through the theoretical concerns outlined in Chapter 1; the intersections of the mask, camouflage and assemblage in relation to identity and the self. The studio investigation spans a significant period of time, from 2013 to 2019, and is presented here as a series of practical strategies that strive to maintain a chronological flow whilst discursively touching on future and past elements as well as contextual artists and their works. Artists discussed include Andy Warhol, Leigh Bowery, David Cross, Dan Graham, Ivan Navarro, Victor Vasarely, Lee Yong Baek and Lincoln Austin.

The practical research presented in this chapter is more extensive than the works presented in the final exhibition, detailed in Chapter 3. I regard the various artworks, experiments and activities presented here as nodes - or spheres - of affect, in which each informs and influences the next. Rather than an independent array of disparate undertakings, each area performs like a scratch pad or sketch book for the next activity (or gesture). It is the broadness

and diversity of the overall undertaking that allows the presence and process of the assemblage to reveal itself.

The main strategies employed in my work are: stencilling; masking; surface; layering; repeating; reflecting; camouflage and spatialising.

2.2 Practical Strategies

2.2.1 Stencilling

Stencilling has been a strategy, method and metaphor within my practice for more than fifteen years. I have extended the framework of stencilling into all aspects of my process; from design work, to the cut-backs¹³ of freehand spray painting, to etching paint off a surface with a power tool, through to the assembling of machine cut layers. A stencil is a strategic filter that selectively masks something, such as a surface, from something else, such as paint. A stencil can be understood as performative; in other words, it performs its function through being in a state of masking or being applied. It is as much an event as it is a thing – a framing device, a lens, and a gateway. A stencil is territorialising; its open and closed sections define the edges of territories through which sight, light and matter can pass through – or not – actively shaping form and content through its opening onto a space. A stencil is defined by its void; it is the empty parts of a stencil that make it useful.



Figure 8: Icy & Sot, 2017, *Untitled works*

¹³ A 'cut-back' is a graffiti painting technique, where a hard edge or point is achieved by cutting back over a previously painted line of one colour, with another line in the colour of the background paint. It is a technique employed to overcome the limits of the spray paint nozzle, that has a defined circular shape and definitive minimum width. In such a way, the technique becomes a technical filter.

The stencil is as much a strategic way of thinking, as it is a practical strategy or physical filter. Iranian duo Icy and Sot, known for their materially diverse and politically charged approaches to street art and graffiti, often employ the stencil as the artwork itself such as in Fig. 8 where the shapes of human figures are cut from their material field, opening onto new territories – framed and framing. These works rely on gestalt perceptions, a visual entanglement between what constitutes figure, what constitutes ground, what constitutes object, and what constitutes stencil. As a way of thinking, the stencil allows me to recognise the way in which one thing is cut from another, such as the human from the milieu, as well as the way in which one thing opens onto another, such as a doorway onto a room.



Figure 9: Abbott Thayer, 1909, stencils illustrating the nature of 'concealing colouration'

American artist and amateur naturalist Abbott H. Thayer (1849-1921), used the stencil prolifically in his work (fig.9), as a tool for seeing and as a means of visual scepticism – 'a habit of distrusting the evidence provided by glances and first optical impression alone' (Shell, 2012, p. 46). Thayer approached his mistrust of seeing, those inherent gestalt perceptions, by employing stencils as a means of discovering through experimentation that which had become disguised to the eye. To quote Shell once more 'to see most clearly what is really there, one has to look at it (whatever it may be) through a stencil' (ibid, p.46). This was achieved, for

example, by cutting the stencil of a shape, such as a particular bird, and employing that stencil as a lens through which to view the actual camouflaged bird in its environment, thus separating the figure from the ground, and revealing the true characteristics of the bird such as its colouration, pattern and form. However, the stencil has its limits, physically and mentally, as it demands a privileged perspective, or as Shell suggests is ‘always in relation to a given user at a given point in a field of space and time.’ (ibid, p.50).



Figure 10: Stencils from *One Thing Begets Another* series 2013

Within this practical investigation, my aim was to shift from a representational mode towards an abstraction of identity through assemblage and camouflage. This was initially investigated through the production of several abstracted and patterned stencil matrices in 2013 (fig.10) that were employed in repetition and reconfiguration across a number of individual works (fig.11). This move signified a step along the path of abstraction – the camouflaging of representation – whilst ultimately still very much concerned with representation, i.e. the face

hidden within the image is clearly a representation. In taking these steps away from overt representation towards a logic of self-organisation and pattern generation, the materiality of the stencil began to take on new capacities and potentials. Rather than performing a one-off or singular usage the stencil began to take on repeated and variegated usages within the process, performing as an actor on a stage with no clear script or overly deterministic role.



Figure 11: *Solutions Becoming Problems*, 2013, Benjamin Kluss, spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100cm (detail)

These stencils employ a hand cut process that mimics a self-organising system, where each cut that is made informs the next; a repeated gesture, an unfolding pattern, a game of contingency. The rules that inform the system are that the length and position of a given line inform the length and position of the following line; a contingent factor, building towards cell-like forms that visually undulate in a manner reminiscent of a topological



Figure 12: Stencil from *One Thing Begets Another* series, 2013

map (fig.10). Another stencil (fig.12) appears like a field of vectors and was inspired by the formations seen on a moth's wing – a self-organising pattern that has arisen in the organism of the moth through evolutionary reaction / diffusion processes, and via extensive (e.g. predators) and intensive (e.g. DNA) pressures within the moth's umwelt. This simple approach to the cutting of stencils follows a logic of repetition and difference. Within this process there is no going back, no rubbing out, no altering of the preceding line that has been cut through the paper; the process leaves the traces of its performance encoded within its materiality.



Figure 13: Layering of actual stencils in the studio, 2015

An emergent potential of the stencil revealed itself in the experimentations that followed on from the 2013 body of work. Beyond spray painting the stencils on a variety of surfaces, I began to test them against each other, as an assemblage in their own right (fig.13 & 14) through arranging, configuring, overlaying, moving, adding and subtracting the material layers. A new property, capacity and tendency emerged. It was observed that:

- 1) Two or more pattern stencils interacting have the tendency to produce a third, emergent pattern which is not easily predicted through observing of either stencil on its own.
- 2) Two or more stencils interacting through kinetic manipulation display the property of granular and flickering visual effects.
- 3) When one stencil is placed above another, it displays the capacity to parallax – where the foreground stencil appears to move faster than the background stencil.

These observations of the stencil inform the studio experiments and strategies that follow and find new expression in the final artworks as detailed in Chapter 3.

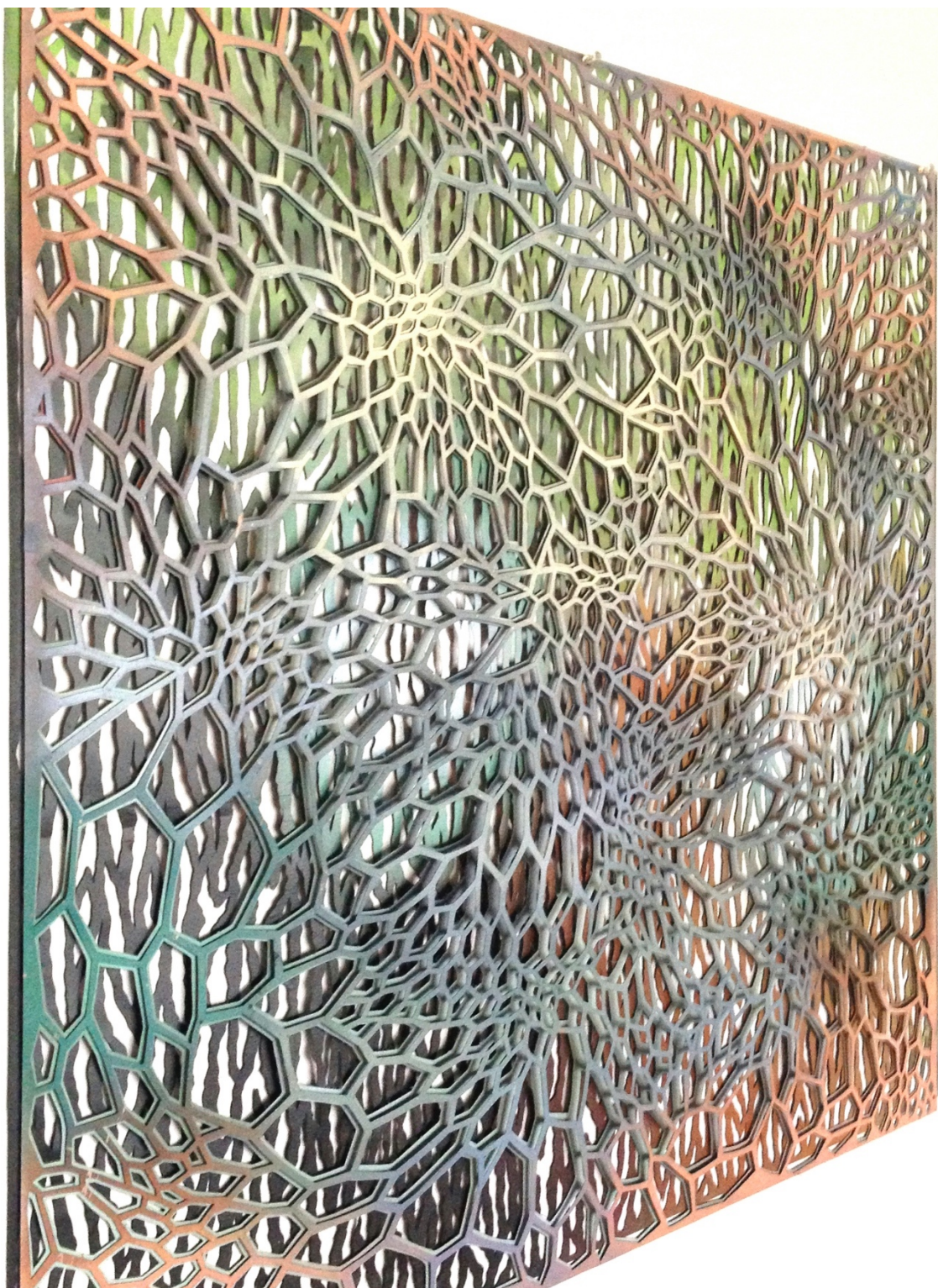


Figure 14: Used stencils from *One Thing Begets Another* Series, exhibited on wall, Plimsoll Gallery 2014.

2.2.2 Masking

Within the practical investigation, the mask is the primary actor within the assemblage. The mask, or persona, is the actor within the assemblage that dictates those semiotic and idiosyncratic concerns such as style, kind, type, fashion, grouping or distinctiveness. The mask performs as a selector and determinant, expressing properties like similarity, likeness, difference and dissimilarity. Because the mask is itself a component in other assemblages, such as theatre, masquerade, and everyday roles within social complexity, it is affected by all of the various models that have preceded it. My mask, and the mask of the investigation in particular, is the primary actor that drives the project. Yet this same mask has been instantiated by every model of the mask that has preceded it, materially and semiotically. It is a copy producing copies; a simulacrum.



Figure 15: Benjamin Kluss, 2014, *Masks*, spray paint on jig sawed plywood, approx. 120 x 90cm each work.

In an adaption of the words of Marshall McLuhan (1967, p.10), the masking is the message. In the same manner that the media environment precedes the resulting consciousness of the society (ibid., 1967, p.157), the mask precedes the performance – the model precedes the real. The mask is a filter; it guides and shapes the vector of a performance, in the same way that a stencil is a filter that shapes the vector of paint. As a practical strategy, masking is the

literal medium as well as the metaphor I employ for my fugitive identity, expressed through stencilling, layering, concealing, and revealing. The stencil, as a literal mask, is placed over a surface to filter forces (such as paint or light) and produce positive and negative territories; territories opening onto each other through exposure, concealment, repetition, pattern, etc. Masking and unmasking are enablers of strategies such as orientation, disorientation, re-orientation, disguise, distortion, destabilisation, presentation, representation, dissimulation and masquerade.



Figure 16: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Self Mediating Simulacrum*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm.

As it relates to persona and identity, strategies of masking and unmasking can be understood as an exploration of the ‘potentially mutable, transitory, and hybridised’ (Patrick, 2017 p.227) nature of self and other. This strategy also employs the space of the slippage of the mask as one of uncertain and indeterminant qualities. Strategies of masking and unmasking draw attention to the sharpening and blurring of belonging and dissociation, and the potential

boundaries of identification itself. As it relates to painting and process, strategies of masking and unmasking can be understood as covering, shielding, protecting and orchestrating surfaces to receive or resist new information.



Figure 17: David Cross, 2018, *Trio (Red, Yellow and Blue)* is a mobile public artwork work for three performers.

Martin Patrick, in a discussion of the work of Australian artist David Cross and New Zealand artists Catherine Bignell and Shannon Te Ao, writes that:

...a notion of selfhood in flux – incorporating simultaneously immaterial, not readily quantifiable aspects, and an extravagant, often vivid rendering of surfaces – is what emerges most distinctly... These artists' performative acts that initially appear to drastically distort, disguise, and mask everyday appearances can be seen more subtly to serve as conduits toward revised understandings of our humanness/animality and to heighten awareness of the deep structures that connect states of beings, which could be read through various comparative lenses (Patrick, 2017 p.229).

These comparative lenses, a relational aesthetic, draw attention to the Umwelt of the viewer and 'the masked, the disguised or the costumed which turns out to be the truth of the

uncovered.’ (Deleuze, 1980, p.24) The simultaneity of the viewers experiences in David Cross’s work *Trio (Red, Yellow, Blue)* (2018, fig.17) suggests a capacity for the self to shift location, to dislocate and to hybridise. The perceptual continuity of space and time may be the cornerstone of how we apprehend identity (Rovelli, 2018, p.151), which the mask demonstrates clearly; for when the mask slips, the ‘who’ reveals itself to be mutable, multiple and simultaneous.



Figure 18: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Self Mediating Other*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 150 x 150cm

Self Mediating Other (2013, fig.18) is the only literal self-portrait made within this project, composed through an assemblage of the various stencils detailed in the previous section. The



Figure 19: Digital inversion of Fig.18

stencils have been layered and sprayed on the front and back of a clear acrylic sheet. An image of my own face has been sprayed employing the concept of cryptic camouflage (the use of colouration and pattern to blend figure with ground) in a freehand manner through the stencil pattern, inverted in tone, creating a reverse of the image. The work was arranged with a computer tablet that

allows it to be simultaneously viewed with the naked eye as well as tonally inverted through the device¹⁴. When viewed through the device, a ghostly image of my own face appears (fig.19) – a gestalt moment – a visual metamorphosis from pattern and noise to sign and signified. A ghost in the machine.

This work investigates the fugitive nature of identity within an umwelt that is partially human and partially technological – a technosphere. The material-semiotic components of the work construct and encode the expanded territory of the painting; when viewed through the technology one does not look at the painting itself, and when looking at the object of the painting, one does not perceive the gestalt figure, or mask, which requires the technology to decode it. The one becomes indiscernible from the other at each viewing axis. The painting itself becomes a fugitive between the eye and the technology – between object representing, and object represented. *Self Mediating Other* (2013) draws attention to partial perspectives and the potential for simultaneity in the developing work.

¹⁴ The work was exhibited at the Moonah Arts Centre in 2015 for *Stand Back* curated by Josie Hurst.



Figure 20: Leigh Bowery, 1988, *2 Way Mirror Performance*, Gallery D'Offay, London.

These partial perspectives through which we occupy our identity is exemplified in the work of Australian artist Leigh Bowery (1961-1995). In his work *2 Way Mirror Performance* (1988, fig.20), Bowery performed behind a two-way mirror at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery in London for one week. During this period, the public could watch from the street outside the gallery, as physical and neurological voyeurs to Bowery's chameleonic spectacle of continual costume changes, gestures and poses which were reflected back upon him in the one-way mirror, an endless confrontation with an elusive opponent, each flaw exaggerated, each moment distended and excruciating. This confrontation pervaded Bowery's life as an artist, as he procured and designed the most outlandish and garish costumes to go with equally cultivated gesture in what amounted to both extreme self-expression and self-denial at once. He extended this art making into his life at large, spending much of his time in costume. Bowery's work holds up a mirror to self and society at once, a mirror that challenges mass conformity and the culture of identity. His work questions identity from within the mask and dislocates the audience perspective into a tension between the observed and the observer, drawing attention to the spectacle of the performance of identity itself; both his own, and that of the observer.



Figure 21: Leigh Bowery, 1988, *2 Way Mirror Performance*, Gallery D'Offay, London.

Within this work the mask is twofold. There is the literal mask of the costume and gesture, both disguise and theatre at once, and there is the mask of the two-way mirror that conceals the external reality from Bowery whilst revealing himself to himself – and in turn revealing his somewhat naked self, in the Jungian sense, to the audience. In a fashion, we have a mask within a mask, a precursor to the technological mask of augmented reality devices and social media networks. It is a raw and startling encounter of the space behind the mask, each iteration of costume change revealing the slippage of the mask and the mutability of Bowery's identity.

In psychology, the term 'depersonalisation' or 'dissociation' refers to the phenomenon of observing oneself from outside of one's body or of the external world becoming less real, or both (Mayo, 2014). It is a common, if fleeting, experience for many – and is only considered a disorder when chronic. Bowery's performances hint at a personal struggle with this condition – or else suggest a deliberate critique of the broader cultural obsession with identity and its

elaborate construction through persona and conformity. To conform is to put on the mask of the collective will, to adopt the persona of assimilation. Bowery, through his deliberate adoption of outlandish personas and masks, reveals to us the equally absurd mask of the everyday.

2.2.3 Surface

Within the practical investigation, surface has been explored through its capacity as an actor within an assemblage. Surface performs like a skin in painting, where it expresses properties like smoothness, liquidity, and plasticity. The same actor performs like a filter and a net when stencilling, where it expresses properties like porosity, extrusion, and striation. The closer that I observe a surface, the more porous that surface appears. What appears smooth and flat from a distance, often becomes undulating and uneven up close. In a philosophical sense, it can be argued that surface is the *tension* point between an object and its environment. The sphere of a liquid bubble attains this form precisely due to this surface tension – the point of least resistance between the air and the liquid surface of the bubble. In this way, surfaces perform as a site of tension.



Figure 22: Detail of surface and stencil from studio experiments 2013.

Masking is closely related to surface and surface tension, in the sense of a second skin. The strategy of this research is to investigate the mask (persona) as a site of tension and uncertainty, exploring the slippages that occur at this threshold of the interactivity between

systems; where one assemblage opens onto another. The site of this tension is the surface itself, which can be understood as the location of where a mask is worn or applied as well as the surface of the mask itself. In other words, surface is a thing in and of itself as well as a location where other things happen. When Andy Warhol in 1967 asks us to 'look at the surface' of his paintings, films and self, he states 'there I am. There's nothing behind it' (Black, 2005, para.1).



Figure 23: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Misrepresentation Fielding Questions*, spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

In the initial experiments from 2013, plexiglass (clear acrylic sheet) is investigated for its transparent properties and its capacity to be painted from the front or from the back (fig.23).

Whilst I have used plexiglass in studio works prior to this project, the use of plexiglass here

represents a literal bifurcation in my painting practice, where the front and back face are painted in such a way as to simultaneously make up the picture plane (fig.24). This introduced a new visual and material tension into the work; an uncertainty of pictorial and actual depth. Due to gestalt perceptions of proximity, the bifurcated layers tended to visually homogenise into one surface. It is only through careful inspection that the surface is revealed to be painted from both sides.



Figure 24: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Misrepresentation Fielding Questions* (detail)

This material bifurcation of surface into distinct layers becomes a critical component in the final works (detailed in Chapter 3), although the clear acrylic sheet is swapped in favour of machine cut aluminium panels, which perform as the same actors. These proto-lenticular acrylic panels become virtualised components within the later assemblage of the *Kinetika* series.

2.2.4 Layering

A layer is like another surface – a deeper surface – though only the front layer is referred to as the ‘surface’. A mask is a surface in the sense that it is the front layer of the persona, and it is a layer in the sense that it is between the self and other. To layer is to cover over, to coat. A layer is a strata, and is stratified. A layer can float to the top as a lighter substance or sink to the bottom like sediment. A layer can be transparent or opaque, visible or invisible (fig.25).



Figure 25: Stencil layers in process within the studio, 2013

Within the practical investigation, layering is employed as a tool for simulating visual depth within painted and assembled artworks. Layering adds dimensionality in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari’s framing of *multi-dimensional* or topological space – a space of potentially infinite dimensions, with each dimension measured by its degrees of freedom (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p.41). In this sense, the dimensionality of layering is infinite – it continues *ad infinitum* – each layer measured and defined by its intensive properties and capacities, as well as by its extensive interactions with other layers and their potential combinations and configurations. The ordering of things affects their behaviour. This is true of the ordering of stencils when spraying a painting, as well as the ordering of layers in photoshop when

constructing a digital image. Despite the mutable and interchangeable properties of any one layer, each configuration of layers is a particular chain of effects that produces different results and appearances when combined or positioned together.



Figure 26: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Osama Becoming Ocean*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

In this work, *Osama Becoming Ocean* (2013, fig.26), a complex repetition has taken place within the spraying of the stencils, the painting and the particular chain of layering. There are a series of thin, light blue drip lines on the front face of the clear acrylic sheet. Everything else has been painted on the reverse side of the sheet, which means that when viewed from the front, the layers that appear to be ordered one way, are in fact ordered oppositely. The 'background' of the work was the final thing painted, or rather, poured all over it. This

painting, with its abstract process, could have been ordered differently and therefore displayed a different expressivity – in a way, its persona is caught up with the order of its layers. My approach to layering and surface treatment within my practice has been highly influenced by three key Tasmanian artists, Neil Haddon, Meg Keating and Paul Zika.



Figure 27: Neil Haddon, 2010, *Three Dogs*, enamel paint on aluminium panel, 160 cm x 150 cm

The work of Haddon, whose hard-edged figurative abstraction employs an industrial approach to surface finish alongside disorienting and disruptive arrangements within the picture plane has informed my use of surface and the quality of its finish. His works employ recurring motifs that entertain the idea of surface as memory and trace, reconfigured within dissembling perspectives that introduce a multi-dimensionality to the gestalt perceptions embedded in his work.

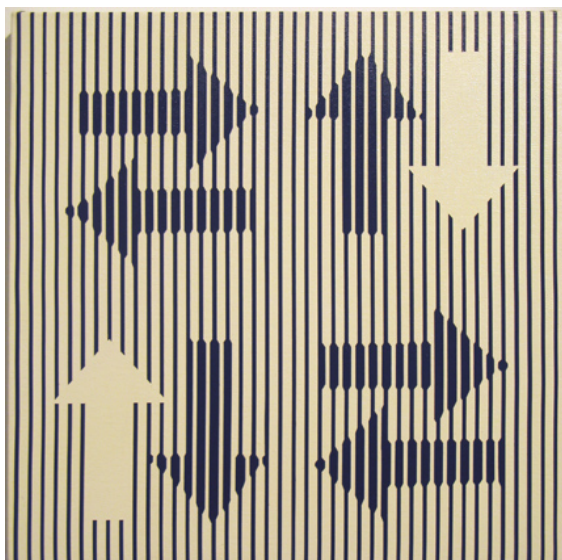


Figure 28: Meg Keating, 2009, *Exit Here*, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 40 cm

My use of hard-edged layering within camouflage and illusion based strategies is informed by the works of Keating, whose engagement with the flat/deep space of the screen within painterly works, as well as her engagement with the act of cutting as an artistic process, have played a key role in my own framing of depth and continued interest in the stencil as a strategic device.

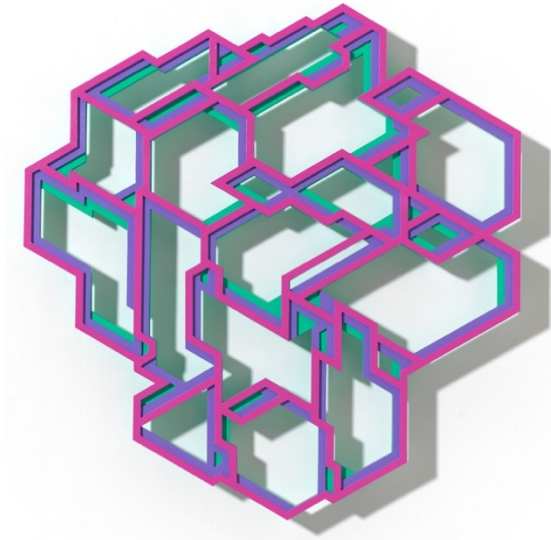


Figure 29: Paul Zika, 2015-16, *Terme 17*, acrylic on wood, 84 x 80 x 5.5cm

Zika's abstract geometric assemblages have also been influential. His works, which are influenced by culturally diverse architecture and the use of pattern, open up the picture plane into a stencil-like and object-based flat deep space that hybridises painterly and sculptural approaches. Between these three artists my approach to layering can be understood as seeking to explore flat deep space through the superimposition of surfaces.



Figure 30: Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Mural production for UTAS UniBar* (detail) Spray Paint on Wall, 60m²

Layering is also employed within my practice to create pictorial illusions of depth, such as with this outdoor mural at the University of Tasmania's Uni Bar in 2019 (fig.30) and a private

commission from 2015 (Fig. 31). With particular ordering (often reverse engineered¹⁵) deep fields of pattern are produced using masking strategies with stencils and masking tape.

Although this mode of pictorial depth is relinquished in the final works (Chapter 3) in favour of a physical bifurcation of the surface and actual depth, these methods of layering figure prominently in the thinking and the experimentation within the studio, as well as within the expanded practice (especially in a street and public art context). It is a strategic consideration of how layers relate to one another in terms of their ordering, their particular attributes, their partiality to the assemblage, and their potential to obfuscate, conceal or reveal other layers.



Figure 31: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Private Mural Commission*, with detail of stencil and masking tape layers, approx. 36m²

¹⁵ By reverse engineering, I simply mean that the layers often need to be executed in a reverse order to what seems logical; and that this ordering is a consideration of engineering before the actual painting commences.



Figure 32: Robert Rauschenberg, 1973, *Star Quarters*, Serigraph (silkscreen on mirror-coated Plexiglas), 120x480cm

Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008) employed 'gritty assemblages or "combines," as he liked to call them' (Genocchio, 2005, para. 1) through montage, appropriation, and a diverse use of materials reconfigured into the dynamics of a durational encounter, a granular synthesis of ocular experience laid out in tableau. Rauschenberg's assemblages drew mainly from the material components around him, most often those traditionally associated with painting and print making. However, he also introduced new materials and processes into his assemblages, such as his use of mirrored acrylic in the work *Star Quarters* (1973, fig.32) and layers of Plexiglas in *Solstice* (1968, fig.33) (ibid., 2005). Rauschenberg's assemblages draw on chance and the unexpected, on the lookout for emergent properties.



Figure 33: Robert Rauschenberg, 1968, *Solstice*, Silkscreen ink on motorized Plexiglas doors in metal frame mounted on platform with concealed electric lights and electronic components 304.8 x 436.9 x 436.9 cm

Rauschenberg called into question the 'distinctions between reality and realism and between representation and the actual' (Barris, 2019, para.2) throughout his work, moving towards 'total environments' such as with his work *Solstice* (1968, fig.33) comprised of 'silkscreened sliding doors, on a lit platform, create changing images in what is essentially a transparent room' (ibid., para. 11). The work of Rauschenberg demonstrates the concept of assemblage through layering; the particular configuring of materials and expressive components to produce emergent entities that exceed their strata.

2.2.5 Repeating

Within my practice I am drawn to repetition, to stuttering – a desire (or a need) to endlessly repeat and reoccur. My gesture repeats itself. My thinking repeats itself. My repetition is my sense of continuity. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze (1980, p.18) draws a distinction between similarity and repetition. Similarity occurs within the field of representation (i.e. something ‘looks like’ something else) whereas repetition is seen as the thing itself, the object of representation. For Deleuze, repetition can be understood as simple or complex; a simple repetition being a mechanical repetition of the same element, such as with computer coding or print technology; whilst a complex repetition is one that disguises its own variability of elements that may dissemble, displace, multiply and reflect (Smith, 2012, p.21). This complex repetition can be observed in language, gesture, painting style and the variability of forms found within a particular natural element, such as a flower. For Deleuze the repeat is the thing itself, ‘since this repetition is not hidden by something else but forms itself by disguising itself’ (Deleuze, 1980, p.24). For Deleuze, difference replaces identity amongst the simulacra of repetitions.

The mask is the true subject of repetition. Because repetition differs in kind from representation, the repeated cannot be represented: rather, it must always be signified, masked by what signifies it, itself masking what it signifies (Deleuze, 1980, p.18).

This is explored through the repetition of a few stencils, across the *One Thing Begets Another* series of work, such as between *Mimicry Mimicking Mimesis* (Fig.34) and *Signification Cloaking Sign* (Fig.35).

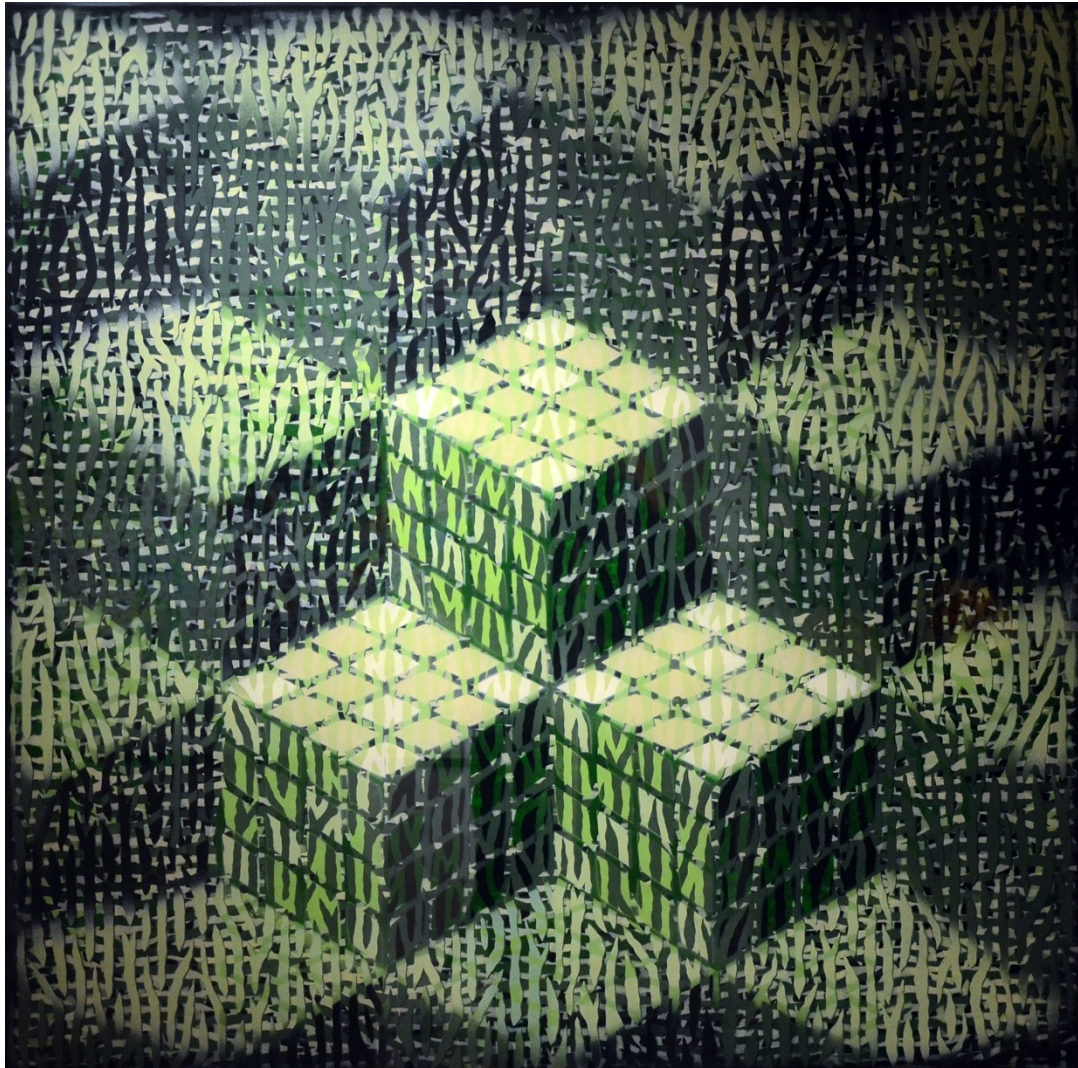


Figure 34: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Mimicry Mimicking Mimesis*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm.

In my series of painted works titled *One Thing Begets Another* (2013), there is simple and complex repetition. The simple repetition is revealed in the layering and spraying of the same stencils, a mechanical repetition of the same elements across the entire body of work. The complex repetition is revealed by the displacement, and disguising of the forms, such as with the flower-like patterns of *Misrepresentation Fielding Questions* (fig.23), which are merely the rearrangement of the same stencils that make the box like shapes in *Mimicry Mimicking Mimesis* (fig.34) and *Signification Cloaking Sign* (fig.35). The perception of repetition is disguised by the immediate gestalt perception of different forms. Also, in *Mimicry Mimicking Mimesis* (fig.34) all of the paint is beneath the clear acrylic sheet; however, in

Misrepresentation Fielding Questions (fig.23) and *Signification Cloaking Sign* (fig.35) the paint is displaced and multiplied, appearing on the front and on the reversed surface of the sheet.



Figure 35: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Signification Cloaking Sign*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

The stencils employed are the object of representation, the artworks are the solutions to the problems posed by the stencils, and the integration of the solutions found for one work affect the solution to the problems across the next, and so on, through the entire *One Thing Begets Another* (2013) body of work. An infinite number of paintings employing these stencils could be produced, in an endless cascade of difference and repetition; all linked by the relationship between their extensities, such as the stencils and their configurations, that produce and

differentiate their expressivity. This is an affirmative and productive relationship with the simulacrum, that is diversifying through repetition.

2.2.6 Reflecting

Within this research the mirror is considered the first reflection, repeat, or copy – a precursor to both the mask and the simulacrum. It is a repeat of the original, and the original repeat.

The mirror is both a location and a strategy. As a location, the mirror has the capacity to locate the viewer (and their environment) within its territory. This gestalt perception of one's self entangled in one's surroundings as a unified whole within another object (despite the mirror's partial framing) is what psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan described as the 'mirror stage' (Mambrol, 2016) – that is the early childhood recognition of a distinction between 'self' and 'other' and the beginning of the process of identification. In particular, the ongoing relations with 'self' and 'other' that are elaborated through social and linguistic frameworks give the persona its particular characteristics, including neuroses and other psychic disturbances (Mambrol, 2016).

As a strategy, I employ the mirror to locate something (or someone) within an artwork.

American artist Robert Smithson (1969, p.122) wrote that 'The mirror itself is not subject to duration, because it is an ongoing abstraction that is always available and timeless.'

Reflections however 'are fleeting instances that evade measure. Space is the remains, or corpse, of time, it has dimensions' (ibid, p.122).

In the contemporary world, reflections exist as a simultaneous multiplicity of copies mediated through instant communication, social media, mass consumption, fast travel and the algorithm. The self, everywhere at once in a multiplicity of reflections, and yet no original self to be found; a mirror state that is fractured, faceted, segmented, shattered, decohering and establishing new coherences. Metaphorically, my experience of identity could be proposed as

a mirror ball, each facet a persona, with nothing at its centre, yet rotating, reflecting through space.

The mirror can also be understood as a historically contingent ancestor of the 'flat/deep space of the screen' (Keating, 2002, p.107) in that both produce a tension of 'continual shifting or perpetual oscillation between perceptions of inner and outer, with and without' (ibid., p.44). Keating describes the space of the screen as one of 'anxiety' due to the 'temporality of the moment and the ephemerality of the image' as a result of 'dislocation, disbelief and hesitation' (ibid., p.44). Both the mirror and the screen engage with the human ocular tendency to look through the surface – that is, the lens of the eye focuses on a point within the spatiality of the mirror-screen, rather than on the material that is performing the reflection or display – a tension between depth and flatness. We do not perceive the mirror or the screen; we perceive its fleeting reflections and its ephemeral image. Keating describes this spatiality of the screen and the screen itself as ambivalent yet containing the contradictions of homogeneity and discordance; unification and distortion, that are 'irresolute and inconclusive' and in which its state of flux 'further exasperates its paradoxical qualities' (ibid., p.112). In their capacity to mimic the spatio-temporality of the actual world whilst maintaining their own distinctly virtual spatio-temporality, the mirror and its descendant the screen, align with the strategies of camouflage and masking.

The mirror is also a filter that has the appearance of a void or empty space. It can represent emptiness, yet cannot be entered – it is a materially dense object which we bounce off. The mirror itself is ambivalent, impartial, unflattering and uncaring.



Figure 36: Dan Graham, 1976, *Public Space/Two Audiences*, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

American artist Dan Graham and Dutch artist Jeppe Hein work with large scale, architectural mirror installations to experientially impact the viewer with an intersecting and ‘shifting apprehension that is one way of measuring the loss and rediscovery of self and other’ (Enright & Walsh, 2009). Their work relies on the participation of the audience, as they navigate and encounter the work, an interactivity between the observers, their reflections and the materials. The audience experience is of themselves, a fractured procession of simulacra, split and displayed – reframed within maze like structures and happenings. It is an unsettling confrontation with the hyper real yet ultimately cold and ambivalent surfaces. These works



Figure 37: Jeppe Hein, 2013, *Semicircular Mirror Labyrinth II*

draw attention to the coherence and decoherence between self and simulacra via reflections, conveyances and barriers.



Figure 38: Lee Bul, 2014, *Via Negativa II*, installation

Lee Bul describes her installation *Via Negativa II* (2014, fig.38) as a labyrinth (of infinity mirrors) 'Although it has a very simple path, all the reflections, mirrored images create endless fictional paths. Within it, the viewer sees himself in parts and continuously experiences the fragments of his own self' (Rosenthal, 2014, para.5) This tension between the possible virtual pathways and the confinement of the actual space, mirrors a contemporary experience of identity, reflected and fragmented, suggestive of Foucault's heterotopias (1967), a multitude of possible *umwelt* constrained by the process of identification itself.

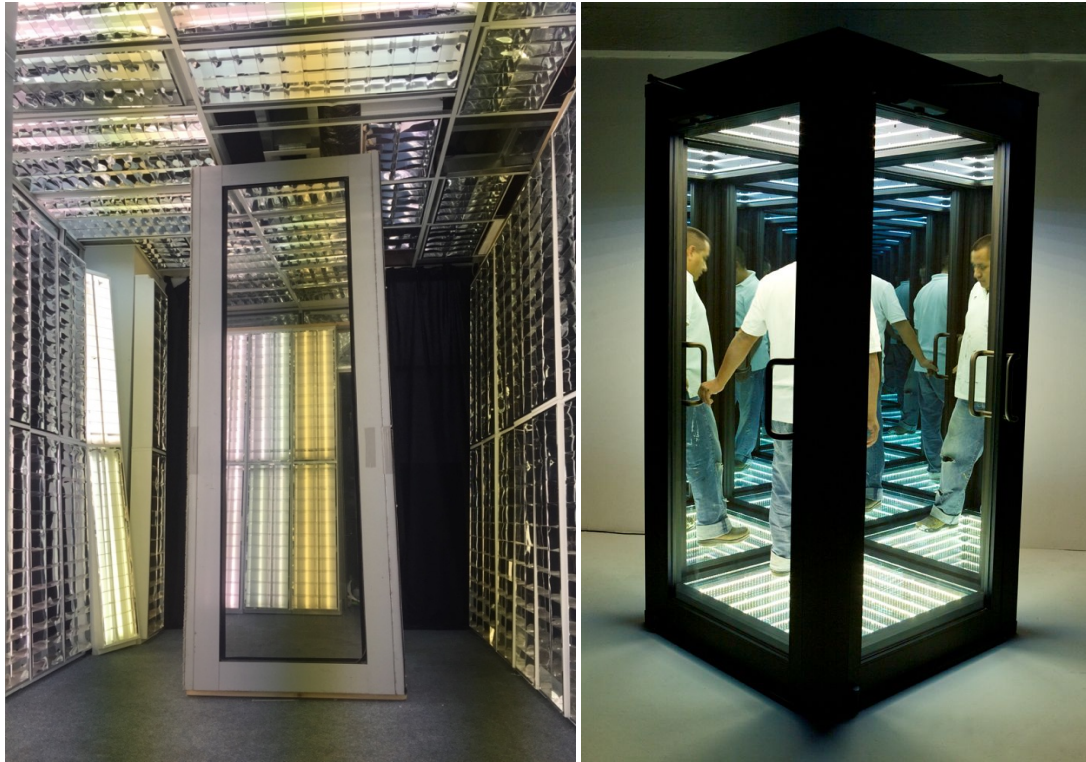


Figure 39: (left) Benjamin Kluss, 2016, *The Observatory* (right) Ivan Navarro, 2010, *Reality Show*

My own work (constructed with assistance from Aedan Howlett & Al Visser) *The Observatory* (2016, fig.39, left) is a contemplation and inversion of Chilean artist Ivan Navarro's *Reality Show* (2010, fig.39, right). In Navarro's work the viewer witnesses an infinitely extending space presented as an internally mirrored cubicle. However, the viewer is also the object of voyeurism for those outside of the cubicle via the mechanism of one-way mirrors. This recalls the mechanisms of surveillance and reality TV shows (such as *Big Brother*) (Ball 2013, p. 138) whilst evoking the disorienting and endless bureaucratic vision of Franz Kafka, where his protagonists are often caught in social or psychological mazes such as with *The Trial* (1925). As Parr comments: 'The evolution of Kafka's work is towards a sober 'hyper-realism' that dispenses with impressions and imaginings. Rather than metaphor, Kafka's hyper-reality constructs an immanent assemblage of metamorphosis, a continuum of reversible intensities' (Parr, 2010, p.138).

In the case of *The Observatory* (fig.39, left), the seemingly invisible viewer within the one-way mirrored cubicle is occluded from those outside of it, who occupy a brightly lit space composed of repurposed fluorescent ceiling lights installed tightly packed across each wall and ceiling. *The Observatory* draws attention to the spatialising flux of exchange between the occupants of the cubicle and the subjects within the brightly lit chamber. Whilst not all of the subjects within the room become aware of the booth's occupancy, they are able to switch roles from that of subject to that of observer once the cubicle's concealed rear door is discovered; and in this fashion, the activities and gestures of the participants become integral to the artwork itself. *The Observatory* encourages the participants into a relationship with two distinct umwelt: one composed of exposure, bright lights and mirrored surfaces, the other composed of confined space, muted tones and muffled sound, one concealing, one revealing, each a simulation.

Whilst evocative of surveillance and reality TV shows (where camera crews behind one-way mirrors observe the drama), *The Observatory* functions like Bentham's Panopticon in that the participant within the chamber becomes the unseen observer of the room's occupants, beyond their knowledge (McMullen, 2015). As the work is an event in flux, the role of unknowing subject becomes inverted when an occupant of the room discovers the mostly indiscernible door to the booth, shifting their perception to one that is more like Latour's 'oligopticon', where the totality of the situation is grasped 'only in a montage of images' (Pyhtinen & Tamminen, 2011). It is the observer's gestalt moment – their recognition of an umwelt and their role within it, as a subject. The reflective surfaces of the work locate the chambers occupants and elements of the surrounding environment within the work itself, creating a sense of belonging (through the reflection of self) or interiority to the work, whilst in actuality remaining distinctly exterior to the observer within the cubicle. In this way the

work mimics the spatiality of screen-based technologies and the sense of being within something whilst being distinctly and actually outside of it. It is a camouflaging structure.



Figure 40: Benjamin Kluss, 2016, *The Observatory* (detail)



Figure 41: (left) Iván Navarro, 2011, *Burden* (Lotte World Tower).
(right) Yayoi Kusama, 2004, *Tender are the Stairs to Heaven*.

In addition to *Reality Show* (fig.39, right), I encountered several of Iván Navarro's works at the *Light Show* exhibition at the MCA in 2015, including *Burden (Lotte World Tower)* (2011, fig.41, left). I was initially arrested by the illusory depth, but what held me transfixed was the surface tension, the sensation of falling into a void that was held in check by the presence of the glass and an awareness of the illusion. The work acts like a mask, transforming the flat space of the wall into a space of indiscernible depth. This technique, known within popular culture as an infinity mirror, has been used in numerous artworks including Yayoi Kusama's *Tender are the Stairs to Heaven* (2004, fig.41, right) and Lee Bul's *Via Negativa II* (2014, fig.38).

Within the studio I made my own experiments within this field of visual exploration through the artworks *Infinity Drop* (2015, fig.42) and *Enfolda* (2015, fig.43). *Infinity Drop* evokes an illusory depth from an internal ring of LED's set between an 80cm circular mirror and a one-way glass of equal diameter, producing an internally bouncing reflection that triggers a gestalt perception of depth of space via the mirrored thresholds. This illusory space, though physically flat, is suggestive of another umwelt such as the imaginary internal world of electronics and computers as suggested in the science-fiction films *Tron* (1982) and *Tron: Legacy* (2010) – or maybe even the space behind the screen. *Infinity Drop* (fig.42) in its original display during the Faux Mo¹⁶ festival in 2016, employed a crawlspace (created with a wheelie bin tipped on its side and a cannibalised air conditioning vent, each large enough to allow a human to crawl through with some difficulty) to create secret entrances that lead to a confined and darkened space constructed from wood and black paint, approximately 2 x 2 metres wide and a metre high. The artwork was placed within the space and set onto the floor, increasing the sensation of falling into a void.

¹⁶ Faux Mo is a night time festival component of MONA FOMA (Museum of Old and New Art's Festival Of Music and Art) in which I was involved as a creative associate and curator from 2015–2017, and which is further detailed in Appendix V.

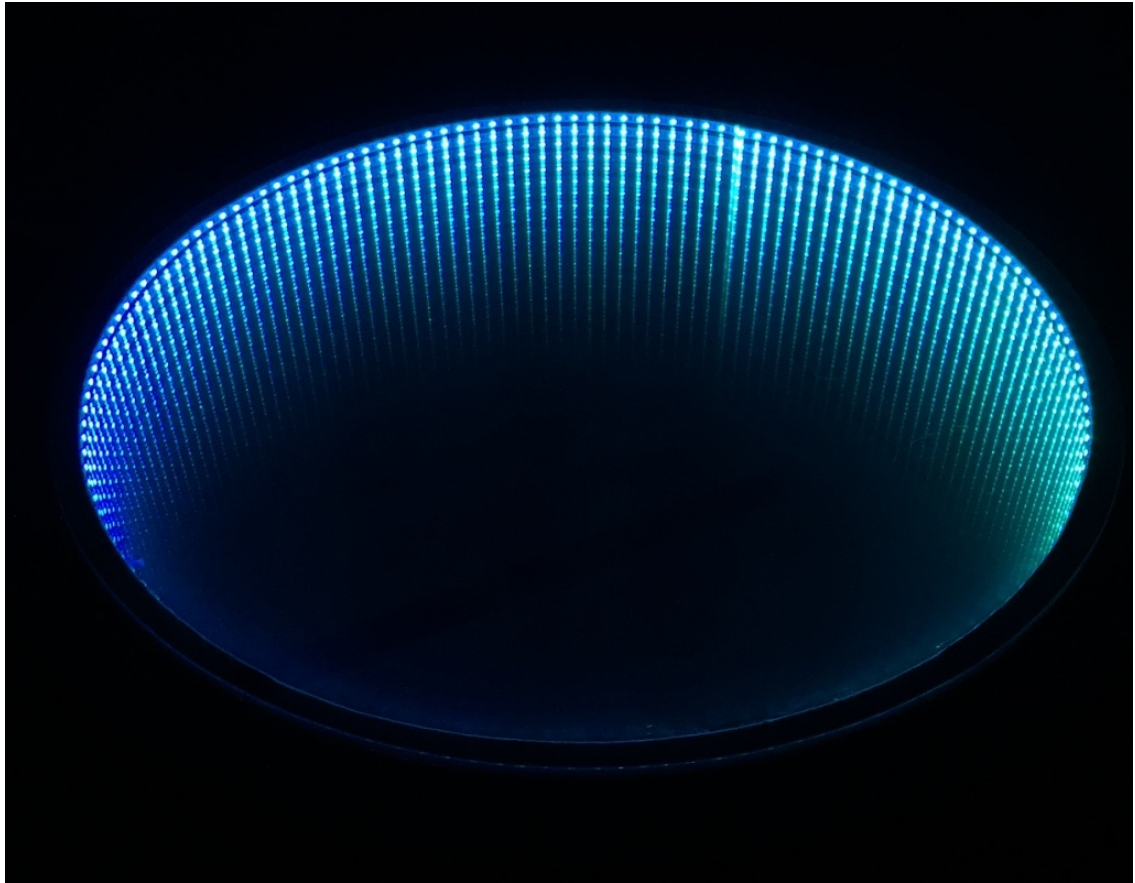


Figure 42: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Infinity Drop*, ACP, acrylic, LED, mirror film, wood, 100 x 100 x 4 cm

The nuance of *Infinity Drop* was this particular situatedness within the confined and claustrophobic crawl space, functioning as a lure, enticing individuals to navigate the space proprioceptively; not only to pass through, but to engage with the infinity mirror encounter in an intimate and particular way. Additionally, the procession of individuals navigating this space (and the particular methods of locomotion to do so, such as crawling, crouching, squatting and shuffling) actively encouraged the emergence of a population thinking proprioceptively, mimicking each other's behaviours and gestures due to the constraints of the space. *Enfolda* (2015, fig.43) is a wall mounted work that employs the same internally reflecting techniques as *Infinity Drop* (fig.42), with internally hand curved aluminium strips supporting the LEDs held in a state of tension within the frame, appearing like two jigsaw elements that will never fit.

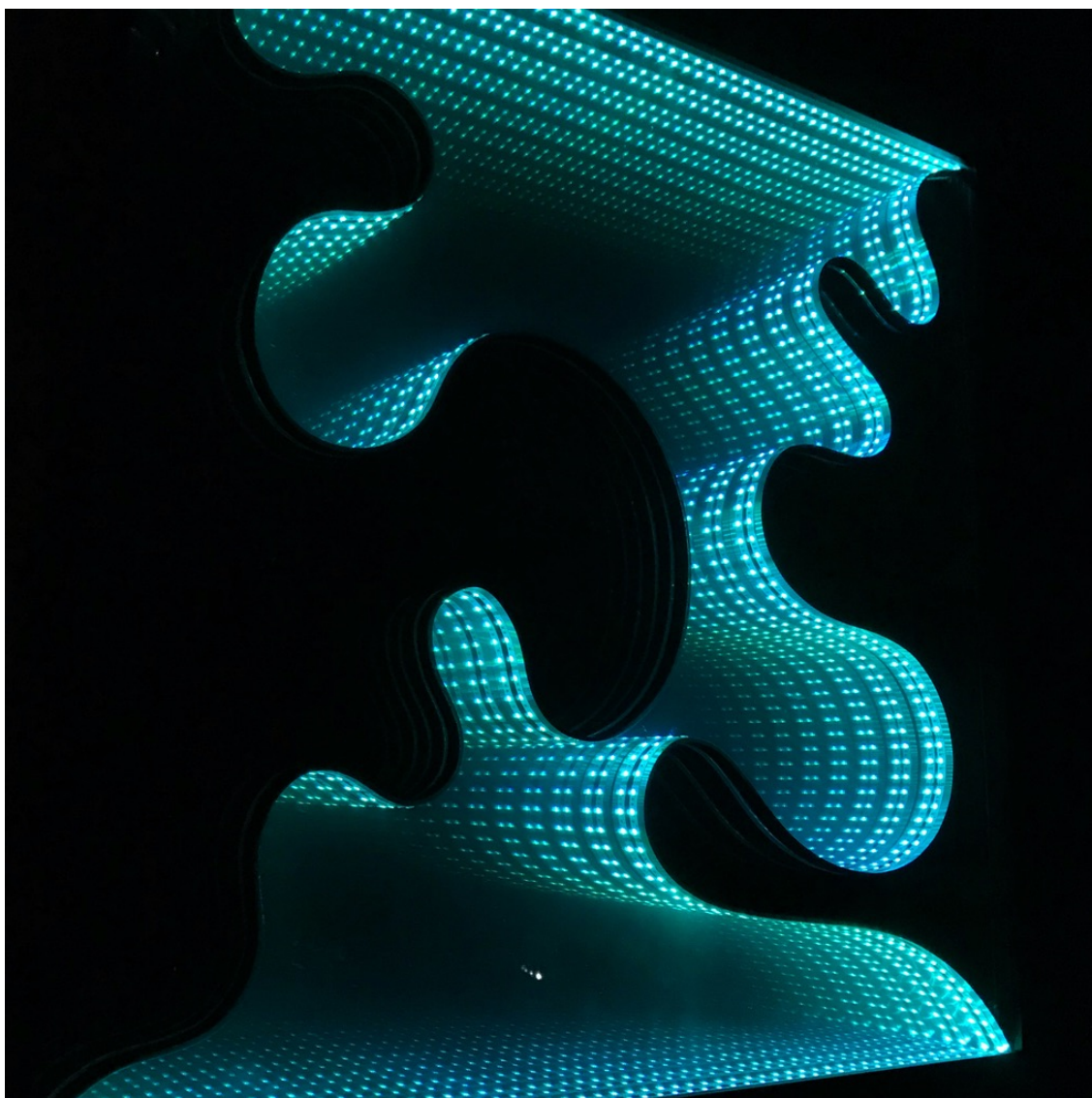


Figure 43: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Enfolda*, ACP, acrylic, LED, mirror film, wood, 100 x 100 x 4cm

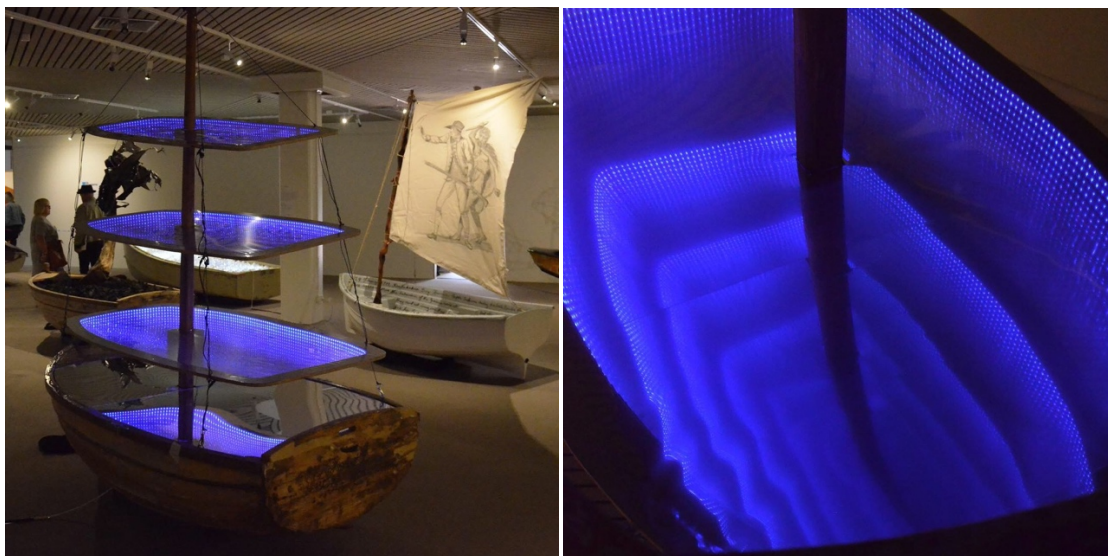


Figure 44: Benjamin Kluss, 2018, *The Gap Between Worlds*, mixed media assemblage, dimensions variable

The Gap Between Worlds (2018, fig.44) was developed as a response to the notion of *umwelt* as presented in this exegesis. Four tiers of infinity mirrors were created using mirrored mylar instead of one-way mirror glass, assembled in a manner evocative of sails. Whilst each individual sail is an infinity mirror, they each reflect the other in an additional array of reflections. When gazing into the sail like forms from an acute angle, the apparent depth is of indiscernible distance. This work speaks to the idea of the semiosphere; those overlapping and partial *umwelt* that coalesce and mingle to produce wider spectrums of perception.

Jung describes the encounter with the mirror as the risk of ‘confrontation with oneself’, an unflattering and faithful depiction of the ‘face we never show to the world’ because we have covered it with a persona, with the ‘mask of the actor’; he also postulates that the mirror ‘lies behind the mask and shows the true face’ (1969, p.43). Within contemporary media the mirror has evolved into the digital screen, a variable and modulating surface that reorients our understanding of reflection and the faithful depiction of the ‘real’ and of the self.



Figure 45: Lee Yong Baek, 2011, *Between Jesus and Buddha* (left) & *Broken Mirror* (Right)

Lee Yong Baek’s work is relevant in this regard and has been particularly influential for my work. His work *Between Jesus and Buddha* (2011. Fig.45, left) displays a rapid succession of

facial iconography (masks) of Christ and Buddha, layered with the face of the viewer reflected in the mirror-screen, a material-semiotic collapse of icon and identity, of mask and self, and a blurring of virtual-real-actual. Another work, *Broken Mirror* (2011, fig.45, right) is an array of mirrors within a room reflecting onto each other, as well as situating the viewer within this field. In (seemingly) random timing, the mirrors appear to shatter as if struck by a bullet, accompanied by a deafening noise. The self, reflected in the mirror, shatters. It shatters across the array, wherever one turns. These works reflect an anxiety, an expectation that the mirror will reflect one's self faithfully; but they do not, we are confronted by a shattering façade, produced from the virtual environment of technology. The once faithful reflection, a source of certainty in identification, is upended and we are thrown into more masks, both literally as the mirror becomes screen and semiotically through the shattering effect; a representation in which we have situated our understanding of our own identity in the ambivalent and burgeoning technology of the algorithm. The medium is the message.

2.2.7 Camouflage

Within the practical investigation, and as outlined in Chapter 1, camouflage is understood as a medium of relating. It is understood to be highly connected to an organism's umwelt, i.e. the limits and particularities of an organisms' capacity to sense the world around it. Of these sensory systems, gestalt perception and kinaesthesia are of most relevance to this project, being concerned as it is with the visual and the dimensional aspects of an artistic discourse.



Figure 46: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, *Razzle Breaching Dazzle*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

Within the painted works of *One Thing Begets Another*, such as *Razzle Breaching Dazzle* (fig.46), camouflage as a strategy has been employed as crypsis; where a form or intention has been hidden within the work, and where the use of disruptive or deceptive pattern material

(DPM) disorients the eye, in an attempt to confuse the gestalt perception of the observer. The cryptic camouflage within these works has been employed in an illustrative sense as much as in the sense of an attempt to camouflage something from the observer. These paintings explore figure / ground territories through the principle of the stencil, maintaining a distinct outline of figure, whilst actively blending or relating them to each other through the use of the patterned stencils, as detailed in Section 2.2.1. The figure elements of the paintings are executed on the front face of the plexiglass, whilst the ground elements are executed on the rear face of the plexiglass (fig.47). Whilst this bifurcation (detailed in Sections 2.2.3-4) presented a range of emergent potentials within the research, it was initially proposed within these works as a challenge – to blend the two physically distinct surfaces together in such a way that demonstrates cryptic camouflage.

However, as these works developed it became increasingly clear that they were ultimately concerned with the representation of camouflage, rather than its performance.



Figure 47: Benjamin Kluss, 2013, (left) *Concealing Reveals Something*, spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm
(right) *Solutions Creating Problems*, synthetic spray paint on acrylic, 100 x 100 x 4cm

One of the key stages in the evolution of this practical investigation was the transition away from this concern of *representing* camouflage towards a *performance* of camouflage, where

the viewer is an active participant in the event. This shift in strategy aligns itself with an expanded framework for camouflage (outlined in Chapter 1) where it is observed to be a dynamic medium of relating, an adaptive quality – an abstract machine that cuts and draws edges, opening one thing onto another. This framing of camouflage describes its capacity to dissolve and construct perceptual boundaries around assemblages. Thus, the performance of camouflage is understood to be spatialising; it inhabits, creates and dissolves spaces through its activities and gestures, rather than as a static attribute of its surface.



Figure 48: Lee Yong Baek, 2011, *Angel Soldier*, video installation.

The work *Angel Soldier* (2011, fig.48) by Lee Yong Baek, was pivotal in the development of my understanding of camouflage as performative. This work is at once a representation of camouflage as well as a dynamic performance of camouflage. In this video work (viewed at the Venice Biennale 2011) soldiers move super-slowly through a suspended array of flowers, wearing suits printed with the same pattern as the photographic background. Additionally, in the manner of a ghillie suit, the soldiers are wearing some of the actual flowers that are

suspended and represented, attached to their suits. As the soldiers move through this field, a swarm of perceptions are pushed and pulled in dynamic interplay. The material-semiotic assemblage of flowers, flesh and weapons evoke a tension between self and environment. 'What is the configuration of self-versus environment that enables one to efface the traces of one's own presence from photographic media of surveillance? It is camouflage consciousness, in which full self-consciousness becomes literal photographic self-analysis.' (Shell, 2012, p.23).

This shift in understanding the role of camouflage as a performative strategy within the practical investigation led to the creation of the work *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* (2014, fig.49), one of the most significant breakthroughs within this research. The work achieves several of the research aims and is a precursor for the final works discussed in Chapter 3.

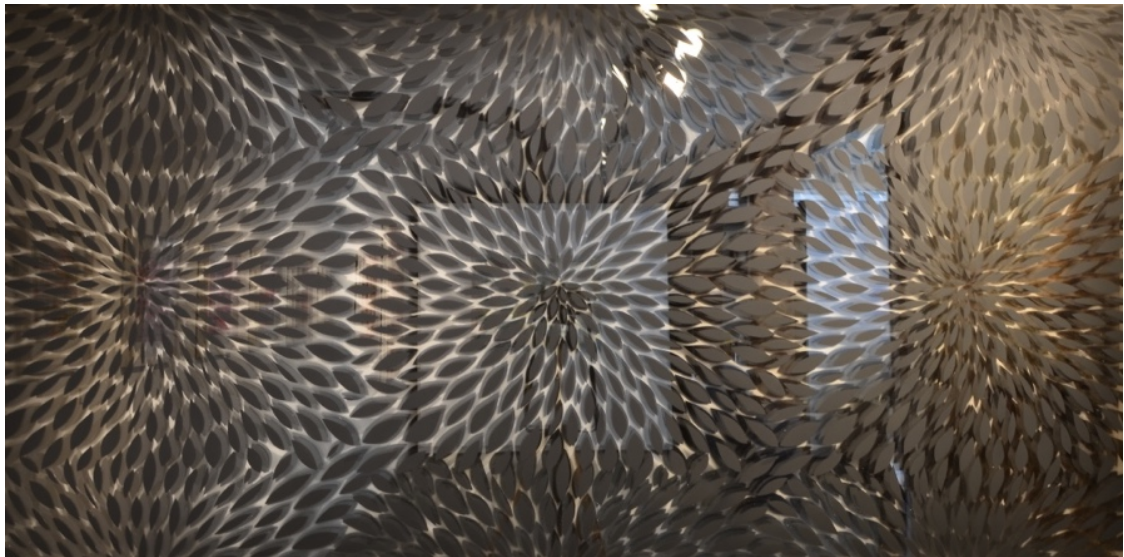


Figure 49: Benjamin Kluss, 2014, *Parallax (Blacker Mask)*, spray paint on 3 acrylic sheets, 80 x 160 x 10cm

Critically, the work is spatialising; beyond the representation of camouflage (as with the earlier works), *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* inhabits space, and through its bifurcated layers,

triggers the perception of parallax as the observer moves around the work. Parallax¹⁷ is the apparent difference in speeds of objects at varying distances due to a change or displacement in the position of the observer. Parallax is also what causes a lenticular illusion to manifest, and so components of this work have become integral to the later *Kinetika* series (Chapter 3). The titling in parenthesis (*Blacker Mask*) is a reference to how the mask within the work is becoming more virtualised and abstracted, using black to denote indiscernibility.

Parallax (Blacker Mask) (fig.49) is an assemblage that reconfigures the same actors as the earlier series from 2013, *One Thing Begets Another* – stencils, acrylic sheets and spray paint. New stencils are employed in this work that mimic the earlier patterns; a simple leaf shape formed by rounding the angles of the hexagons into curves. This form was cut in repetition across a sheet of cardboard in the same manner as the earlier works (see figs.10-12). Once the sheet was filled, further sheets were cut using the first as a template – a mimic or simulacrum of the first – with each progressive layer of forms receding in scale whilst maintaining shape and proximity (fig.50). These stencils were then sprayed across three layers of clear acrylic, each stencil occupying its own layer, each stencil repeated nine times across each sheet in a precise manner. A white acrylic box was fabricated to specification by a supplier, and the clear sheets were locked into the frame with a 3cm space between each layer. The work is responsive to environmental light in that it is reflective across areas of clear plexiglass, and absorptive across areas that have been sprayed with matt black paint.

¹⁷ The parallax effect is also found within web and mobile based computer interfaces where it is used to produce the appearance of foreground and background elements as moving in 3D space, as seen in parallax scrolling, effectively mimicking depth perception within the flat space of the screen.



Figure 50: Stencils for *Parallax (Blacker Mask)*, 2014.

The virtual bifurcation of surface suggested in the *One Thing Begets Another* series (which used the front and back of a singular sheet of plexiglass) is now an actual bifurcation into separate media (fig.51), a material stratification of layers that extends and extrudes the potential of the earlier works. Whilst the work still maintains a gestalt perception of wholeness, it is now a literal assemblage of diverse components, layers and surfaces. It is still a painting, in the sense that it involves paint and a surface, however it has also become an object in its own right, in terms of its dimensionality and its behaviour as a body.

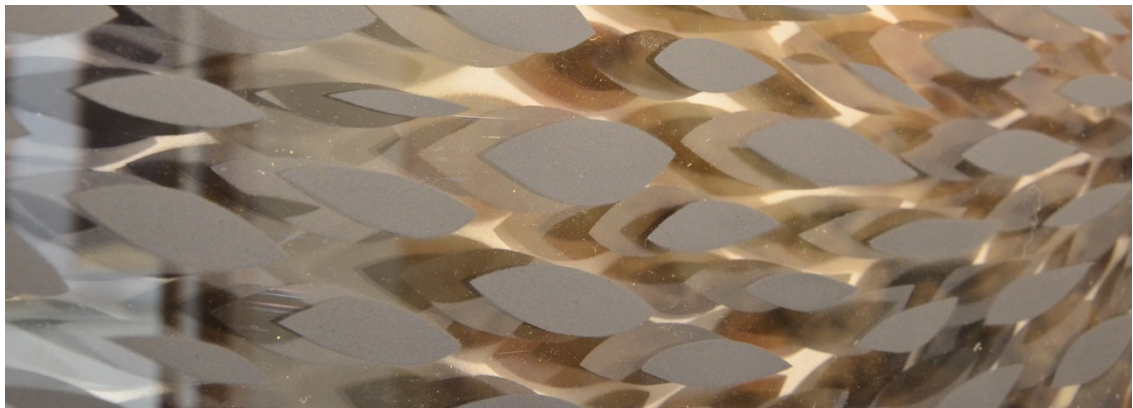


Figure 51: Benjamin Kluss, 2014, *Parallax (Black Mask)* (detail), spray paint on 3 acrylic sheets, 80 x 160 x 10cm

Parallax (Blacker Mask) also engages the observer's proprioceptive system. The work continuously changes as the viewer moves around it which encourages a nomadic orientation – no fixed position – as the work can never be viewed at once in its entirety (unlike the earlier works and most conventional paintings). This work takes on a granular apprehension, a flickering montage of images and interactions. The viewer moves from ground to ground, whilst the work occupies a situatedness. This strategy becomes critical within the later

Kinetika works (Chapter 3) and enables a departure from the representation of camouflage towards the performance of camouflage as a dynamic medium of relating.

There were problems associated with the fabrication of the components. In particular, the use of acrylic framing to contain acrylic sheets was enormously frustrating in fitting the work together due to the flexibility of each component. This led me to explore more rigid framing in later works, swapping acrylic out for metal components and in so doing, demonstrating the interchangeable nature of components as actors within assemblages; they can be unplugged, exchanged or replaced (DeLanda, 2006 pp. 10-25). Another problem that arose in this work was that the build-up of sprayed layers created an interior space that was darker than I would have liked, which prompted me to consider the introduction of a new component – light – in order to illuminate the interiority of the work. These new methods and materials were experimented with in the studio at some length before the next, and most pivotal, body of work within the research project was produced, *Kinetika I: Entity* (detailed in Chapter 3).

2.2.8 Spatialising

This practical research began with the cutting of a stencil, which itself became an actor within the network of another stencil. The project's pivotal moment is when the stencil and its copy are displayed, in such a way, that they become a new entity with emergent properties; i.e. they produce an optical illusion or disruption pattern. This emergent property relies on the fact that the two layers of stencils have physical separation in space whilst visually collapsing or combining within the eye of the observer. Within this research, the strategy of spatialisation is the multiplication of actors within simultaneous networks.

Increasingly, this research project became concerned with the investigation of how an artwork can be spatialising, i.e. how it can affect the space that it occupies, and how it can affect other entities within its space. I also began to investigate the temporal implications of this encounter, examining how the work performs its function and the durational nature of this experience. This project made a significant shift through the research into camouflage, towards an engagement with the proprioceptive system (rather than purely with vision), explicitly to encourage new modes of engagement that are not habitual or explicitly tacit or innate – but that are particular and partial to the work. Proprioception is an organism's sense of the relative position of the parts of its body and the strength or effort required for movement in response to incoming information regarding external forces (*Oxford Dictionary Online*, 2019, proprioception entry). It is at once a distinct sense (i.e. in addition to the five senses) and yet it is critically informed by other senses such as sight, hearing and touch.



Figure 52: Studio experiments of lenticular animation produced with handmade stencils, 2014.

A series of experiments from August – November 2014 (fig.52) employed a strategy of shifting and spatialised layers, resulting in the (re)discovery and employment of an old animation technique called lenticular arrangement. It consists of a series of images spliced into segments that when filtered through a series of proportionately spaced lines, or viewing angles, produces the perception of movement or animation as each frame is revealed in granular fashion. The frames can be revealed through either mechanical means or the variable position of the observer. Its origins date back to the *Tabula Scalata* or ‘turning images’ of the late 16th Century (Shickman, 1977, p.69). Shakespeare is said to have expressed, in regard to these turning images, that “‘one thing entire” was divided into many parts, into many flats, which appeared confused if the assemblage of them was directly beheld’ (Shickman, 1977, p. 68)¹⁸. I was interested in the capacity of the stencil to perform these lenticular affects, after the observations made with *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* (fig.49). Initial experiments focused on complex intersections of patterned imagery that were later relinquished for more simple forms, as it was discovered that complexity dramatically increased the visual ‘noise’ of the lenticular effect – and a resultant tendency to decohere (fig.52). As these initial experiments

¹⁸ Lenticular animation has seen a variety of manifestations including the lenticular printing techniques of the popular 80’s gimmick, the *Tazo*.

were all made by hand, there was also a tendency for the imperfections of the hand to also complicate and impact the clarity of the animation.

My experimentation with lenticular effects intersects with the Op artists. One of the pioneers in this regard is Bridget Riley (1931 –). Riley's *Continuum* (1962 / 2005, fig.53) is striated in lenticular fashion, and extends the potential of an optical object beyond the purely visual. Assembled from acrylic and aluminium, the work presents a tension between gestalt perceptions of the eye, and the proprioceptive sense of the body. The static field of dizzying lines overpower the senses of the observer, generating an umwelt of disorientation. One must enter the work to view it, the ocular experience affecting the physicality of locomotion and disturbing the usual frames of reference such as horizon line, depth of field and other gestalt perceptions. The spatialising aspect of this work creates a shift in tempo and a reorientation of the observer's sensory perception.

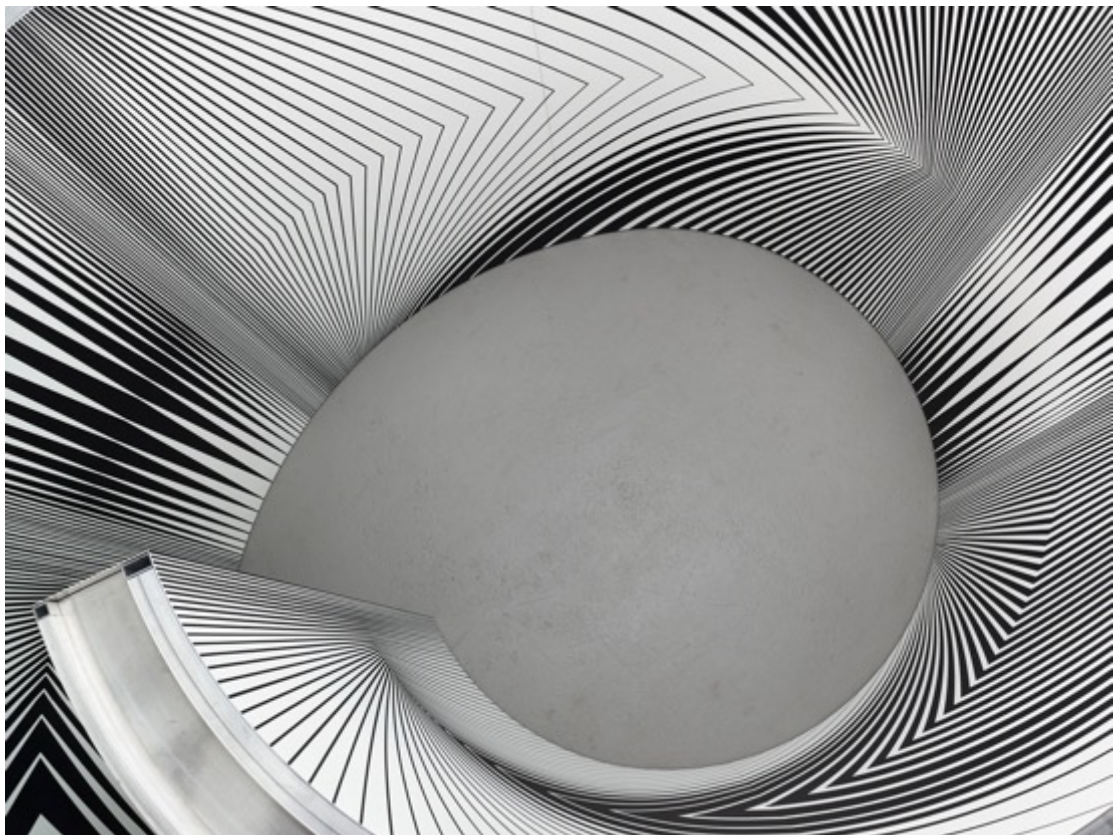


Figure 53: Bridget Riley, 1962, *Continuum* (Remake 2005)

Other artists have employed lenticular effects and animations within their work, famously Victor Vasarely (1906–1997) and more locally, contemporary Australian artist Lincoln Austin (1974–). Each of these artists situates their lenticular works within broader contexts of visual perception and optical illusions. In his *Yellow Manifesto* (1955) Vasarely postulates that in his lenticular works, the viewer is considered the sole creator as they play with and navigate the optical illusion. Curator of *Victor Vasarely: The Birth of Op Art* (2018), Martin Orosz, writes of Vasarely's lenticular work:

Vasarely's optical kineticism also posed the question of the dematerialisation of the artwork, for in his works, the actual spectacle is not present on the canvas at rest in front of us, but comes about through interacting with the work and is generated on the retina (Orosz & Imre, 2018).



Figure 54: (left) Victor Vasarely, 1988, *Holid (Moire Tower)*, Acrylic with three screen printed sides, 67 x 17.8 cm. (right) Victor Vasarely, 1973, *Box (Black and White)*, Silkscreen on plexiglass, 45.7 x 40.0 cm

Of particular interest to this research are Victor Vasarely's Visual Kinetics (*Plastique Cinétique*) developed from 1951 to 1955, of which *Holid (Moiré Tower)* (1988) and *Box (Black and White)*



Figure 55: Marcel Duchamp, 1935, *Rotorelief*

(1973) are examples (fig.54). It can be argued that Vasarely (re)discovered and systematically studied most of the construction methods, modular elements, optical effects and visual elements belonging to the field of Op-art, although the earliest Op-art works were likely Duchamp's *Rotoreliefs* (1935,

fig.55), systems of illusionistic depth through almost concentric

circles produced on a turntable (Ljiljana & Jablan, 2010, p.127-134). Vasarely's *Plastique Cinétique* reveals an overt and distinct preoccupation with the human visual cortex, his professed interest in the underlying patterns that sit below the surface layer of all things, and his rationale that pure abstraction is a thing in and of itself – not a representation (ibid., p. 127-134). Vasarely's notion of abstraction aligns with Deleuze's framing of repetition as the object of representation. Vasarely's kinetic images, achieved through use of transparent and layered surfaces, screen printing techniques and an interest in the production of moiré effects¹⁹, create a dynamic impression of movement that responds to the position of the observer.

¹⁹ My visual training began in the Graphic Arts prior to entering fine art. It was during this time working in the print industry (as written in my statement for *Black Prism*) that I first encountered Moiré patterns as an undesirable by-product of re-scanning previously printed photos. We were trained to remove these visual artefacts – however I developed an interest in them and would often spend time deliberately producing them.



Figure 56: Lincoln Austin, 2013, *Out of sight*, Light box: acrylic paint, aluminium and LED, 101 x 121 x 13cm

Contemporary Australian artist Lincoln Austin (1974 –) follows on from Vasarely, continuing the hunt for new materials and processes, contemporary hybrids that increasingly blur the boundaries of screen-based (i.e. computer aided) and traditional (i.e. mechanical or hand-based) technologies. Austin employs lenticular technology within his works, assembled from wire and metal mesh, acrylic paint and other industrial materials including LED lights and aluminium and like Vasarely's works, they are activated by the viewer. As curator Peter McKay writes of Austin's lenticular artwork *Out of Sight* (2014, fig.56):

...the viewer controls the tempo of the composition and, to this extent, some of the work's affect. The experience is further heightened by a series of LEDs in the interior, which produce a machine-like glow. Austin's *Out of sight* 2013 exemplifies this bold new strategy... Activating its secrets and

peering into its potential is a playful activity: it could even be said that the audience is simultaneously performing and viewing (McKay, 2014, para. 2).

It is these same insights that developed within my own studio practice through the work *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* (fig.49) and the lenticular experiments that followed (fig.52) leading to the *Kinetika* series (2015-2019, detailed in Chapter 3). Of particular interest to me is their purposeful engagement with eliciting kinetic and movement-based responses in the audience. 'My touchstone of success for the work', says Austin in an interview for Museum of Brisbane (2018, 00:00:37) 'is if someone was happy to stand and look at the work, I hadn't succeeded – what they needed to do was somehow interact physically with the work'. The words of Austin are mirrored in my own investigation into camouflage, i.e. to move from representation towards the performance of camouflage. My rediscovery of lenticular techniques enabled this shift in temporal and spatial dynamics through which I could further the aims of the project.

The lenticular work of both Vasarely and Austin is situated within extensive bodies of visual-optical investigations, both flat and sculptural, where the goal appears to be the exploration of the optical illusions and effects themselves. Just as these artists have exploited new technologies and manufacturing processes in order to occupy, hybridise and utilise the emergent visual spaces, my own work occupies a hybrid space between painting and computer-aided design. The utilisation of the technology of the CNC router (or its equivalent the laser cutter) within the fabrication of the works has a spatialising effect on the work's production as it now moves from idea, to computer-screen, to web, to machine, to transport, to composition and combination by hand in the studio.

At the same time however, my works are driven by different conceptual concerns to theirs. Vasarely, throughout his body of works, systematically explores human visual depth

perception through two-dimensional geometric abstraction and illusion, touching upon the lenticular as one mode amongst a plethora of modalities. Similarly, Riley and Austin extend Vasarely's preoccupation with illusionary space through a multiplicity of painted and sculptural geometric abstractions. All three of these artists employ techniques associated with motion dazzle camouflage, i.e. kinetic and visual disorientations that confuse the observer's capacity to judge exact directions, speeds and proximities of objects, lines and patterns. In this regard, my lenticular experiments share and extend the work of these artists and appears to situate my work within a canon of illusionistic geometric abstraction, or Op Art. What sets this project apart from the concerns of these artists is that my work is a meditation on persona and camouflage; and so, the work is better understood as a self-portrait disguising itself through motion dazzle camouflage. Beyond appearances, my work is more closely aligned with the self-portraiture of Warhol and Bowery than it is with Vasarely et al. Rather than a systematic investigation of geometric illusion per se, this research project re-discovers the lenticular through a practical exploration of the capacities of the mask and camouflage. The specific modality of the lenticular is employed (within the final body of work detailed in Chapter 3) as metaphor and demonstration for the fluctuating multiplicity and potential of persona. It is a spatialising performance of persona through material assemblage that resembles Op Art through its fluctuating, disorienting and visually confusing field of ephemera. While for them the exploration of optical effects is the primary concern, for me the employment of lenticular effects is a means to directly engage the audience in the experience of the flickering and constantly changing nature of identity.

2.3 Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the evolution of the practical investigation, identifying seven distinct strategies that I have employed and the ways in which they overlap and interact with each other. Throughout the practical work so far, there has been a consistency of materials and processes that have been expressed through dissimulation – a process of difference within repetition – that has moved incrementally from a flat picture plane to a bifurcated dimensionality.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the final body of work – the *Kinetika* series – explaining how the strategies as outlined in this chapter, have been synthesised in the final outcomes of the practical investigation.

Chapter 3: An Abstraction of Persona

*"The greatest trick the devil ever pulled
was convincing the world that he did not exist."*

Charles Baudelaire.

3.1 Introduction

In this paper so far, I have applied a reductive and deconstructive approach to both self (through persona) and not-self (through the artwork) as processes which produce indeterminant outcomes despite the determination of their components. Manuel DeLanda suggests that many important insights are best grasped during the process of becoming and 'before the final form is actualized, before the difference disappears' (1999, p.5). In the previous chapter, I have outlined the important insights that were developed through the practical experimentation, during the process of morphogenesis; and in this chapter, I will outline its final codification, the *Kinetika* series of assemblages.

The *Kinetika* series engages with a spatio-temporal relationship to the viewer. It leaves behind the static relationship of traditional painting between observer and representation, and enters into a dynamic mode, in which the observer becomes an actor within the network of the art assemblage. Through a kinaesthetic response, the enrolled observer actively produces the illusion through their gestalt perceptions and animates it through their movement. It is a form of motion dazzle camouflage, engaged with the visual cortex and proprioceptive faculties of the (human) observer.

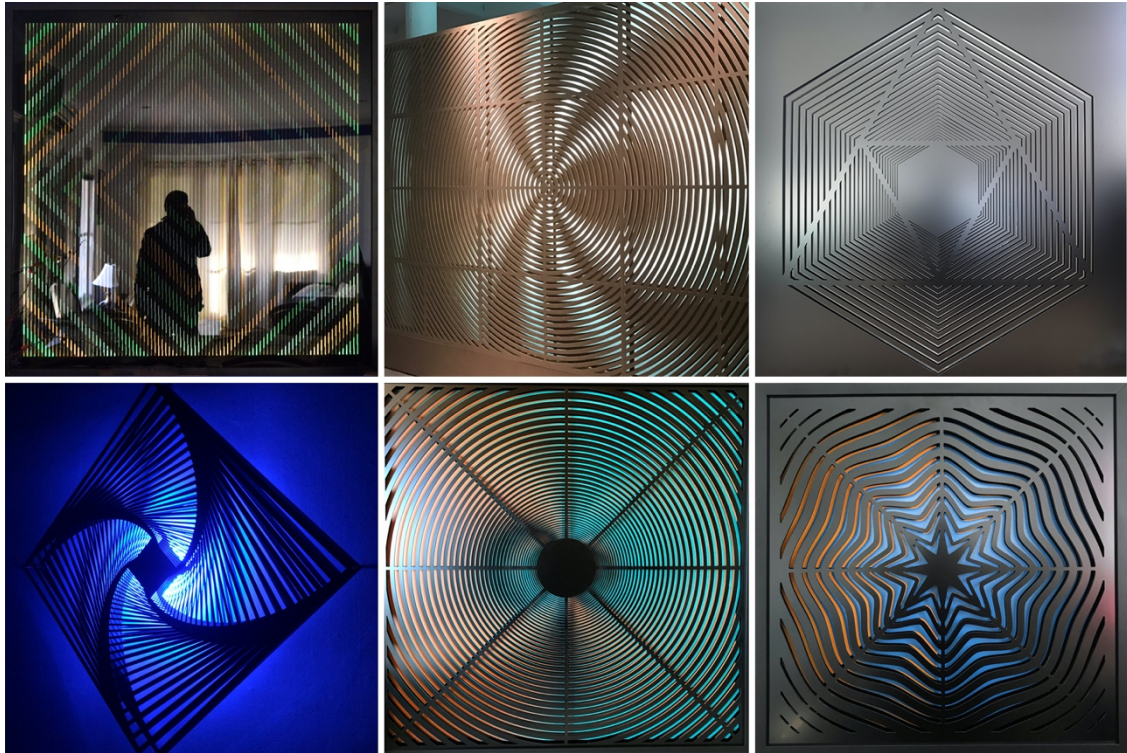


Figure 57: Benjamin Kluss, 2015-2019, examples of *Kinetika* series across multiple generations.

These artworks, beginning with the singular *Kinetika I: Entity* (fig.58) take on a titling convention of *I, II, III, IV* etc. which indicates its generation, followed by a colon and secondary title that denotes their individual status within that generation – an identifier. After *Kinetika I*, a particular generation may have any number of members. This convention aids in the observation of the dissimilitude and dissimulation that occurs within the *Kinetika* series, which are all copies of one another, describing the pure difference within their population, between individuals and across generations (fig.57) drawing attention to simulacra and simulation, difference and repetition, identity and persona. At each jump between generations, components are swapped, modified, augmented, made obsolete, reconfigured, recoded, etc. This chapter presents the first seven generations of *Kinetika* works; acknowledging that what is presented here, is a snapshot along a performative path of variation and potential.

3.2 Becoming Individual

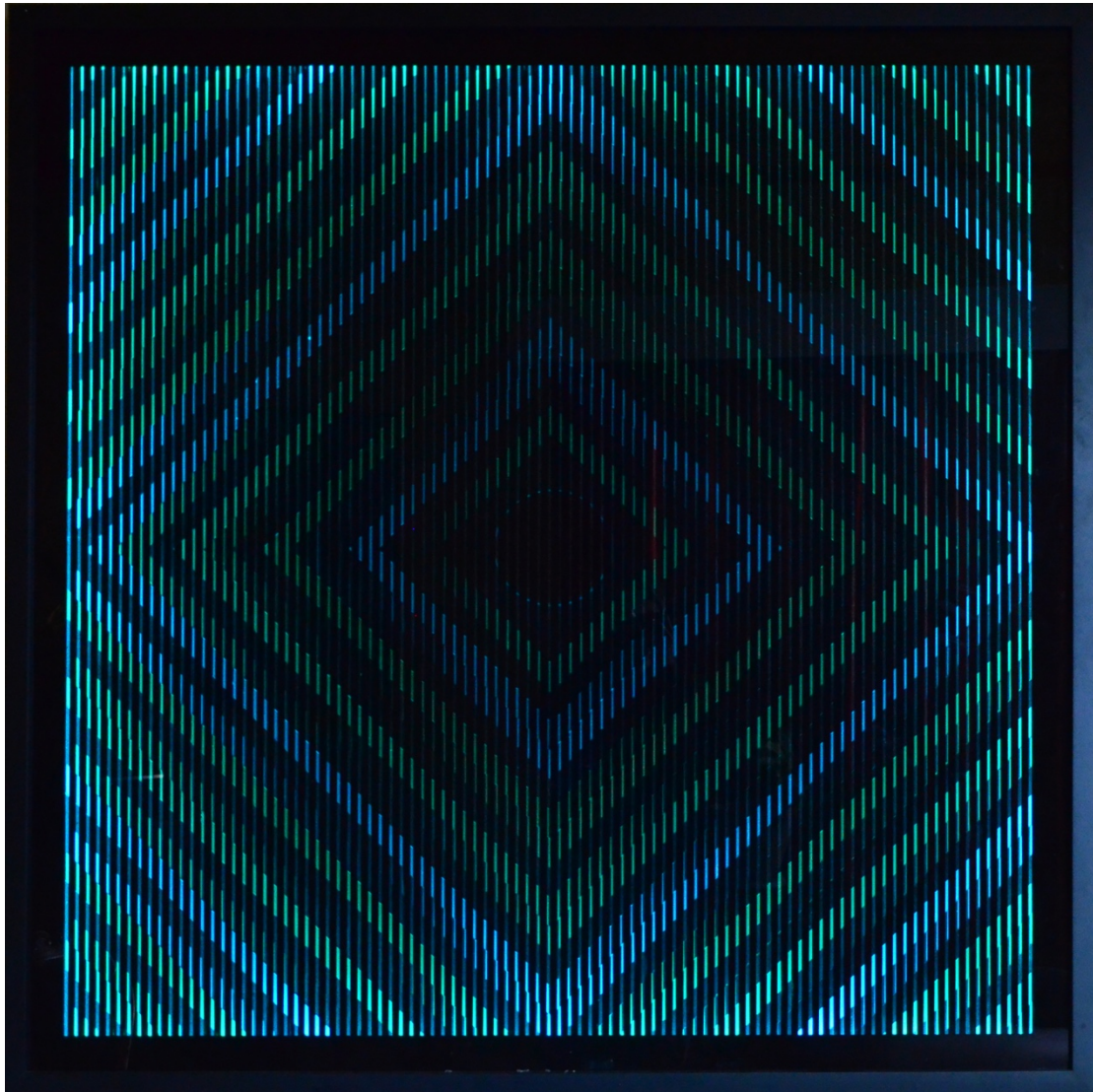


Figure 58: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Kinetika I: Entity*, synthetic spray paint, aluminium composite panel, acrylic sheet, wood, LED, wires, components, 120 x 120cm

Kinetika I: Entity (2015) (fig.58) is a lenticular artwork that has been produced using the materials, techniques and strategies outlined in Chapter 2. The front panel of *Entity* (fig.58) is stencilled on its rear surface with a series of perpendicular lines in black spray paint. The stencil itself was prepared in computer software and laser cut from MDF, after smaller initial hand cut experiments delivered proof of concept. The resultant stencil is a field of parallel vectors. The back panel of the work is a satin black Aluminium Composite panel (ACP),

selected originally for its rigidity and availability as a common building material, and for its flatness and the void like appearance of its factory finished surface. I have used aluminium panels within my work since 2006. The work is box framed with wood and routed to hold the two panels layered in parallel separation with 2cm between. A diamond-shaped form was masked with painter's tape and sprayed onto the surface of the ACP, the width of the tape informing the space between the lines, following on from the method developed for the *One Thing Begets Another* series. Three colours – blue, green and yellow – were selected for their overlapping colour frequencies and to establish intensive differences in the interlacing of the diamond shapes, in the manner of 'intensive differences' driving flow. (DeLanda, 1999, p.4).

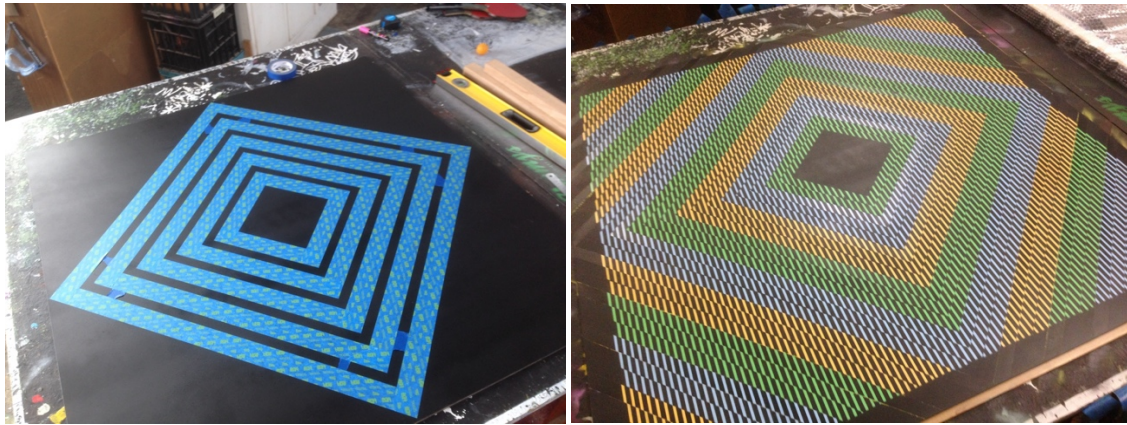


Figure 59: *Kinetika I: Entity*, 2015, process images

The masked diamond forms were sprayed through the lenticular stencil (fig.59, right), re-masked and re-sprayed in precision, three iterations in simple repetition; the stencil of vectors acting as a filter between the void of the ACP and the force of the irruptive paint ejecting from

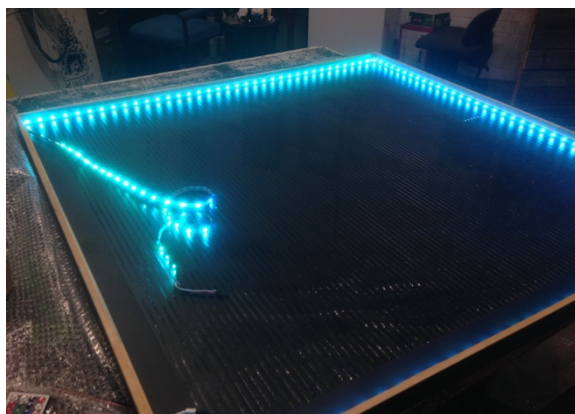


Figure 60: *Kinetika I: Entity*, 2015, LED installation

the can. My own gesture is another field of vectors, my face obscured by a protective mask, filtering the particles of airborne paint that vector towards me and my respiratory system.

LED lights and their electronic component parts were then installed into the frame

between the front and back panel (fig.60). They were introduced in this work to address the inherited problem from *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* (fig.49) of insufficient internal light²⁰.

However, this also introduced an emergent capacity for the new assemblage to change colour intensity and frequency, in a fixed or adaptive manner, introducing another intensive quality and an emergent expressivity in the work.

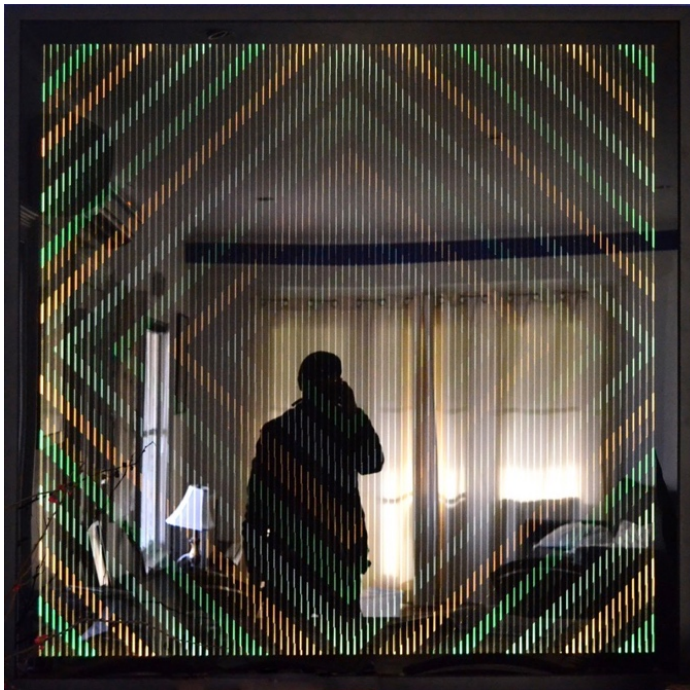


Figure 61: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Kinetika I: Entity*, assemblage, 120 x 120cm

The surface of *Entity* (fig.61) is mirrorlike, reflective and reflecting; it locates the observer within a territory bound by its framing. *Entity* is an object of representation in which the observer, including myself, becomes a subject represented within the reflection. The location and dislocation are heightened by the work's situatedness; that is,

the lenticular, moiré or disruption effect of the work encourages the observer to move from ground to ground, like a nomad, whilst the work itself occupies a fixed position. *Entity* changes appearance from every angle. No two observers see the same phenomena at the same point in time and space, and so each observes a different potentiality of *Entity's* virtual configurations. Whilst it can be said in broad generalisation that all perspectives are unique, with *Entity* this is made apparent in specificity by drawing attention to the particular configuration of the subject-object relationship. It does this through the emergent properties

²⁰ These LED lights were not initially intended for this artwork but became necessary due to the lack of natural light available through the lenticular front panel (50% black) in order to illuminate the back panel. This inherited problem is addressed further in later works and remains an opportunity for future experimentation.

of the lenticular animation that are formed through the intersection of the assemblages; the human proprioceptive system, the human ocular system, and the arrangement of the artwork itself. The emergent lenticular property is a localised reality bubble, a localised spatio-temporal event, which could be described as a meta-*umwelt* or coded-semiosphere. In this sense *Entity* is emergent from the intersections of those assemblages, opening onto a new territory. ‘The abstract machine begins to unfold’ write Deleuze & Guattari (1987, p.63) ‘to stand to full height, producing an illusion exceeding all strata, even though the machine itself still belongs to a determinate stratum’ (2000). *Entity* has become.

Entity is now performing camouflage. The observer’s eye is drawn to the virtual phenomena of the disruption pattern, before it necessarily discerns the material-semiotic components of the object²¹. In this way, the painting is hidden in plain sight; it is relating to the observer through a dynamic, spatialising and temporal encounter. Though the work itself is static and determinate, it has become less discernible due to the flickering and granular montage of the effect it produces.

Entity also performs as a meta-mask in the sense that it wears the lenticular mask layer upon the painting’s face. This dissimulation of the stencil pushes it further into the disguise of its own variability (compared with the earlier painted works) as it becomes an actor in a new kind of assemblage – now a painting wearing a mask, rather than a painting that has had a mask applied (although the latter is also true). This bringing out of the stencil from the surface, an actualisation of the mask, introduces the stencil’s performative nature as a temporal and dynamic agent, no longer statically embedded within the paint as a trace of itself, now emboldened and operative.

²¹ Of course, when one spends time engaging with the work, the actual layers are readily observable

Entity enrolls the observer into new gestural modalities as they apprehend the work. This effect is granular, both in its segmentation of space and in the viewer's apprehension as they navigate a flickering montage of strobe-like images. The nomadic perspective of the observer is sharpened via the situatedness of the artwork, revealing the observer to be literally unsettled. According to Latour, totalities can only be grasped through a panorama or montaging of images (Latour, 2005, p.181, 222).

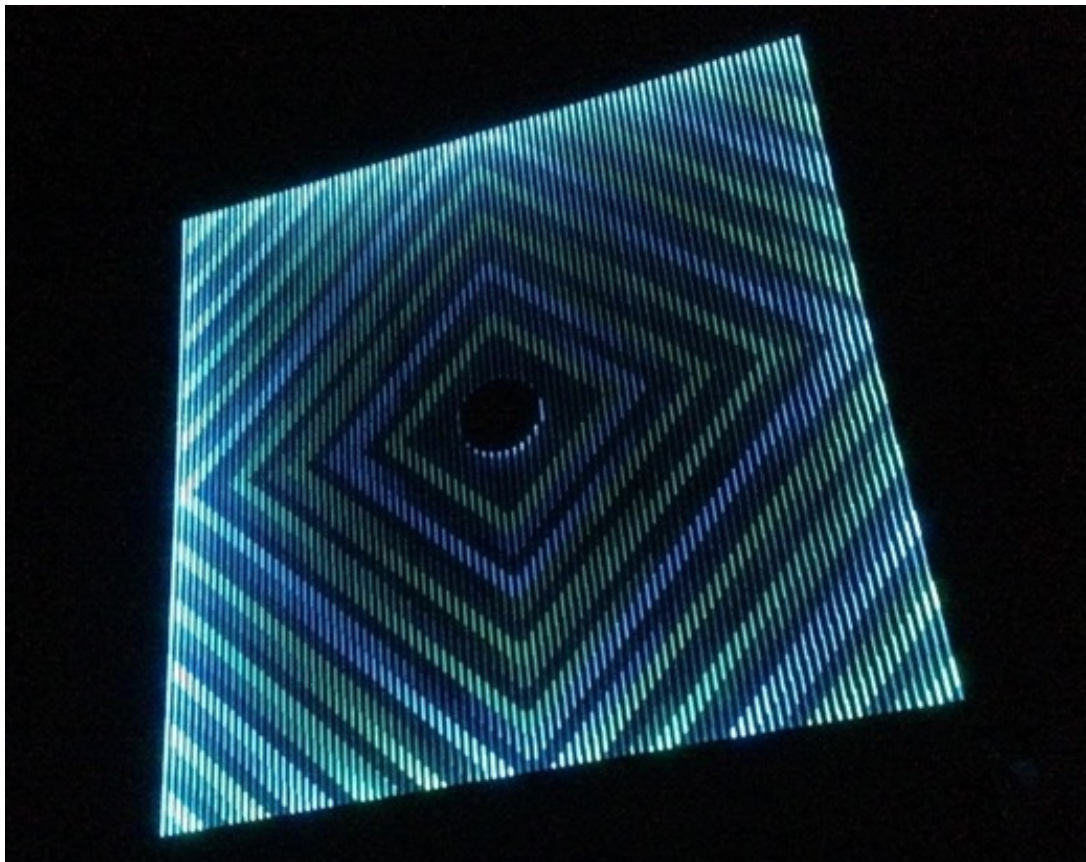


Figure 62: Benjamin Kluss, 2015, *Kinetika I: Entity*, assemblage, 120 x 120cm

Entity (fig.62) has the gestalt appearance of an actual entity, of a seamless totality, based on the semiotic coding of persona and the mask. It performs as a body, having the capacity to affect and to be affected. Both observer and artwork perform as actors within the new assemblage – visually, kinaesthetically and semiotically – actualising the virtual potential through their interaction. The main problem arising from *Entity* is the interference of the

reflective surface with the lenticular effect. Although the reflection in this work is deliberate and productive, it is made redundant in future iterations in favour of a clearer moiré effect.

The practical strategies of the research are surfaced and amplified through this work. *Entity* is the actor, the persona, the entity. The stencil itself has become a physical component in the work, the mask that *Entity* wears, amplifying its dimensionality.

3.3 Becoming Population



Figure 63: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika II: A*, MDF, paper, LED light source, 270 x 360cm

In *Difference and Repetition* (1968) Deleuze argues that the individual precedes the species, and that the species is a population of individuals. Where *Entity* (fig.62) is an individual, it has given rise to an endless iterative capacity in the studio, producing a population. Each work in the *Kinetika* series (of which *Entity* is *Kinetika I*) follows a path of dissimilitude, disguise and repetition, of the swapping in and out components; the shifting of vectors, filters and forces within the space of potentialities. Keller Easterling in *Superhumanity: Design of the Self* says 'Beyond the design of things is the design of the medium in which they are suspended, and beyond the design of a totalizing medium is the design of an iterative medium, the right answer is doomed to be right only for an instant before its superiority is challenged' (Easterling, 2018, p.272). The *Kinetika* series is an iterative medium, unified by the strata of materials and processes that compose them, and their lenticular capacities and their strategies of relating. *Kinetika II: A & B* (fig.63 & 64), are an evolution of *Entity* (fig.62), of the

same coding, they propose solutions to some of the problematic territory imposed by their progenitor. To alleviate the darkening of the interior void, these works are lit from behind rather than from within the frame, a differentiated vector of light as an intensive force. Additionally, rather than a solid rear panel, both of the layers employ an open lenticular pattern as a filter, resulting in a punchier and more dynamic visual gestalt of the moiré effect for the observer, appearing more like a 'screen' than a wall-based object, partly due to its larger scale. Significantly, these works employ the machine cut lenticular mask layers as the work itself, rather than the sprayed stencil surfaces of *Entity* (fig.62). This bringing forward of the stencil *again* is another move towards an object of representation beyond representation itself. This is significant in that the lenticular stencil mask has become the work itself.

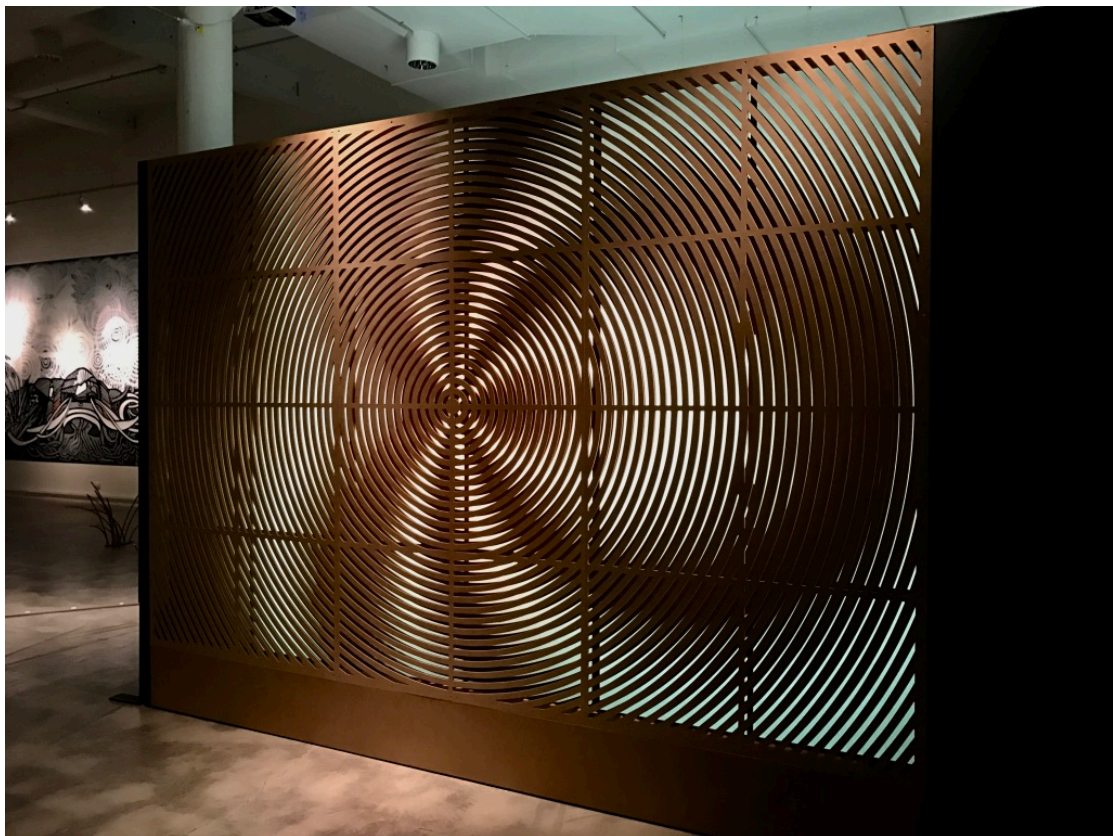


Figure 64: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika II: B*, MDF, paper, LED light source, 270 x 360cm

Clear acrylic was abandoned as a material in this iteration due to its extreme flexibility, especially at larger scales, and for the problem of reflection interfering with the lenticular effect as observed in *Entity* (fig.62). Another significant component change was that these



Figure 65: Machine cutting process at the School of Architecture & Design, UTAS, Launceston

assemblages have subtracted paint entirely; employing only raw MDF, paper and light, the works are complete. Between *Kinetika I* and *II* (fig.63 & 64) exist an extensive array of iterative potentialities, through varied combinations of materials and processes. The works that follow in the *Kinetika* series (as presented in this research) explore a fraction

of these potentials. An alternative configuration for *Kinetika II* was also trialled in my 2017 solo exhibition at Despard Gallery, *Black Prism*. Whilst the work was not included in the final exhibition, the reconfiguration demonstrates how the components can be assembled in alternative and particular ways towards future potentialities (fig.66).

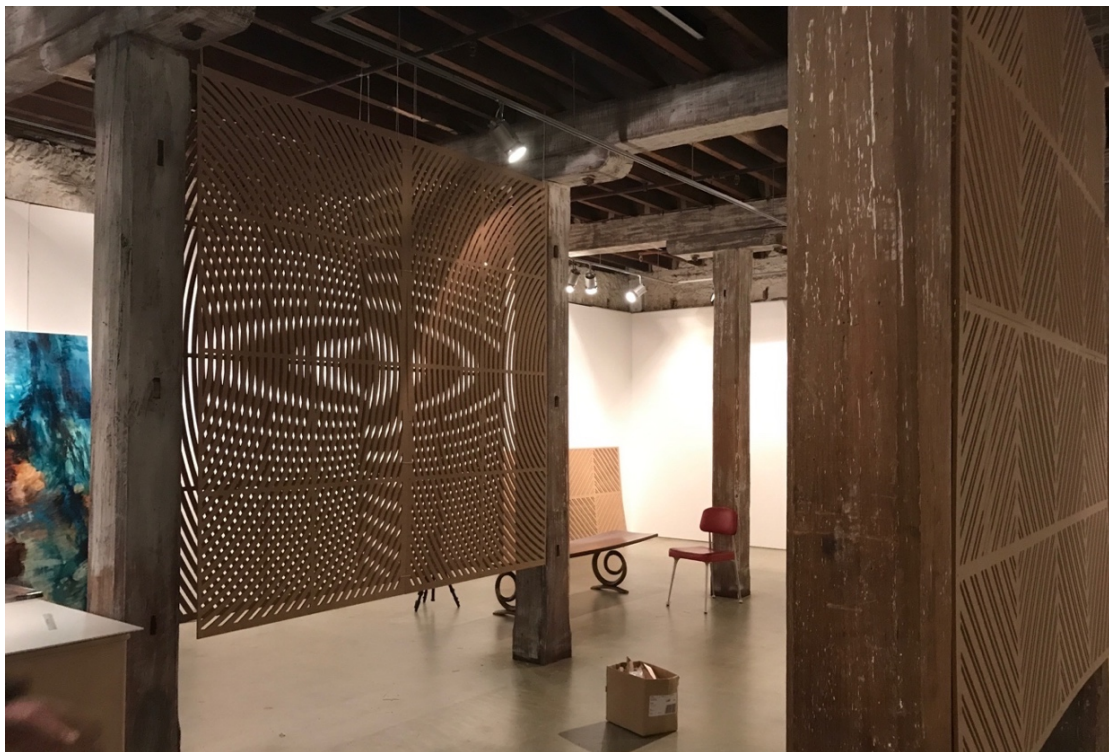


Figure 66: *Kinetika II* (Alternative arrangement) 2017, Despard Gallery, Hobart.

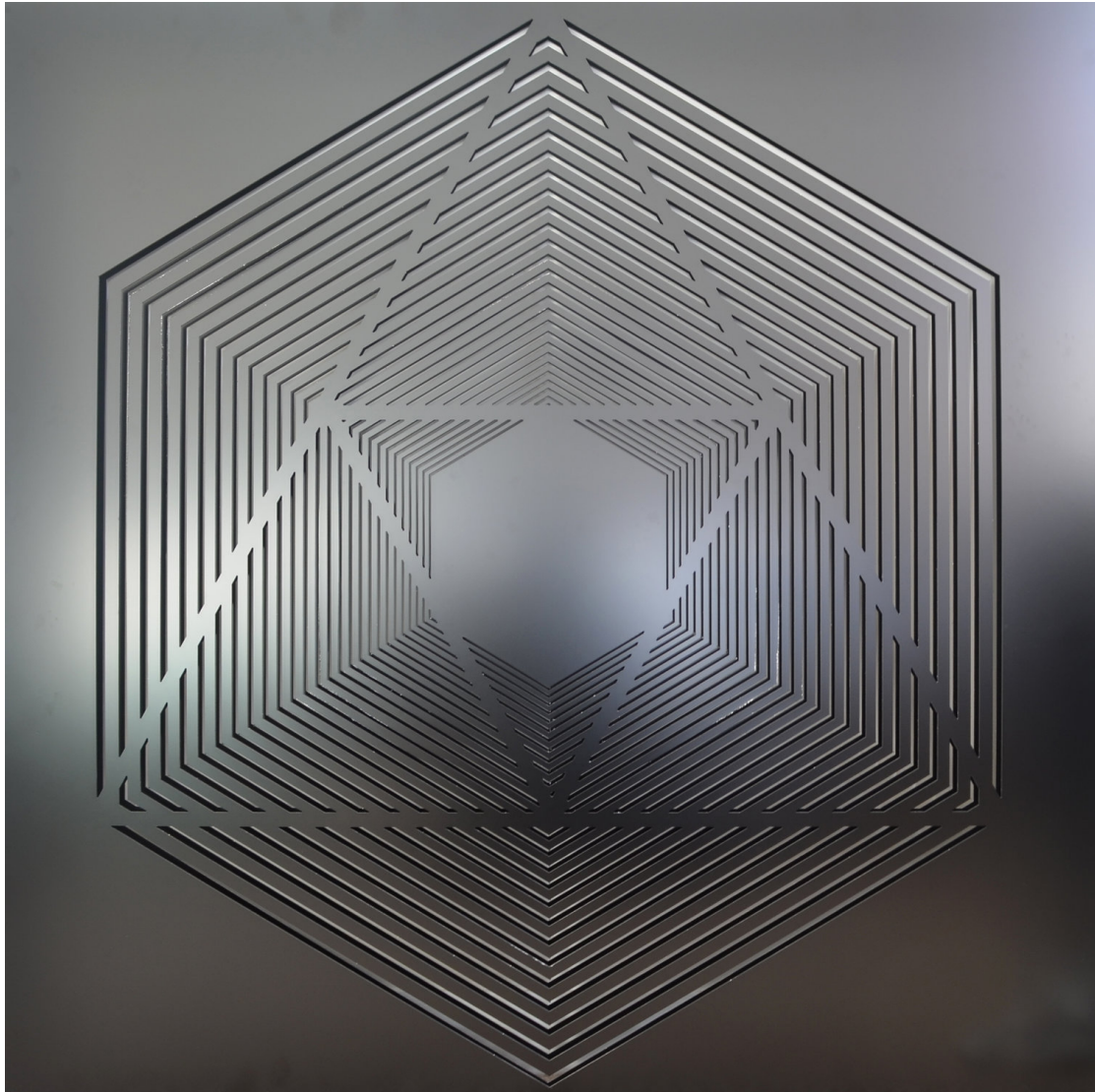


Figure 67: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika III: Atlas*, ACP, wood, acrylic mirror, 124 x 124cm

The *Kinetika III* (fig.67) series extends the format of *Entity* (fig.62) whilst incorporating new developments from *Kinetika II* (fig.63 & 64). The scale (120 x 120 x 5cm) and wooden framing of the work remain as historically identical material components to *Entity*, with the sprayed lenticular acrylic sheet swapped out in favour of machine cut panels, as per the *Kinetika II* (fig.63 & 64) series. The material for these panels is ACP which has been employed previously for its construction strength and the expressive qualities of its low sheen, deep black surface. In this work the ACP is physically brought forward to the front (where in *Entity* it occupied the back panel) and its factory finished surface recodes the hand painted surface employed in *Entity* (fig.62). It is an act of dissimulation within the material and process.

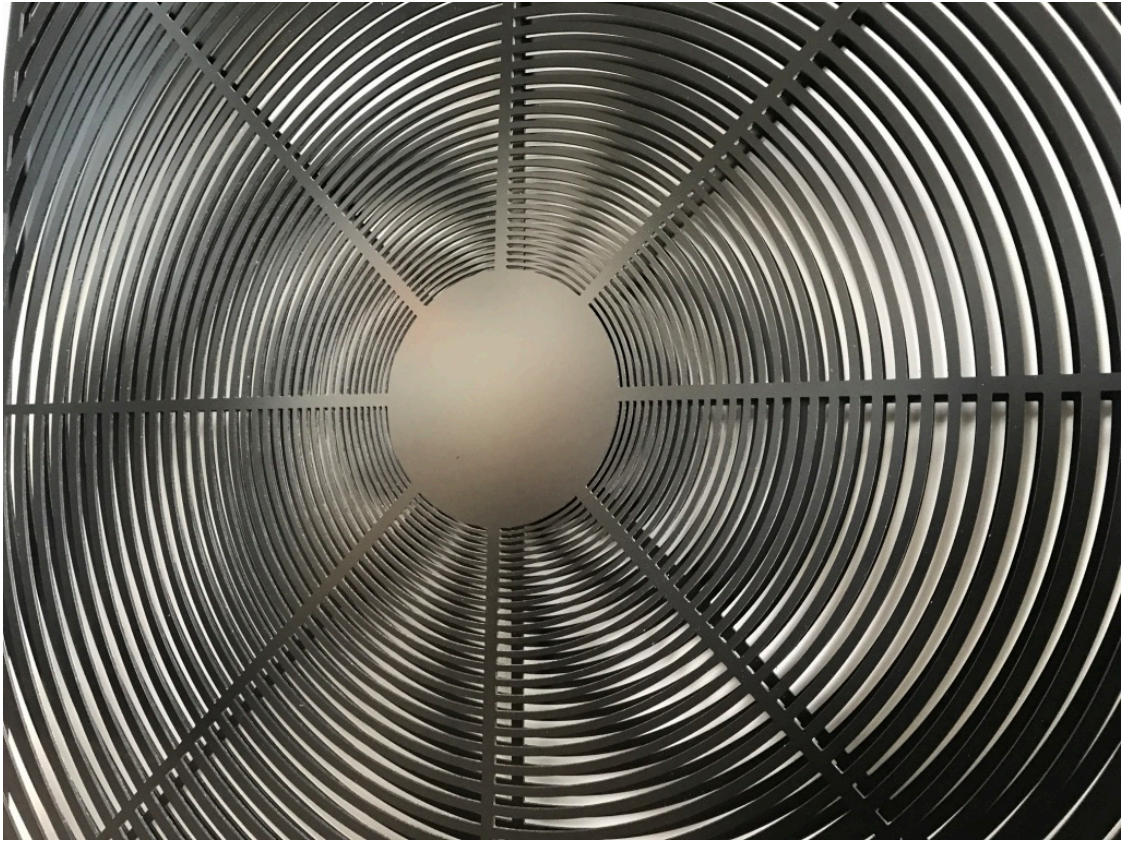


Figure 68: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika III: Sputnik I* (detail), ACP, wood, acrylic mirror, 124 x 124cm

The six works of this generation were originally planned as two panels of machined lenticular mask layers, as with *Kinteika II*. However, in the experimental stage not enough natural light was penetrating the layers to create the kind of contrast necessary for the lenticular effect, similar to the problem originally encountered in *Parallax (Blacker Mask)* (fig.49). Internal lighting sources as well as non-electrically configured methods such as a return to mirrored surfaces were considered and trialled as solutions. Eventually, an acrylic mirrored panel was swapped into the rear space of the work in place of the rear machined ACP, and a singular panel of machined ACP employed as the front mask²². The purpose of the rear mirrored panel was to produce more light from ambient sources, as a filter bouncing the intensive force of external ambient light and redirecting the vector of that light outward from within the

²² An arbitrary or accidental outcome of this was that the second, or rear, machine panel from each work was swapped out for acrylic mirror and made obsolete – only to find an unexpected and arguably more successful role in the future *Kinetika V* series.

assemblage. As a reflection, the mirrored panel also creates a virtual lenticular mask, enabling the moiré effect through the reflection. The re-introduction of reflective surfaces into the work resulted in greater efficacy of ambient light production and enabled the novel emergence of the reflected virtual lenticular mask. However, these works suffered once again from the reflections of the surrounding environment interfering with the produced lenticular effects. Therefore, in future generations, mirrored and highly reflective surfaces are made obsolete in favour of other materials and methods. This process can be understood on an evolutionary level as an intensive pressure, an evolution that comes from within – rather than an extensive pressure such as the strength of a material over different scales. There remains an open-ended productive potential for reflection to be employed in future works; for its capacity to interfere, and for its potential to produce a virtual mask within the assemblages.

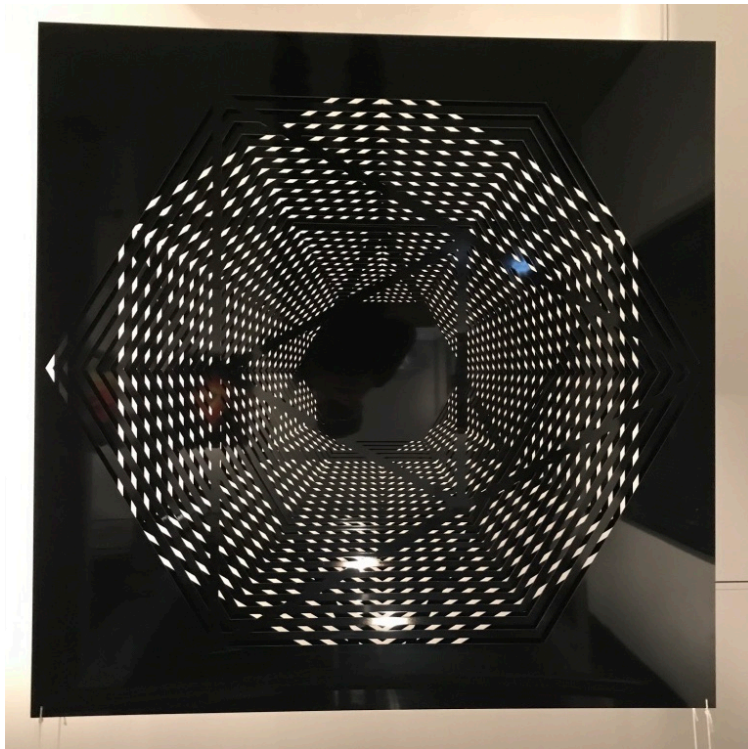


Figure 69: Benjamin Kluss, 2017, *Kinetika III: Atlas (Test Flight)*, ACP, suspension wire, 124 x 124cm

The singular *Kinetika III: Atlas (Test Flight)* (fig.69) was an experiment in this series that consisted of two machine cut panels suspended from the ceiling, so as to create a naturally lit (ambient light) effect where the panels could move in a pendulous way from breeze or the more direct touch of an observer.

This work draws on the

approach of *Kinetika II* (fig.63 & 64) by employing two masks in a state of relation to each other. This work also introduces future potentialities; however, the suspension, or free-

floating component was not pushed further within this research due to its effect on the observer. In the earlier iterations it is the movement of the observer in parallax that produces the lenticular effect; in this iteration the work itself produces the effect through its own kinetic momentum, returning the observer to an undesirably fixed or sedentary position within the interaction.

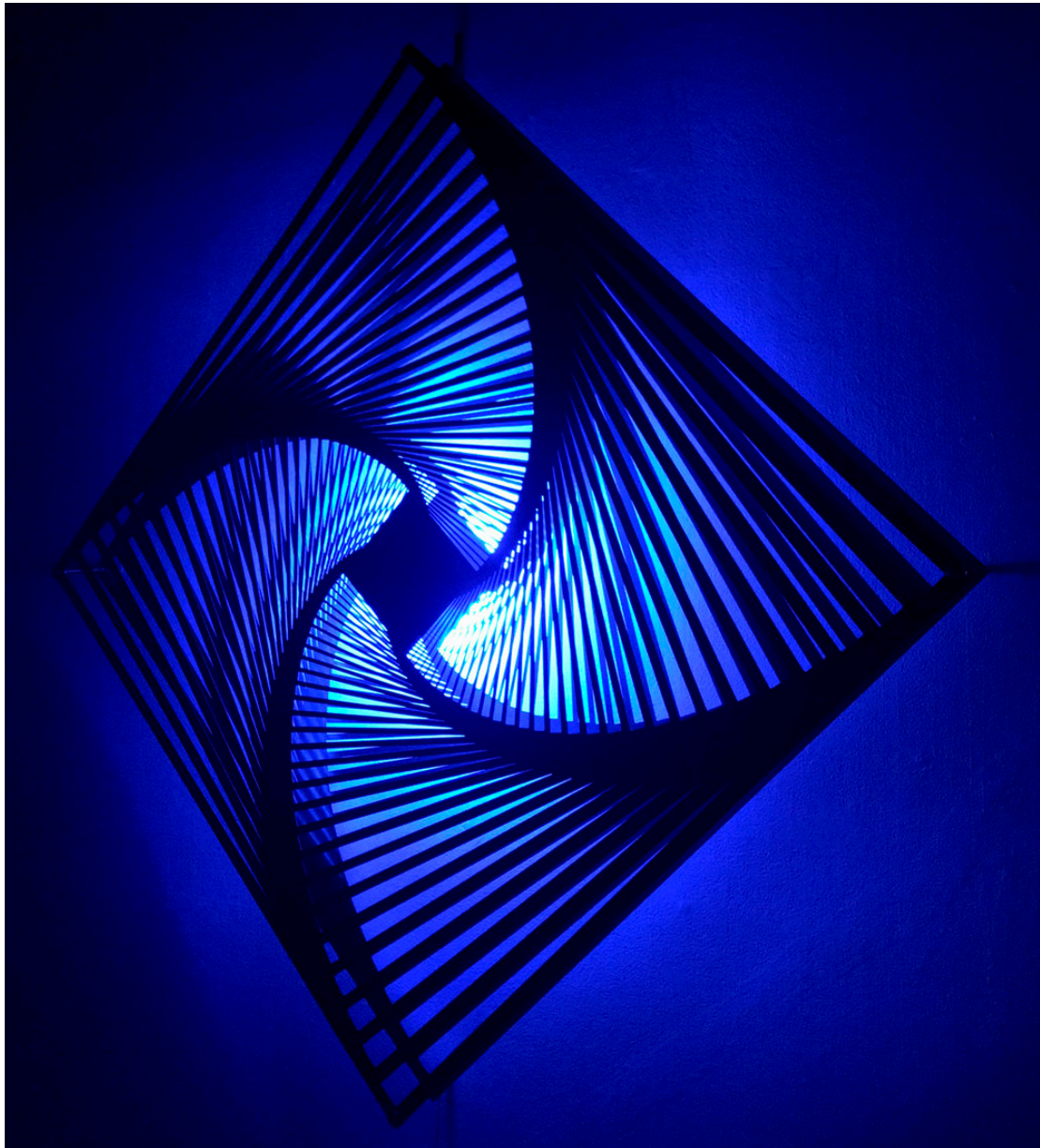


Figure 70: Benjamin Kluss, 2018, *Kinetika IV: Beyond*, aluminium, LED light components, 170 x 170 x 10cm

The fourth generation of this series, *Kinetika IV: Beyond* (2018, fig.70) hybridises components and techniques of previous generations. It is of similar physical dimension to *I* and *III* (120 x 120 x 10cm); however, the panels are displayed as a diamond rather than as a square (resulting in a 170 x 170 x 10cm dimension). *Beyond* is composed of two lenticular masks cut from 2mm aluminium without a frame, separated by steel screws at the points. In this manner the configuration is similar to *Atlas (Test Flight)* (fig.69); however, the work is fixed in position and not suspended or swinging. The metal has been cut with a bevelled tool, resulting in a finer edge for the striations than with the straight cut ACP. The work also re-introduces light as a component and an intensive force, this time in the form of a singular LED light source affixed centrally to the rear mask and vectored towards the wall, illuminating the wall itself in a radial pattern. This work successfully responds to a number of problems inherited from the previous iterations (i.e. correct illumination, reflection interference, kinetic response of the observer); however, in the very minimal approach of this work I felt that it lacked the expressivity of previous components, especially when compared to *Entity* (fig.62). One issue was that the absence of a frame and the visibility of the bolts and fixings interfered with the gestalt perception of the work as a whole. Instead, the work appeared as a collection of industrial components. Additionally, and through analysis, it also became apparent that the painted surface was a key expressive component of the earlier works. The unique materiality and application of paint is like a second skin, or even a mask, in and of itself; its colour is an intensive force, an expressive medium that encodes the work with a unique and particular persona. In a return to the concept of the dissimulated self-portrait, the simulacrum of Jamin, it was also identified that spray paint is critical to the work.

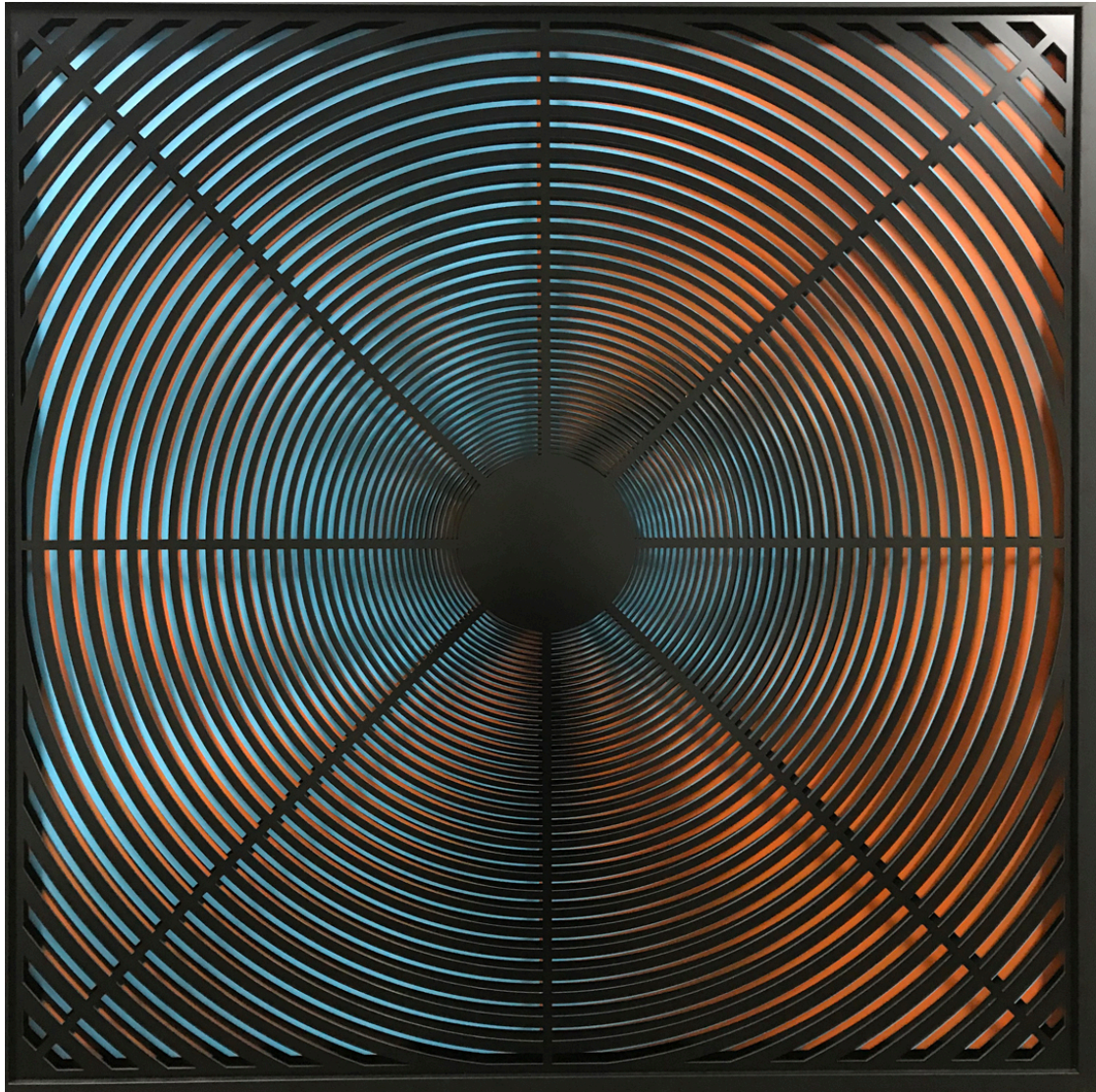


Figure 71: Benjamin Kluss, 2018, *Kinetika V: Sputnik I Revisited*, ACP, wood, spray paint, 125 x 125 x 5cm

The *Kinetika V* series (fig.71 & 72), cannibalises the older *Kinetika III* (fig.67) works – reusing the machine cut lenticular masks and wooden frames whilst swapping out the rear acrylic mirror panels for flat sheets of matching satin black ACP. Paint has been re-introduced and sprayed onto the new rear panels, using the spare lenticular mask panels that had been swapped out from the earlier series, in a painted simulacrum of the front panel. In this way, the literal mirror has been virtualised as a component, and is now a painted mirror. Equally, where before it was a reflection, it is now a simulacrum of the lenticular mask itself.

Complementary colours have been employed to heighten and add to the visual push and pull of the works, resprayed in slight offset to each other, producing a lenticular effect that flickers

between the forms themselves as well as between the two colours, in decohering perceptions of gestalt colour dissimilarity. It is now colour that is employed as an intensive force within the work, replacing light. The dynamics of colour respond to the ambient light surrounding the work in such a way that the need for an additional light source is negated, and the dissimulation of the mirror into a painted surface brings a new understanding to the nature of the mirror and its relationship to the mask and the stencil.

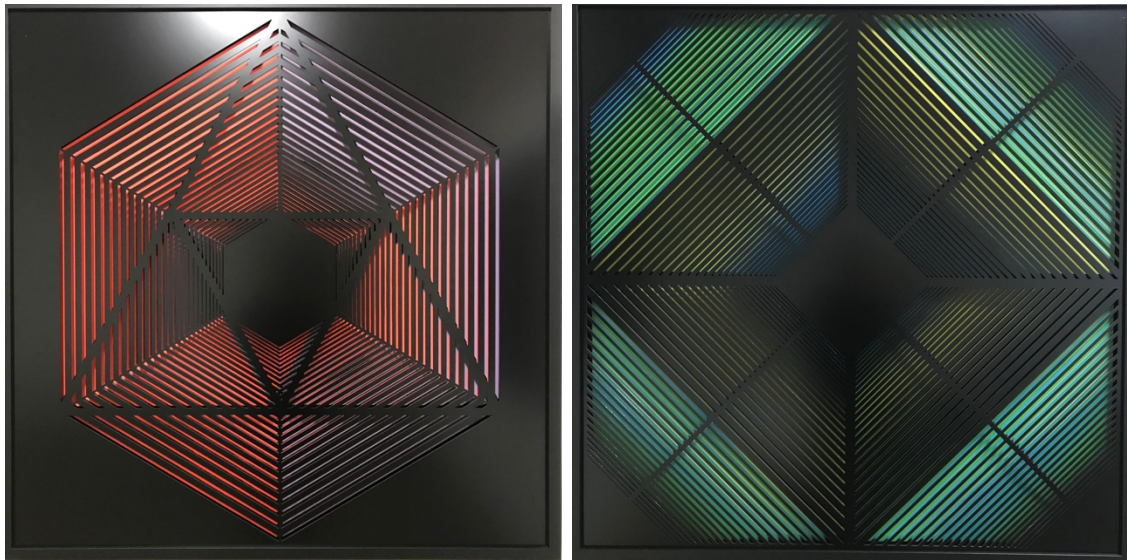


Figure 72: Benjamin Kluss, 2018, *Kinetika V: Atlas* (left) and *Mayak* (right), ACP, wood, spray paint, 63 x 63 x 4cm

The Kinetika III (fig.67) and *Kinetika V* (fig.72) series are in fact the same actual entities that have undergone a material adaption not dissimilar to a cephalopod re-writing its RNA (Dean, 2019, para.9); the works have recoded their materiality. Whilst I consider the *Kinetika V* series a distinct generation, it can also be argued that they are in fact an edit of *Kinetika III*.



Figure 73: Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Kinetika VI: Astraea* (left) and *Eros* (right), ACP, wood, spray paint, 63 x 63 x 4cm

The eight works of the *Kinetika VI* (fig.73) series are identically coded to the previous series, though they are actual new entities, and they are of smaller dimensions. An external evolutionary pressure dictated their scale of 63 x 63 x 4cm (i.e. they needed to be cheaper to produce and send interstate for an exhibition at Flinders Lane Gallery). The intention of these works was to expand the population of the *Kinetika* series, whilst refining the techniques that had been employed across all of the iterations with special attention placed on the developments that had occurred within the immediately prior series. This series employs new configurations within the lenticular patterns themselves, developed within the computer-based environment. These works deliberately hint at an infinite array of potentialities for the populations' continued evolutionary journey as a species of assemblages.



Figure 74: Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Kinetika VI: Ceres* (left) and *Thule* (right), ACP, spray paint, 63 x 63 x 4cm

A particular concern arising for these works, following on from the previous generations, is how to produce enough light force to illuminate the void and the painted rear face of the works. As the scale of the works decreases, so does the amount of light available. This concern is addressed via a less dense, more open pattern on the outer mask, resulting in more light, though affecting the density and smoothness of the produced optical effects. This concern for the passage of light through the mask is an internal evolutionary pressure across the population, which has produced a range of differing solutions, striations, forms and patterns – decoded as an extensive display of expressivity that is driven by the internal, intensive pressures.

3.4 Becoming Umwelt



Figure 75: Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Kinetika VII: Umwelt*, MDF, paper, LED par cans, approx. 240 x 500 x 500cm

Kinetika VII: Umwelt (2019) is the final work of the practical investigation. The work is a 2.4m high chamber in the shape of a 5m x 5m hexagon, with each face comprised of an assemblage after the manner of *Kinetika II*, i.e. two machine-cut lenticular panels made from MDF with a paper screen attached to the rear of the back panel. *Umwelt* presents a ganzfeld (total field) of lenticular mediation – a near total hallucination onto shifting perspectives and the mutability of self within a camouflaging assemblage. The work encourages kinaesthetic engagement in the observer that is not explicitly tacit or innate – it is a spatio-temporal encounter that is particular and partial to the work. *Kinetika VII* was assembled through a process of complex repetitions that have disguised their own variability of elements through dissimulation, displacement, reflection and multiplication. It is the evolutionary successor to those studio experiments that began in 2013 (detailed in Chapter 2). It employs material and semiotic actors to perform a structure of relating that demonstrates emergent properties

through the produced moiré effect, as the observer keeps moving whilst encountering the work. A multiplicity of variable configurations exists at once, as virtual potentials within a single physical system. However, an observer will only perceive one particular and partial configuration of this pattern at any one moment within the encounter. In this way the work draws attention to the intersections of things as events, and of assemblages as processes, revealing a temporal structure of relating.

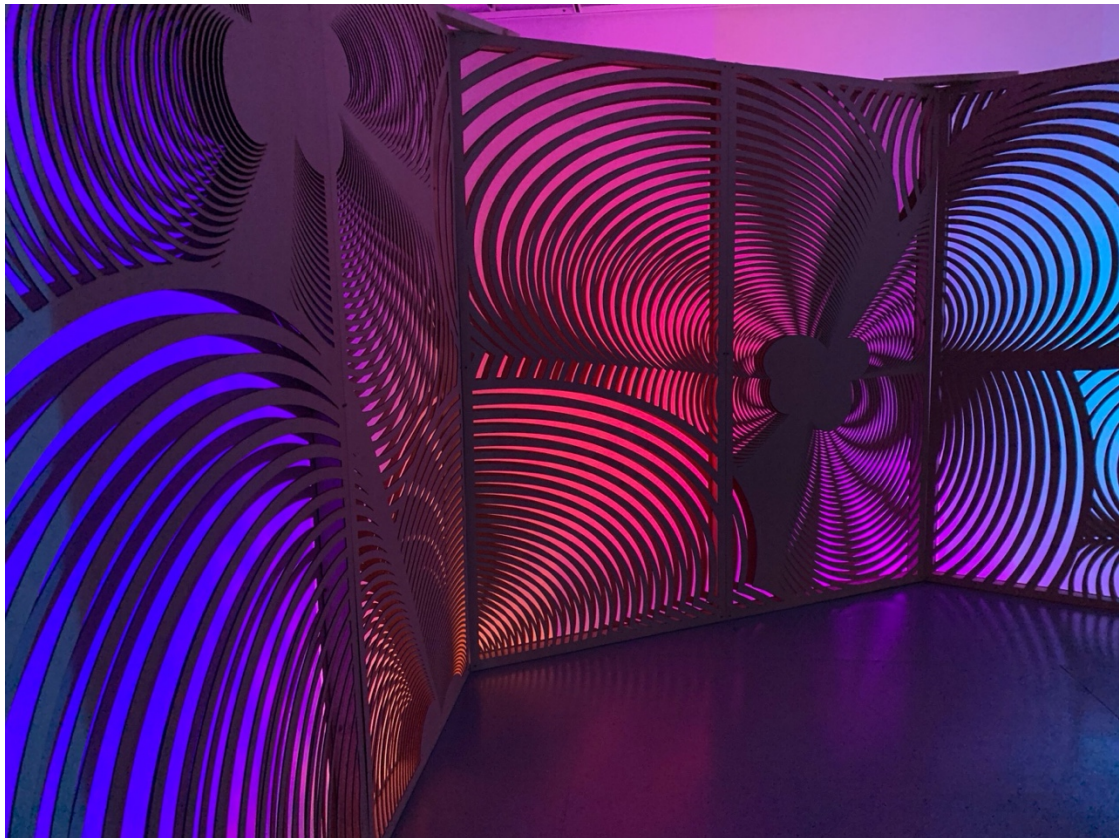


Figure 76: Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Kinetika VII: Umwelt*, MDF, paper, LED par cans, approx. 240 x 500 x 500cm

The work strives to produce a dissociative and disorienting experience of *umwelt* for the observer, through the perceptual and kinaesthetic simulations of surface, depth, movement and illusion within the spatio-temporal encounter. Adam Geczy describes *ganzfelds* as illusionistic spaces that alter the viewers perceptual field, and that 'once we enter a space that has been mediated, or specially constructed by the artist, we are presented with another space, a window-like opening that confounds our conventional, habitual relationship to lived

space' (Geczy, 2007). *Kinetika VII* achieves this 'confounding of conventional' relationship to space through its physically static yet visually crawling surfaces that respond in real-time to the movements of the viewer, an experience of kinaesthetic synaesthesia. To be within the work is to be within an environment mediated by myself to be a simulation of the *umwelt* in which my personas reside. In this way, it could be argued that the work is a manifestation of an hallucination, a portal into another dimension (*umwelt*!) such as described in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, Aldous Huxley's *Doors of Perception* and Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* – a dimension beyond a singular perspective.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the final stage of the practical investigation, the *Kinetika* series, through an analysis of the materials and processes that governed its morphogenesis and continued evolution. Along the way, various intensive and extensive pressures were revealed as evolutionary forces that impacted the appearance and performance of the artworks. This methodology is revealed as productive – it produces distinctiveness through repetition and dissimilitude rather than through a pursuit of originality or uniqueness. The methodology also reveals a dynamic mode of relating between artist and object, where a set of determined rules can produce endless iterative configurations and assemblages; and in this way the studio process comes to mirror the observers experience of the artwork.

This chapter has highlighted the movement of the observer in parallel to the artwork's surface to be of central importance to the success of the work. It has also highlighted the importance of gestalt perception within the material-semiotic encoding of the work's capacity to be perceived as a 'seamless whole' or 'totality'. The importance of paint and colour was also revealed in this chapter, as a method of instantiating expressivity into an object, and developing its character, its persona. Complimentary colours were employed as an intensive force to heighten the existing lenticular push and pull effect of the work.

The final work presented in this chapter, and within this research, is an immersive installation called *Kinetika VII: Umwelt*. The work is framed as a ganzfeld, a mediated artistic environment, that is a simulation of the umwelt in which my personas reside. The work demonstrates a dimension beyond a singular perspective.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

'Abstraction today is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory - PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA - it is the map that engenders the territory'

Baudrillard, 1981, p. 1

This research project has explored a condition of identity that is fugitive in nature through an abstraction of my own persona – demonstrating an experience of shifting and mutable roles and contexts experienced and framed as masquerade. The mask, and the performance of camouflage, have been employed literally and metaphorically within the works as a medium of belonging and relating. This medium and structure of relating is adaptive, modular and mutable – an assemblage of material components that produces gestalt perceptions of ‘wholeness’ and ‘totality’ which can be read as identity, but which have no origin beyond the pure difference and repetition that they display. A swarming of this difference and repetition has produced ganzfelds – total fields that exceed the strata of their assemblage – a ‘real’ hallucination that interferes with the ‘impermeable shell’ (Uexküll, 1928, p. 219) of experience that surrounds the observer, as one umwelt melding into another. Through practice and through performance, I have entered into this logic of becoming: the performer, the performance and the performed have become a new assemblage; grasped only through the montage of its components and the swarming multiplicity of moments; a shifting panorama of durational perspective.

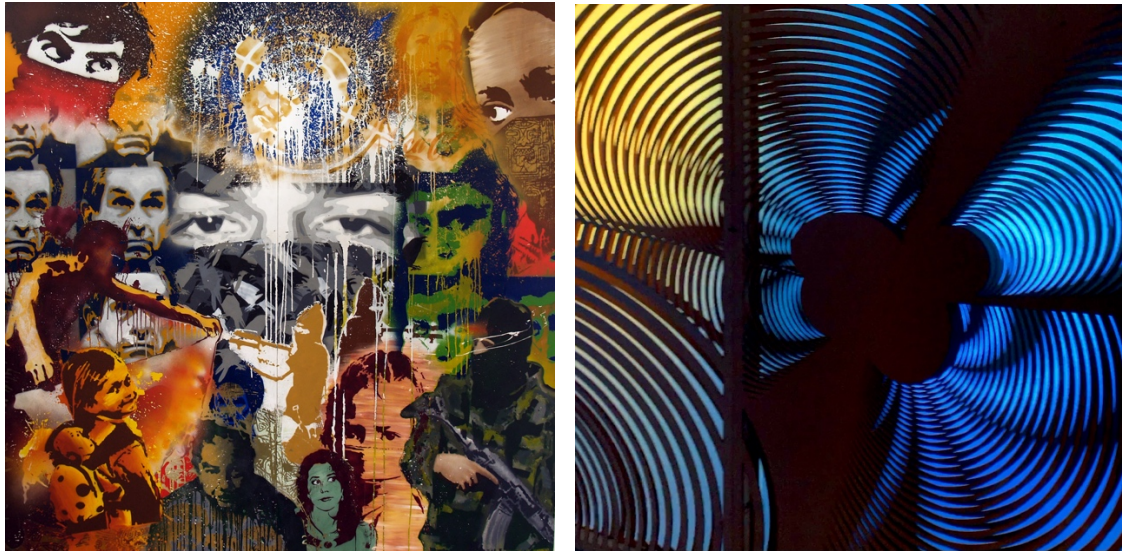


Figure 77: (left) Benjamin Kluss, 2005, *Dawn of the Golden Age*, spray paint on MDF, 240 x 240cm

(right) Benjamin Kluss, 2019, *Kinetika VII: Umwelt*, MDF, paper, LED par cans, approx. 240 x 500 x 500cm

This research presents an original approach to de-stratifying and transforming an artistic practice; specifically, it departs from message driven political spray painting to arrive at an open-ended multidisciplinary approach that is affirmative of its own morphogenic potential whilst maintaining a direct line of flight (through its materials and processes) from its point of departure. The final work, *Kinetika VII: Umwelt* (2019, fig.77, right) hybridises diverse elements and installation-based strategies to conjure disorientation and the carnivalesque. Through an interrogation of the materials and processes of the prior-practice, I have transformed my 'identity' as an artist through complex repetition and pure difference, presenting an original practical interpretation of the philosophy of Giles Deleuze and Manuel DeLanda. In turn, this practical investigation has revealed my fugitive identity and my *umwelt* – the *I* and the *world of I* – to be sites of flux; events, performances, interactions. In my 2005 work *Dawn of the Golden Age* (fig. 77, left), a literal self-portrait is contained within representations of my political milieu. In 2019's *Umwelt* (fig. 77, right) those representations have become a temporal performance between myself and the observer. My identity, despite whatever seemingly deterministic attributes it possesses, is an assemblage of morphogenic capacities that flow towards an ocean of emergent potentialities or else calcify into sediment

and strata, which is the fate of all things that do not keep moving. This project proposes that nothing is essential, fixed or static; but rather that what we consider to be identity is itself a copy, a simulacrum, and an illusion; and that things are better understood as events and dynamic processes, continuously evolving in non-linear fashion producing emergent properties through their interactions. Through the practical investigation I have reframed persona as an adaptive and productive assemblage of partial and shifting perspectives that employs the performative strategies of camouflage to produce the appearance of identity and the development of new artworks. It is the body of the two-headed synthesizer, the one head productive and associative, the other effacing and dissociative. As Deleuze and Guattari have put it:

It is no longer a question of imposing a form upon a matter but of elaborating an increasingly rich and consistent material, the better to tap increasingly intense forces. What makes a material increasingly rich is the same as what holds heterogeneities together without their ceasing to be heterogeneous. What holds them together in this way are intercalary oscillations, synthesizers with at least two heads. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.189)

The evolution of the work as detailed in Chapter 2, involved the development of lenticular stencils, which I have termed 'masks', that produce a disruption pattern or motion dazzle. In these works, the viewer is a nomad, entirely partial to the work. The movement and vision of the observer actively generates the illusion that immediately camouflages the object. The observer moves into the virtual configurations, producing an effect of the real, whilst rendering the actual object invisible in plain sight. Through design, the work has been placed in a state of performative camouflage; the eye is drawn to the produced effect, rather than the actual work.

Kinetika I: Entity is the turning point of this research. *Entity* is regarded as another me – a mask, a persona, a copy, a simulacrum. I understand that it is different to me, that it is irruptive and individuated. *Entity* is an abstraction of the idea that we are the same, a two-way self-portrait of dissimilitude and difference. And yet it is this difference, this lack of representation and lack of similarity, that makes *Entity* unlike a self-portrait, and more like a simulacrum. *Entity* assembles from my gestures, the materials I have chosen and the methods and strategies I have pursued, into something emergent – a new assemblage of mask and persona, camouflaged and disguised through its material-semiotic encoding. *Entity* is the gestalt moment of the research – a singularity – an event through which the research irrevocably passed. A dissimulation of death. An unfolding onto new territories. A new persona was born, a new mask, a new me, a new agent, a progenitor of a new population, an explorer of new umwelts.

These new understandings of masking and camouflage are both literal and metaphorical in the work; literally destabilising a privileged or singular perspective, and metaphorically destabilising the privilege of identity, whilst maintaining a simultaneity of potential states. Quite simply, the work wants the viewer to enter into a dance with it. The interaction of this syncopated tango produces an emergent entity, an assemblage that exceeds the strata of its components, exceeds the combination of object and observer. Spatial and temporal, one filter opening onto another. Unfolding.

This project has focused on the persona, the person and the personal – drawing attention to the folly of its own abstraction; a simulacrum within a simulation, a mask within a masquerade ball. Before the advent of thought, before the complexity of language, before the image and the symbol – before identification – there exists a vibrant materialism that is productive and

effacing in and of itself. It produces all forms and erases them. It coheres and decoheres. It is kaleidoscopic, viral, and multidimensional. It operates at all scales. It is vibratory and immersive. Multiple. Simultaneous.

Midway through this research project, I was staring at *Kinetika I: Entity* (fig.62) from the outside, the observer of something new – another entity, another ‘I’. At the end of this research project, I am staring out from within *Kinetika VII: Umwelt* (fig.75) – the entity is now *within* the umwelt. In no uncertain way, the *Kinetika* series (fig. 78) has the potential to continue after the fact of this research ad infinitum. It’s morphogenic capacity provides an inexhaustible array of possibilities: should they be pursued. However, this project has excavated potentials within my artistic practice beyond the *Kinetika* series; in fact, there were multiple threads that emerged through the practical research that have been detailed briefly within the main body of this text and continued within the Appendices. These tangential threads include mirror and LED based works, concepts centred on a labyrinthian installation, curatorial work, sound production, performance and multi-disciplined (and multi-sensory) installations. The logic of the mask, camouflage and assemblage has enabled a new and clear approach within my practice, that is not limited to a particular style, medium or modality, but rather, is an interface – a technology of relating, a character, a persona, a performance. This allows for an indeterminant yet highly productive and rigorous set of creative approaches that are able to span a wide variety of undertakings, as evidenced through this project and furthered through the appendices. This strategy of the mask is that of a partial perspective, revealed here through this written exegesis and through the exhibition of final works – the thesis. This research has applied a conceptual framework to a practical investigation whilst remaining open ended and expansive enough to provide a lifetime of further investigation, experimentation and output across a range of disciplines. From modulations of scale,

materials and intensities, through to reconfigured modalities and arrangements, this research proposes a beginning rather than an end.

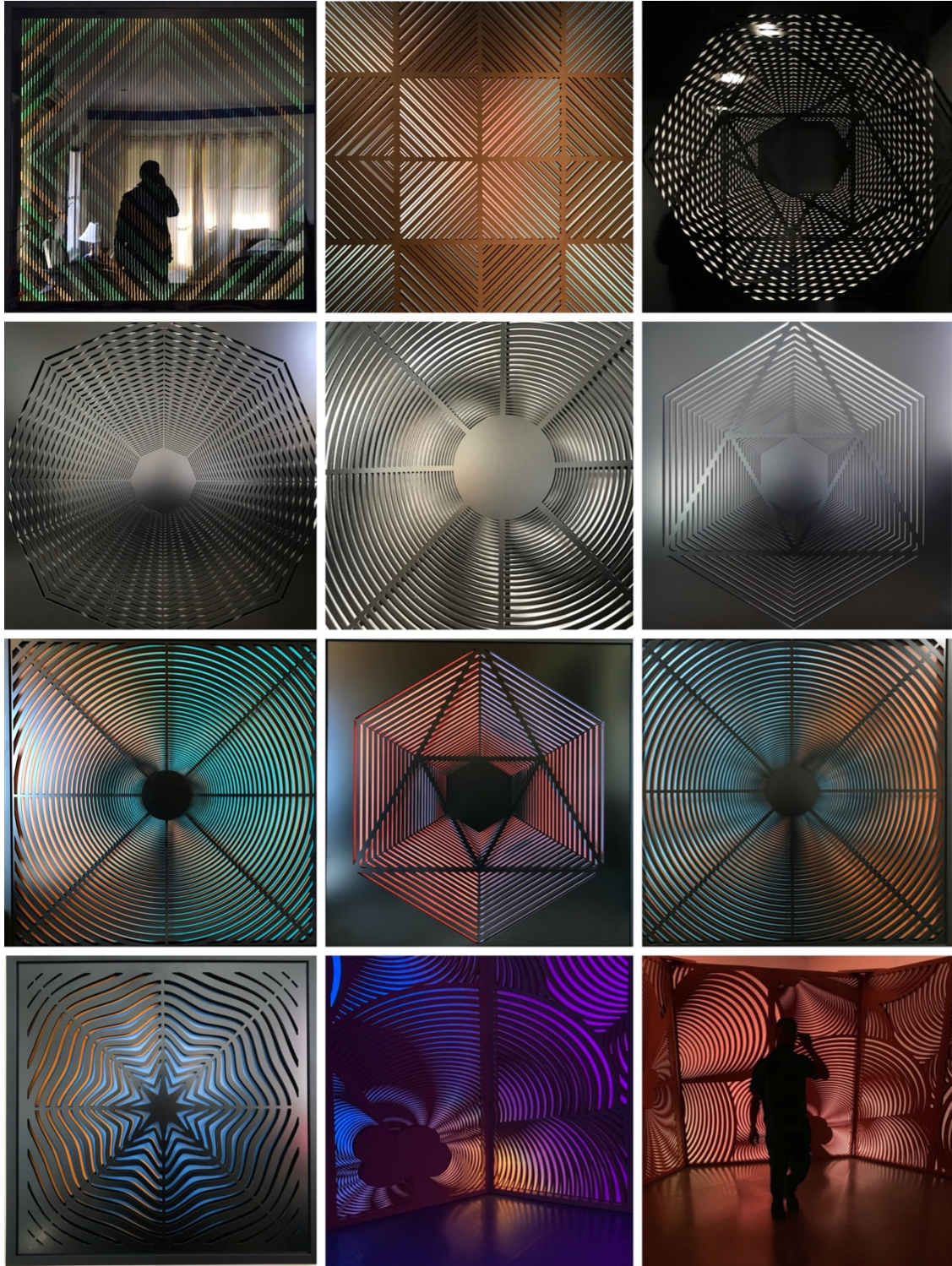


Figure 78: Benjamin Kluss, 2015-19, *Kinetika* – from the outside looking in, to the inside looking out.

Appendix

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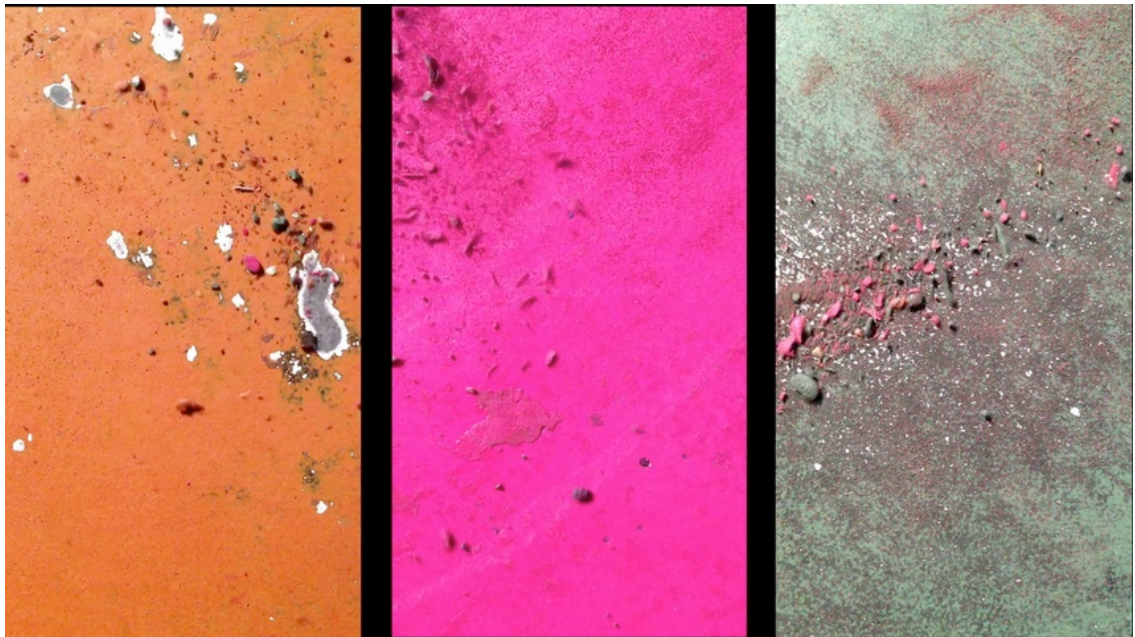
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II: Other Works

This section presents works made as part of this research project, that were not included in the body of the exegesis nor in the final exhibition.



Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2013, *Entropic / Extropic*, 3 Channel Video installation.



Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2015, *Vibrant Matters #2*, spray paint and ACP, 50 x 50cm



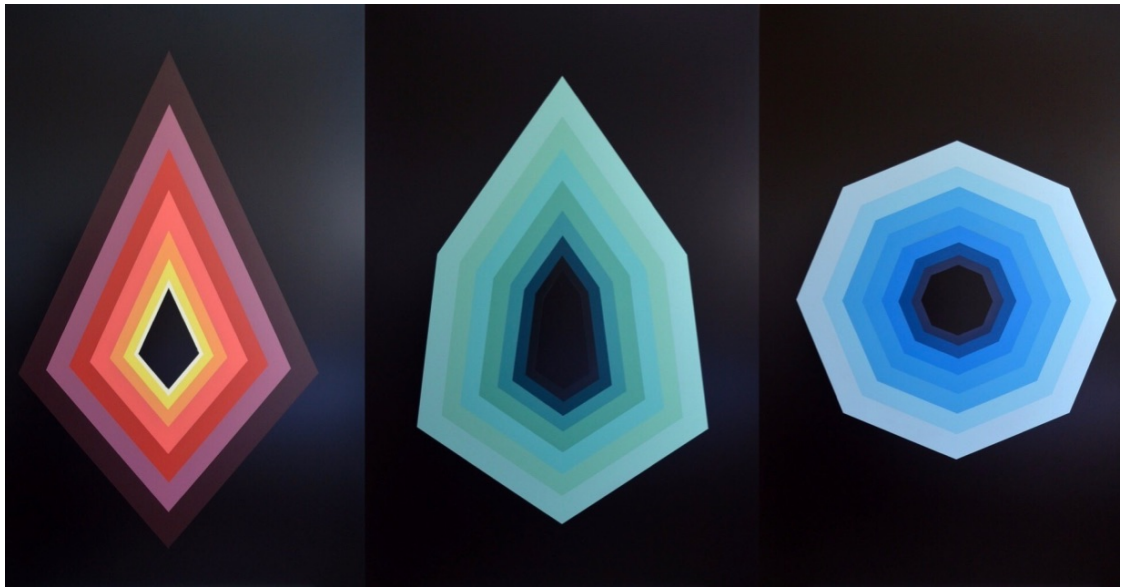
Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2015, *Vibrant Matters #1 & #3*, spray paint and ACP, 50 x 50cm each



Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2017, *Enfolda II*, material assemblage, 125 x 45 x 5cm



Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2017, *Temple*, Material Assemblage, approx. 360 x 120 x 10cm



Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2018, *Eve, Birth & Origin*, spray paint on ACP, 120 x 90 each work.

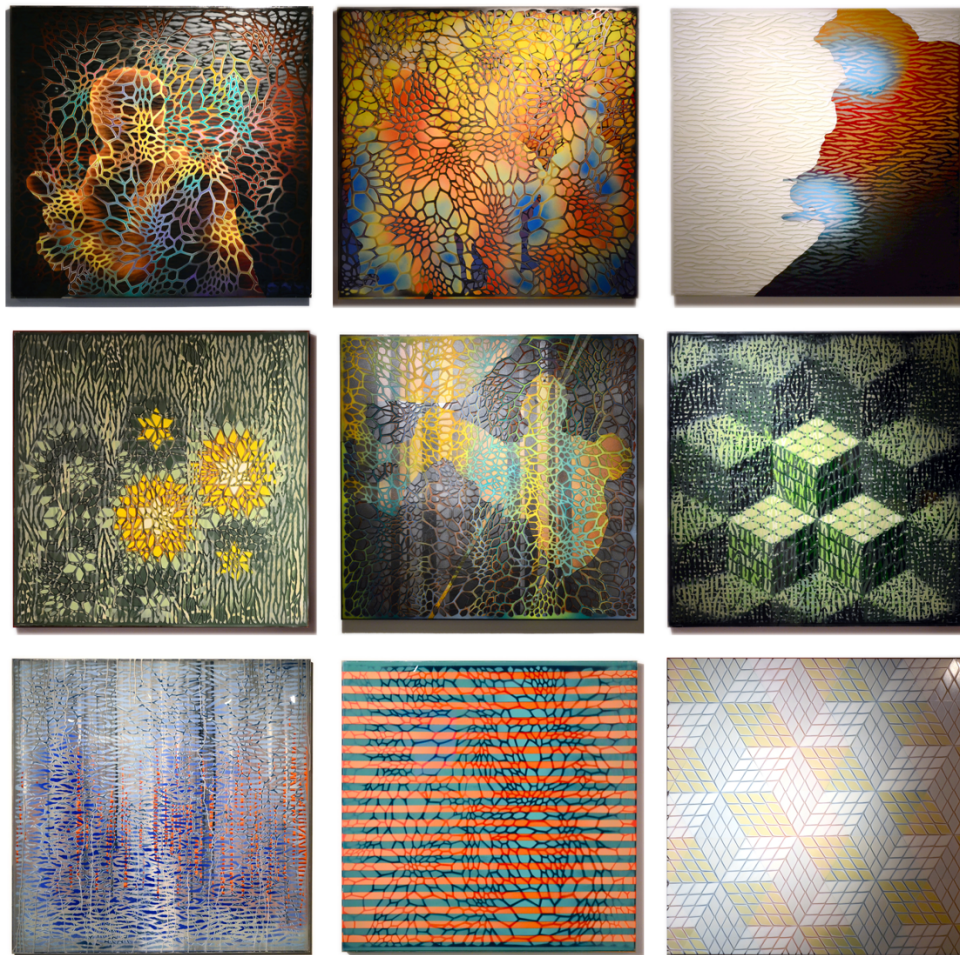


Benjamin Kluss (Jamin), 2018, *Voyage, Odyssey & Vagrant*, spray paint on ACP, 120 x 90 each work.

III: Exhibitions

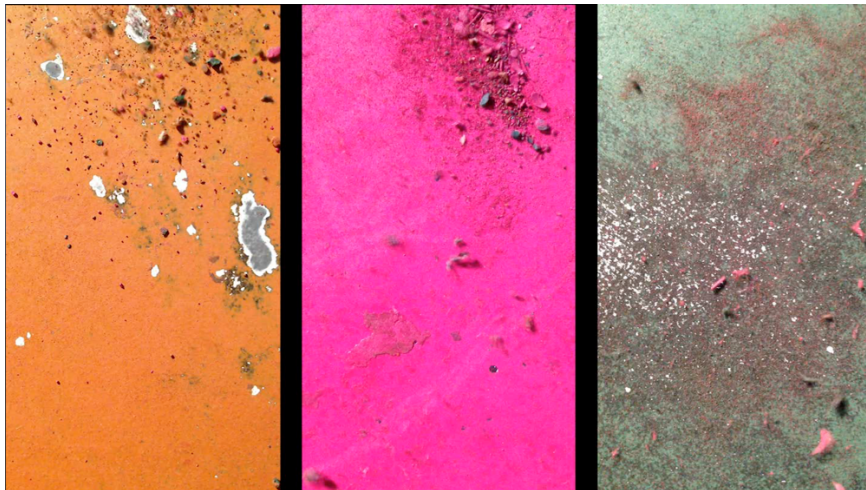
One Thing Begets Another, 2013

This body of work was the formative and experimental component of the practical investigation. Its associated research output was exhibited at Despard Gallery in August, 2013, titled *One Thing Begets Another*. Images of the works and exhibition statements are included here, with full details contained in Section. 2.2 to follow.



This exhibition is a series of work concerned with camouflage - in the sense of how one thing *relates* to another, rather than how one thing *hides* from another. Specifically, they mark a continuation of my ongoing interest in media processes,

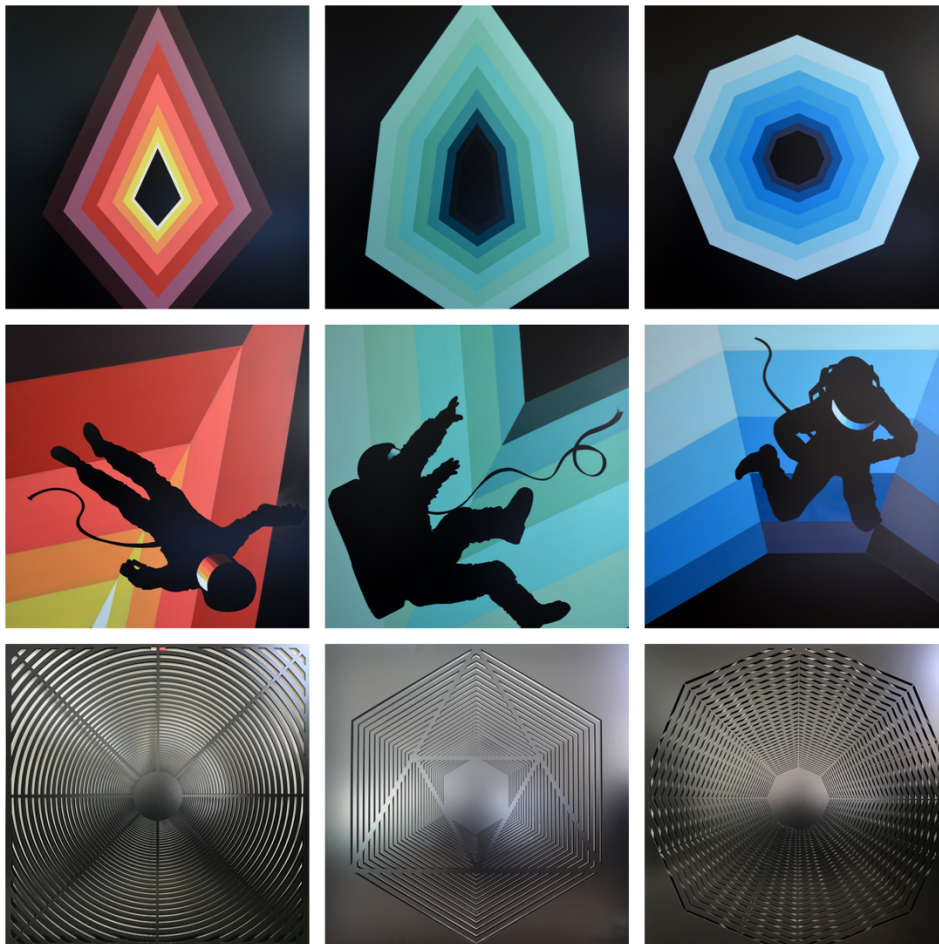
knowledge systems and power structures. The works evolve through an engagement with materiality: the plexiglass substrate mediates the subject and the ground whilst continuously occupying the territory of object just as the application of spray paint oscillates between transparency and impenetrability across areas of the screen. Masks have been employed in the creation of the work to continuously reveal and conceal areas of the substrate, an additive and subtractive force at play. These masks, or stencils, are matrices, semi-random in their creation and deployment. The framework for these matrices is *one thing begets another*, each cut line informing where the next occurs, and each layer arranging and colouring the next. These matrices operate individually and collectively, often intersecting to create new arrays of arbitrary quantities. Enmeshed within the matrices are elements of form and colour which occasionally coalesce into figures or symbols. These areas have been treated with paint in much the same manner as has the rest of the matrix.



The video work, *Entropic-Extropic*, mimics the methodology employed in the painted works via a different set of processes. Fine particles of paint, dust and detritus have been manipulated to coalesce and fragment according to my level of interest and surveillance.

The Death of David Walsh is a painting that has been created using a wire brush attached to a power drill. The areas of image have been subtracted from layers of flat paint by vigorously applying the abrasive tool to the reverse surface of the plexiglass. Each successive layer of paint concealed the previous layer in such a way that the forming image was continuously hidden from view - resulting in a painting that was painted, or un-painted, before it was seen in the manner that you are seeing it.

Black Prism, 2018



Exhibition Statement by Benjamin Kluss, August, 2018:

'Black Prism' is the title of this exhibition. It is also the name of a metal band from Los Angeles that I have never heard. It is the name of a fantasy book that I have read. And it is the name of an album I am producing as Vibrant Matters. Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things is a philosophical book that I have read, and it is the name of a series of paintings that I made in 2015. Both Black Prism and Vibrant Matter are seeming oxymorons. They suggest a reality in which there are some very fuzzy edges, where the intensive differences that drive flows, are actually as interesting (maybe more so) than the outcomes and neat manifestations of what we consider to be the rational and correct reality.

As a graphic designer in the print industry in the mid 90's I spent many hours removing moiré patterns (undesirable artefacts) from rescanned photos. This was achieved by changing the angle of the photo on the scanner bed, or by drastically increasing or decreasing the resolution, or by some other arcane trick. However undesirable these artefacts were, I was continuously struck by their beauty and their seemingly magical appearance in the otherwise mundane imagery from which they were removed – such as the self-congratulatory photos of national Lions Club members disbursed to their regional newsletters, or the butchering of one Mitre 10 catalogue to feed another.

This moiré, or interference, pattern spoke of another reality, a more subtle and occulted space of frequencies and multiple perspectives. I would view an analogue TV through the lens of a handy-cam to experience the strobing moiré of the screen. As a guitar player during those years, I also experienced interference patterns as I tuned my guitar, the subtle beating of two notes of similar frequencies coming together as they found unison in pitch. What was this strange world? What were these strange visible and audible patterns that lurked at the edges of things? Why, during my four-and-a-half-year apprenticeship, did I write so many songs and lyrics to the regular and irregular clacking and whirring of the print machines? Did their drone like hum and monotonous beating, alongside the endless retyping of banal advertising copy, create moiré patterns inside of my head?

Probably not. But the moiré stuck, as did a general attraction to industrial materials and processes.

Aluminium printing plates have here been replaced by ACP and the offset printers replaced by stencils, spray paints and CNC machines. The technology, and the materials it produces and that produce it, continuously create moments of

unevenness and irregularity that occasionally come together as a note heard in unison, or else as a discombobulating pattern that slides in and out of perception as the medium changes – or as we change our position in relation to the medium.

The medium is the message, yet we settled for a massage.

Jamin, 2017

Void, Vector, Filter, Force



Exhibition Statement by Benjamin Kluss, 2018.

In Jamin's *KINETIKA* series he employs a Deleuzian approach towards art-making, each iteration of work within the series (which has its beginnings in 2014 with a work titled *Entity*) adding or subtracting components, cannibalising previous generations, or adapting new materials. The simple interactions of the layers, and the viewers proximity, give rise to more complex phenomena in a fluid visual language of emergence and potential.

Floating Point, 2019



Catalogue Essay by Scot Cotterell, April, 2019

Athanasius Kircher the German Jesuit scholar and polymath introduced the term *tabula scalata* or ladder pictures in 1646 after painter Jean François Nicéron described the technique in his 1638 ground-breaking book *La Perspective Curieuse*. The technique, an early version of what we now call lenticular images, forms a suite of visual and scenographic effects along a continuing lineage from the ancient triangular *periaktos* theatre *coulisse* (used to rapidly change theatrical scenography and create depth illusions), to the *tazo* (a collectable lenticular minicard included in Australian chip packets circa late 90s). The stuttered, binary animation of the lenticular image and its attendant notions of part trick, part cheap novelty presuppose our now ubiquitous down up scrolling, gif heavy, video saturated social moment.

I have written on Jamin before. His work and he have both changed.

I know him as a friend. We are on divergent but oscillating paths – fellow travellers of some sort. He resonates and occupies space in diverse and divergent ways. He uses various types of disruptive pattern to dissect, constitute and redistribute

images. Jamin has traversed several strata of imagery, all part of the mass mediated flow. I have watched the work flow through dense stark political portraits that betray a corrupt underbelly, to hyper glitz collage mashes of reference-heavy pop decay, to a studied excavation of the optical. A logical evolution of his work is to focus in, isolate and derive information from, this act of looking (visual flux) – you in relation to a thing, perceived by organs; the thresholds of these interactions.

Within the production of effects Jamin explores, image has gone now. At least in these works, the meaning carrier is removed. Now we witness the optic barrier with no penny drop of the visual reference – no untangling of the intertwined visual samples. Things are unanchored, set adrift from the time/place referent implicit in all image sampling. These works are composed in software and then executed by machine and hand – a code. They morph from object to image to decor to concept. They may be portals. They may also protrude into your space.

There is the sensation of travelling and moving data around.

A child sits in the passenger seat of a moving vehicle, alternately testing the wind with a right angled elbow and cupped hand and defocusing his eyes to create a peripheral parallaxing.

Repetition and difference. Animation and fracture. Seeing things.

These works resonate as your retina moves across them. Your gaze; their gaze. A silent geometry acting against you and in concert with your ability to see, to perceive pattern, to compose images, and to infer or impose meaning – ground control receiving transmission optics, locked mid glance, and mid movement. There is a toleration of ambiguity, not by any means a resignation but a denial of the image, instead choosing to focus in on the perceptual moment. These works

capture the novel, the epiphanic and elongate it. Jamin exerts and authors control over this visual effect, testing variations on us, with us.

Floating in deep space, cut off from oxygen.

Erasure of identity. Cellular regeneration. Breath.

Scot Cotterell, 2019

IV: Musical Persona – Vibrant Matters

“Music is the most multi-dimensional knowledge we have.

It's as specific as nature can be.

Any form nature takes contains a specific sound combination.

Music is a language.

It's a memory of the cosmic system, a memory of past and future.

Above all it's science not entertainment.”

Vangelis

As much as this research project documents and makes academic the investigation, there run parallel streams of life and consciousness that have affected it. These streams have been operating as a seeming ‘whole’ – the identity that is Jamin – whilst paring off into other actors and assemblages performing on different stages. One such actor is a persona named Vibrant Matters who began within the context of the research and evolved beyond it. Born through literal yet ad hoc performances, Vibrant Matters is a musical stage persona that developed a studio-based practice of electronic music production. Key to this research is that the computer-based music production software, known as a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) has its own environment rich in voids, vectors, filters and forces in a literal and metaphorical sense.

Music, being concerned as it is with kinetics and aural representation, is easily conceptualised as a space in and of itself; populated by sounds and frequencies that vary in proximity, speed, trajectory, intensity etc. These sounds have easily imagined representations – such as the clash of symbols or the sound of a car racing past – so that when listening to music, the listener enters into an umwelt of sound. The music producer can create such an umwelt

within the DAW environment, describing other worlds that can be inhabited through aural representations.

Vibrant Matters was initiated in 2015 as a case study informed by the logic of the research in order to develop an alternative artistic persona from scratch as a demonstration of assemblage in relation to the role and representation of identity. A key element of this research tangent was to engage with sound through electronic production, creating future potentialities for the *Kinetika* works through the integration of sound components.

Parallels were discovered between sound production software (also known as digital audio workstations, or DAW) and graphic software (also known as computer aided design, or CAD). Specifically, audio elements and their effects can be controlled via vectors drawn in empty space, or voids. Equally many effects are described as filters, and the intensities of sound waves can be likened to forces. In this way, a series of audio tracks were created that focused on kinaesthetic responses from the listener, paying close attention to frequencies (elevations) and stereo balance (lateral movements). These tracks were compiled into an album, called *The Black Prism*, and released on the Soundcloud platform. Additionally, these tracks were performed across a variety of venues and festivals. Over the course of this research project, Vibrant Matters has taken on a life of its own; a nuanced artistic persona, assembled from the theoretical components of the research.

A link to the material is provided below.

www.vibrantmatters.com

V: Curatorial Persona – Faux Mo (A Case Study)

Introduction

Another persona, developed through and performed as related to the research, is Jamin as an artistic director and curator within a festival context. Over three yearly iterations of a large Hobart festival called Faux Mo, curatorial ideas and production concepts were tested against the aims of this research project.

Faux Mo began as a small afterparty for the second MONA FOMA (Museum of Old and New Art's Festival Of Music and Art) in 2010, progressing in scale and ambition in subsequent years, with earlier iterations curated and produced by a series of other individuals and groups²³. Brian Ritchie (MONA FOMA Curator) appointed a new team in 2014 consisting of Aedan Howlett & myself as visual curators & creative directors alongside James Walsh as musical curator.

For Faux Mo 2015 (FM15) my role was co-curator (alongside Aedan), and collaborative and solo artist. In the 2016 iteration (FM16) my role shifted in line with a more refined and clearly articulated role structure from the previous event to a lead curatorial and directorial position for the visual environment, with Aedan's role shifting to that of the lead production artist. The final iteration of Faux Mo in 2017 (FM17)²⁴ continued with the same role structure as 2016, however I dropped back from solo art production, and executed my artistic vision through

²³ Including Duckpond (Doug Pond), Supplefox (Hannah Fox & Tom Supple), Julia Drouhin

²⁴ FM15 spanned all levels and side rooms of the Odeon theatre, through the old Saloon Bar and into Tattersall Hotel and included over 30 visual artists and performers. The FM16 & FM17 iterations took place in the ex-government building at 12 Murray Street, Hobart, and occupied all four levels from basement to rooftop.

collaborative artworks and curatorial work; with the viewpoint that the entire event and assemblage was an 'artwork' in and of itself.

The most critical aspect of the Faux Mo project was the opportunity to take the developing methodology of my research into a testing ground environment that was conducive to spatio-temporal concerns at varying scales and intensities. In this environment individual and collaborative works were tested that employed divergent processes and technologies²⁵, as well as curatorial frameworks. Across the three iterations, the research entered into the logic of assemblages at varying scales (individual artworks and installations, stages and spaces, multi-space & building wide), which came to inform the later studio works (Chapter 3). The strategy of assemblage was employed as a mimetic adaption in order to parse the non-human, to enter into its logic.

In this appendix I will present a critical analysis of selected works produced for these events, both solo and collaborative, as well as an overview and interrogation of the curatorial methods and overarching conceptualisation. The work of relevant artists and theoreticians will be referenced in relation to the research.

²⁵ Artists were encouraged to diverge from their practice and engage with other artists and technicians to develop artworks and methods that sought to reconfigure and combine diverse elements. E.g. Pip Stafford and Andrew Harper worked with programmer & technician Jonny Scholes (also an artist in his own right) to develop an artwork using sensor technology to trigger soundbites as audience members passed through a stairwell.

Collaboration, Curation and Production.

The curatorial and design perspective for the Faux Mo events were iterative in both outcome and intention following on from earlier iterative events curated by others (Supplefox et al.). To adapt Keller Easterling's (2018) thoughts the design of an iterative medium was critical to this research in order to house the things that were to be suspended in the medium of a large-scale artistic night club. As Easterling states:

Beyond the design of things is the design of the medium in which they are suspended, and beyond the design of a totalizing medium is the design of an iterative medium, the right answer is doomed to be right only for an instant before its superiority is challenged (Easterling, 2018)

The allowance of indeterminacy within the various scales of thinking (curatorial, intermediate and specific) were also crucial to enable an agility to respond to movement within the manoeuvring of each iteration and its components so that in addition to a framework there were 'reagents, mixtures, interdependencies, chemistries, chain reactions and ratchets' (Easterling, 2018). In the case of frameworks, the three iterations in the broadest sense engaged with the Deleuzian Manifold (2015), the Non-Human (2016) and the Holobiont (2017). The artists, collaborators, technicians, spaces, materials and processes were the 'reagents, mixtures, interdependencies, chemistries etc.' suspended momentarily within and across the iterations and their frameworks.

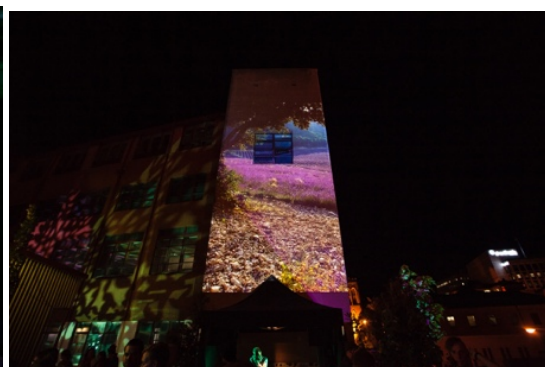
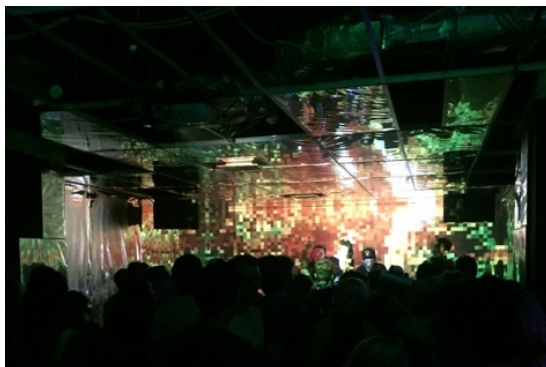


Faux Mo 2015: (top) Keith Deverell & Aedan Howlett (bottom left) Jacob Leary (bottom right) Aedan Howlett & Benjamin Kluss

The first Faux Mo iteration, the Manifold, considers within the research the ideas of continuous multiplicities and discreet multiplicities after Bergson (cited in Deleuze, 1966) and Riemann in terms of both the audience experience and in terms of the processes of artistic assemblage; for example, the way in which an individual audience member encounters a succession of things (continuous multiplicities: stages, installations, corridors etc.) whilst a simultaneity of things (discreet multiplicities) are occurring elsewhere²⁶. Likewise, elements

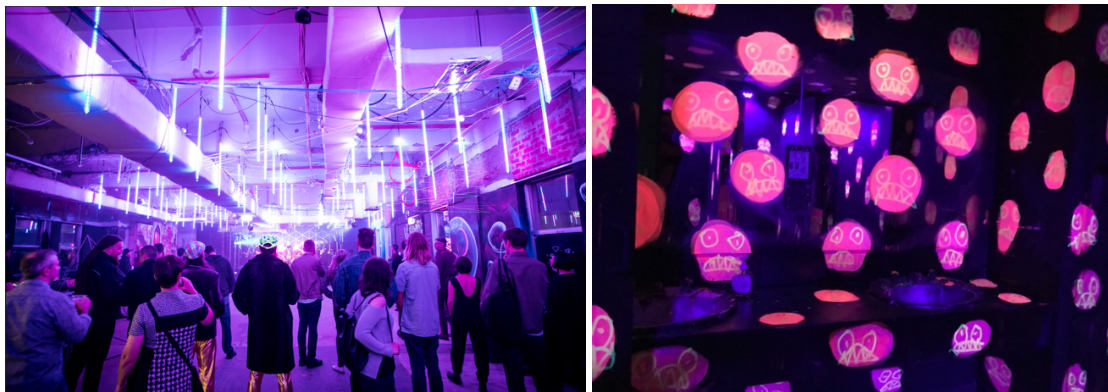
²⁶ one of the abbreviations and understandings of Faux Mo is FOMO or Fear of Missing Out – alluding to this multiplicity or everywhere-at-onceness.

within the assembling and the experiencing could be fusions in the sense of the continuous, or juxtapositions in the sense of the discreet; for example, the introduction of various artists into collaborative groupings that were stylistic or methodological fusions, or alternatively juxtapositions – and the fusing or juxtaposition of these groupings across the dynamic of duration (continuous multiplicities) and space (discrete multiplicities). This thinking, in terms of a Manifold and the relationships between spatiality, duration and materiality were considered part of a methodology for approaching the delivery of a phenomenological experience of a conceptualised topological or rhizomatic space, both for the artists, technicians and collaborators as well as for the audience.



Faux Mo 2016: (top) Jason Jones (bottom left) Kit Wise / Benjamin Kluss (bottom right) Joe Hamilton)

The second iteration builds on the ideas of the first, this time focusing on the Non-Human as the conceptual framework in which the Manifold occurs. According to Latour (1993 p.136) ‘the human... cannot be grasped and saved unless that other part of itself, the share of things, is restored to it. So long as humanism is constructed through contrast with the object that has been abandoned to epistemology, neither the human nor the nonhuman can be understood.’ Latour goes on to discuss how the Human and the Non-Human are not poles nor oppositional, but intrinsically linked. These ideas are complemented and expanded in many ways by Foucault, Deleuze, Guatarri and Hathaway amongst others. Critical to the research was developing a curatorial framework that allowed artists to embrace the non-human aspects of their practice, conceptual thinking and processes – whether that be through material thinking, conceptual framing, technological processes or stylistic turns. Letting the materials and processes, human/non-human assemblages, lead the making was a key directive – allowing for great scope within the building site of re-purposing, cannibalising and re-framing existing materials and spaces.



Faux Mo 2017: (top) Alexi Freeman (bottom Left) Jamie Lupine (bottom right) Tom O'Hern

The third and final iteration employed the conceptual framework of the *Holobiont*²⁷; an extension of the Manifold and the Non-Human that looked towards a more cohesive and symbiotic relatedness between all of the components. It should be noted, that across the three iterations, many different artists were engaged in various roles; however, a significant portion (over half) of all artists and technicians were involved in each successive iteration

²⁷ **Holobionts** are assemblages of different species that form ecological units. Lynn Margulis proposed that any physical association between individuals of different species for significant portions of their life history is a symbiosis.

providing a continuum not only of entities and individuals, but of the evolving thinking and methods that were being employed individually and collectively. Critical to this iterative framework was for the audience to experience the relationality throughout the venue and event, and so artists and technicians were engaged with building wide installations and interventions, working predominantly with singular materials, such as cement, projection, paint or corflute and in such a way recurring surfaces, motifs, materials and forms were encounterable across the totality; thus extending the premise of the Manifold's multiplicities and the human/non-human interdependency. Indeterminacy was still a key strategy, allowing for 'chemistries, chain reactions and ratchets' (Easterling, 2018) to unfold and emerge as well as enfold and recede.

The three curatorial iterations of the Faux Mo project engaged with assemblage based and material thinking across a range of spatio-temporal scales. These assemblages were composed of heterogeneous components with individual characteristics and dynamics (individuals, artistic practices, diverse materials, stages, spaces, passageways, structures) giving rise to a variety of material and semiotic expressions. Additionally, the research posited the smallest (indivisible) component within each system, the artists, as the 'actors', and the various artistic assemblages and spaces as the 'networks' in which those actors perform (Latour, 2005). These networks were considered actors in the largest scale assemblage, i.e. the event itself. Once populated with an audience, new networks consisting of new actors arose from these assemblages. This research suggests that each iteration was an *emergent* entity, a result of the interactions of their diverse components.

Manuel DeLanda describes a list of criteria for emergent entities in *A New Philosophy of Society* (2006) citing that they must have 'emergent properties': in this case, the Faux Mo event has features not discernible in any of its individual artists, materials, spaces, or

audiences when taken alone – such as the encoded activities and gestures of audiences as they interact with an installation. Another feature he describes is ‘redundant causality’: the artists of the Faux Mo event can change their medium or materials or even be completely replaced themselves without necessarily changing the Event as a whole. Another feature of emergent entities is that they are able to act retroactively on their parts: the artists involved with these Faux Mo iterations may have been subjected to more stress and collaborative exposure than they would in say a studio context, and that participation in these events may have influenced the methods and concepts of their studio practices. Finally, many parts of the emergent entity do not pre-exist the entity itself; rather, they are generated by it. For example, the experience of crawling through a confined space to encounter the illusion of an infinite drop, or ascending to a rooftop to sit within a glowing crystal disco cave, were not initially components for the Faux Mo 2017 iteration to be what it was, however each is now inseparable from the whole that emerged.

The three iterations of Faux Mo consider the notion of populations thinking proprioceptively; which is to say, unique forms of embodied and encoded awareness adopted by individual organisms as a population, as suggested by DeLanda in his paper *Virtual Environments as Intuition Synthesizers* (1992) where he makes the case for population thinking using the example of language. These behaviours are in part mimetic and in part constrained by the external forces. The research proposed that individuals within the Faux Mo events would imitate the behaviours of other individuals according to the environmental forces and pressures that they were subjected to. This proposition was actualised, at times with unpredictable results such as individuals and then populations of individuals deeming it more appropriate to go *through* a wall rather than around it. This tendency, of individuals within a population to encode patterned behaviours, was teased out and affected through the various installations and artworks.

Additionally, a key component within all iterations of this project was my capacity as a solo artist and as an artistic collaborator. In this sense, I operated as a component within each collaborative assemblage, with the aim of each being to expand the outcomes through diverse capacities and properties, enabled through such collaborative interactions. Whilst the outcomes of these collaborative works ranged from successful to failures, each one introduced new dynamics to the research; primarily, a shifting of focus from solo execution towards assemblages that incorporated diverse materials and processes – expanding the potential of each work beyond my own capacities. This strategy enabled the future methodologies employed within the studio works, namely the *Kinetika* series (Chapter 3), and fore-fronted assemblage-based thinking within the research and research outcomes.



Biome, Jamie Lupine & Jamin, 2017, *The Infinity Octagon*, assemblage, 240 x 300 x 300cm

The Infinity Octagon (2017) is a collaborative artwork that pursues a dissociative and disorienting experience of Umwelt, extending the research through assemblage-based thinking and via an interrogation of surface, depth, reflectivity and spatio-temporal engagement. The work is a 2.4m high chamber in the shape of a 3m x 3m octagon, with each face of the shape containing an infinity mirror and with the roof and the floor mirrored,

creating an infinity room, ala Kusama, Bul et al. The basic premise was put forward by Pippin Tui after lengthy conversations spanning a year. From there the concept was further developed in conversation with Jamie Lupine (Lighting Manager FM17) to include an animated array within the LED component of the infinity mirrors. The work occupied the final room in the basement of the FM17 event, conceptualised as the end point of the entire event, a singularity of sorts, amongst the other, often fluid and topologically oriented, spaces. Adam Geczy describes Ganzfelds, ‘total fields’, as illusionistic spaces that alter the viewers perceptual field, and goes on to say that ‘once we enter a space that has been mediated, or specially constructed by the artist, we are presented with another space, a window-like opening that confounds our conventional, habitual relationship to lived space’ (Geczy, 2007). *The Infinity Octagon* is one such confounding total field, and the experience of it can be likened to a portal such as in Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass* or the effects described in Aldous Huxley’s *The Doors of Perception*.



The Infinity Octagon has no path or actual way through its apparent maze, it does suggest an infinite number of lines of flight that could be taken, each with a unique array or combination of potentials and forces described by the

animated lights and the geometrically positioned mirrors – a literal kaleidoscope of human scale. This tension between the possible virtual pathways and the confinement of the actual space, mirror contemporary anxieties such as identity, the existential threat of global warming, endless war and political corruption, and are suggestive of Foucault’s heterotopias (1967), of possible places constrained by a dystopian prison of no place and *no way out*, a calcification into singularity.

These tensions, between the actual, the real and the virtual; between surface and depth; between self and not self; and between cohesion and fragmentation: bring together many of the research aims of this PhD project. *The Infinity Octagon* followed on from my own experiments with infinity mirrors as described in Chapter 2, and is a precursor (in ambition and modality) to the final work of the research project, *Kinetika VII: Umwelt*, detailed in Chapter 3.

Summary

The three Faux Mo iterations, through the various solo, collaborative and curatorial works, were deliberately indeterminate assemblages of entities, materials, activities and processes towards an experiential and sensorial evocation of a Deleuzian *multi-dimensional* or topological space – a space of infinite dimensions, each dimension measured by its degrees of freedom (Deleuze-Guattari 1980). In this sense, myriad new *Umwelten* were generated, both continuous and discrete; disorienting and dissociative *Umwelt* for human populations navigating new or alternative spatio-temporal relationships. Within the research, these disorienting and dissociative experiences are likened to a re-orientation and re-association towards ‘otherness’; not as something new or different, but as a return to what is the actual continuous and contingent human experience from which we become separated via ego and the construct of identity.

VI: Curriculum Vitae – Benjamin Kluss (a.k.a. Jamin)

www.jamin.com.au | m: 04.....

Education

- 2013 (Current) PhD Fine Art (Tasmanian College of the Arts)
- 2008 Master of Fine Art (Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania)
- 2005 Bachelor of Fine Art with First Class Honours (Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania)
- 2004 Bachelor of Fine Art – Painting Major (Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania)
- 1998 Certificate in Pre-Press (Trade - Adelaide institute of TAFE)

Solo Exhibitions

- | | | |
|------|---|---------------------|
| 2019 | <i>Floating Point</i> , Flinders Lane Gallery | Melbourne |
| 2017 | <i>Black Prism</i> , Despard Gallery | Hobart |
| 2013 | <i>One Thing Begets Another</i> , Despard Gallery | Hobart |
| 2011 | <i>Shields Against the Enemy</i> , Criterion Gallery | Hobart |
| 2008 | <i>INERTIA / FORCE / CHANGE / INERTIA</i> , Criterion Gallery | Hobart |
| 2007 | <i>First We Take Paris, Then We Take the World</i>
Devonport Regional Gallery Solo Commission 2007, Devonport Regional Gallery | Devonport |
| | <i>Tasmania: Explore the Possibilities</i> , INFLIGHT Gallery | Hobart |
| 2006 | <i>MAY's</i> , May Lane (with Die Laughing Collective) 2006 & 2009
<i>Common Ground (Folie à Trois)</i> , BUS Gallery | Sydney
Melbourne |
| 2005 | <i>Die Laughing</i> , Earlyspace Gallery, Smith Street (with Die Laughing Collective)
A.K.A., Criterion Gallery | Melbourne
Hobart |
| 2004 | <i>Dissent Disrupt Desert</i> , Entrepot Gallery (with Die Laughing Collective) | Hobart |

Production Work

- | | | |
|------|---|--------|
| 2021 | Mapiya Lumi, TMAG Children's Gallery, Mural Production, Tas Museum & Art Gallery | Hobart |
| | COMA, Corridor of Modern Art, Mural Production | Hobart |
| 2018 | <i>Food Art Production</i> , MONA, Toby Zeigler exhibition Opening | Hobart |
| | <i>Vibrance Festival</i> , Mural Production | Hobart |
| | <i>Piecing It Together</i> , Council of the Aged, North Hobart Workshop & Mural | Hobart |
| 2017 | <i>Faux Mo (MOFO)</i> , Curator / Creative Director, Visual Environment, 12 Murray St | Hobart |
| 2016 | <i>Devil Mural Project</i> , Lead Artist & Educator, Kickstart Arts | Hobart |
| | <i>Dark Park Graffiti Wall</i> , Dark MOFO, alongside the Labyrinth | Hobart |
| | <i>Faux Mo (MOFO)</i> , Curator and Co-Producer of Visual Environment, 12 Murray St | Hobart |
| | <i>Peacock Theatre</i> , Visual Re-Design and Production of Foyer Space, Salamanca Arts Centre | Hobart |
| | <i>Fractangular</i> , Visual Co-Production Main Stage | Hobart |
| 2015 | <i>Party In The Lane (Moo Brew)</i> , Live Artwork Production (with Aedan Howlett) | Hobart |
| | <i>Faux Mo (MONA FOMA)</i> , Curator and Co-Producer of Visual Environment, Odeon Theatre (with Aedan Howlett) | Hobart |
| | <i>Fractangular</i> , Market Stage Visual Production, Buckland, Tasmania | Hobart |
| 2014 | <i>FRANK</i> , Interior & Exterior Artwork Production for Hobart restaurant Frank | Hobart |
| | <i>Make Your Mark</i> , Exterior Mural Production, Kingston & Moonah, TMAG | Hobart |
| | <i>MONA ROMA 0 (MRO)</i> , Interior & Exterior Artwork Production for 2nd MONA Ferry | Hobart |
| 2013 | <i>MONA Paella Stands</i> Artwork Production for MONA Chef Vince Trim | Hobart |
| | <i>MONA ROMA 1 (MR1)</i> , Interior & Exterior Artwork Production for MONA Ferry, with Tom O'Herne and Rob O'Connor | Hobart |

Selected Group Exhibitions

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|------|--|------------|
| 2018 | <i>Partnership</i> , Curated by Prof Patricia HOFFIE, Burnie Regional Arts Gallery | Burnie |
| | <i>BOAA (Biennale of Australian Art)</i> , Curated by Julie Collins, Ballarat, Victoria | Ballarat |
| | <i>Beyond The Field (Still)</i> , Curated by Anne Mestitz, CAT Gallery | Hobart |
| | <i>FIFA Street Art / Mural Festival</i> , Moscow, Russia | Moscow |
| 2017 | <i>Islands: A Speculation</i> , (with Nicolas Mole & Grace Williams) TDOTI, Curated by Jane Deeth, QVMAG | Launceston |
| 2015 | <i>Your Kid Can't Do This</i> , Curated by Luke Cornish aka E.L.K., Ambush Gallery | Sydney |
| | <i>STAND BACK</i> , Curated by Josie Hurst, Moonah Arts Centre | Hobart |
| | <i>Abstraction</i> , Despard Gallery | Hobart |
| 2014 | <i>ORDER / DISORDER</i> , Verge Gallery | Sydney |
| | <i>Make Your Mark</i> , Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery | Hobart |

	<i>Abstraction</i> , Despard Gallery	Hobart
2013	<i>Investigations</i> , Plimsoll Gallery	Hobart
	<i>I Want Change</i> , curated by Michael Brennan, La Trobe University Museum of Art	Melbourne
2012	<i>InFLUX</i> , curated by Tracey Cockburn, Rosny Barn	Hobart
2011	<i>Dimanche Rouge #11</i> , Batofar	Paris
	<i>Street Kube</i> , Kube Hotel	Paris
2010	<i>Next Show</i> , curated by Aedan Howlett, Melville Street Warehouse	Hobart
	<i>The Oyster's Locale</i> , Artsalive, curated by Fernando do Campo	Launceston
	<i>MAY's Bathurst Regional Gallery Touring Exhibition</i> (with Die Laughing Collective)	Australia
	<i>Spray Drip Stroke</i> , Poimena Gallery, curated by Ben Miller	Launceston
	<i>Let's Make the Water Turn Black</i> , INFLIGHT Gallery, curated by Mat Ward	Hobart
	<i>Prosopography</i> , Academy Gallery, curated by INFLIGHT ARI	Launceston
2009	<i>Temporary Collection: Darwin Centenary</i> , Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery	Hobart
	<i>Poppers</i> , Front Room Gallery, curated by Tom Kearney	Newcastle
	<i>May's Lane Street Art Retrospective</i> , Carriage Works	Sydney
	<i>Portrait Show</i> , Famous When Dead Gallery	Melbourne
	<i>Your Kid Can't Do This</i> , ACT Legislative Assembly Gallery	Canberra
2008	<i>Contemporary Australia: Optimism</i> , Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Art Gallery	Brisbane
	<i>Unsustainable Weight of Place</i> , Watch This Space	Alice Springs
	<i>One Night Only</i> , Tepid Baths, curated by Kate Kelly and Pip Stafford	Hobart
	<i>Some Dayz</i> , Michael Koro Gallery	Melbourne
	<i>Lucha Libre!</i> , Curated by Victor Medrano, INFLIGHT Gallery	Hobart
2007	<i>Urban Skins</i> , Pinnacles Gallery	Thurgow, Queensland
	<i>Urban Art Agenda #1</i> (with Die Laughing Collective), Shed 4, Docklands	Melbourne
	<i>Board of INFLIGHT</i> , Firstdraft ARI, Sydney; ArtsAlive, Launceston; INFLIGHT	Hobart
	<i>Stencil Festival 2007</i>	Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Sale, Ballarat
	<i>E.G.</i> , Plimsoll Gallery, curated by Briony Nainby	Hobart
	<i>Selected Cuts</i> , Higher Ground, Adelaide Fringe Festival	Adelaide
2006	<i>...text me</i> , Devonport Regional Gallery, curated by Ellie Ray	Devonport
	<i>2006 Melbourne / Sydney Stencil Festival</i> , Rose St Artist Market	Melbourne & Sydney
	<i>May's Retrospective Exhibition</i> (with Die Laughing Collective), Building 1 Factory 1	Sydney
	<i>Hatched '06</i> , Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA)	Perth
2005	<i>Highly Recommended</i> , Plimsoll Gallery	Hobart
	<i>Criminal Intent</i> (with Die Laughing Collective), HO Gallery	Melbourne
	<i>Melbourne Stencil Festival</i> (with Die Laughing Collective), Meat Markets	Melbourne

Exhibitions Curated by Jamin

2017	<i>Faux Mo (MONA FOMA)</i> , 12 Murray St	Hobart
2016	<i>Faux Mo (MONA FOMA)</i> , 12 Murray St	Hobart
2015	<i>Faux Mo (MONA FOMA)</i> , Odeon Theatre	Hobart
2009	<i>Auto-Graphic</i> , INFLIGHT Gallery	Hobart
2007	<i>Edition Addiction Vol #1</i> , Jimmy's Skate & Street	Hobart
2006	<i>Sex & the City</i> , BUS Gallery	Melbourne

Grants, Awards & Commissions

2017	Art Site, Mural, Elizabeth College	
2016	Art Site, Hobart College (with Jacob Leary)	
2013	Tasmanian Graduate Research Scholarship	
2012	Winner: <i>Vectorizer Prize</i> , Clarence City Council	
	<i>Glover Prize</i> , Finalist	
2011	Rosamund McCulloch Studio Residency, Paris	
2009	146 Studio Residency, Arts Tasmania	
2007	Devonport Regional Gallery Solo Commission 2007	
2006	Australian Post Graduate Award Scholarship	
	ArtsBridge Grant, Die Laughing Collective @ MAY's, Arts Tasmania	
	Finalist: <i>A Place in the World</i> - Visual Art Prize, ACU and University of Adelaide	
2005	Art for Public Building Scheme (APBS) with Die Laughing Collective: Springvale Hostel, Newtown	
	Youngtown Underpass: Public Art Commission, Youngtown Primary School, Launceston	

Relevant Employment

2003	(Ongoing) Self-employed Artist, Producer, Designer	
2006	Sessional Lecturer & tutor at the Tasmanian School of Art, UTAS (2006-2013)	
1995	Graphic Pre-Press (Trade), Hobart (1995-1998)	

Appointments / Volunteer Work

- 2008 C.A.S.T. (Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania), Board Member, Secretary, Treasurer (2008-2012)
- 2006 Chairman, INFLIGHT Artist Run Initiative, Hobart (2006 – 2008)
- 2005 INFLIGHT Artist Run Initiative, Board Member, Web Designer (2005 – 2009)
- 2005 Red Wall Gallery, Designer / Publicist, Founding Partner, Republic Bar & Café, Hobart (2005 – 2007)

Selected Workshops / Residencies

From 2005 Jamin has completed residencies and workshops with many school and community groups including: COTA (2018), Kick Start Arts (2016), East Launceston Primary (2013), Kingborough Council Y-Space (2013), Collegiate School, Hobart (2012), Woodleigh School, Victoria (2007-2009), Youth Arc, Hobart (2010), Moonah Arts Centre (2010), Hutchins School, Hobart (2009), etc.

Collections

Australian War Memorial, Art Gallery of Ballarat, QBE, Criterion Gallery, UTAS, private collections Australia & Europe.

Selected Publications

- 2018 *Biennale of Australian Art (it takes a Village)*, Julie Collins, Ballarat NSW
- 2015 *Stand Back : Exhibition Catalogue*, Josie Hurst, Glenorchy : City of Glenorchy, ISBN 9780994277305
- 2013 *I want change : two decades of artistic defiance, disapproval and dissent*, Michael Brennan, Melbourne : La Trobe University Museum of Art, ISBN 9781921915253
- 2013 *In the Vineyard of Art: The Story of Art and Tasmania, A History, Vol 2*, Michael Denholm, Carlton St Press, ISBN 9780975168424
- 2010 *May's : the May Lane Street Art Project*, Tugomir Balog, Bathurst, N.S.W. : Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, ISBN 9780947301828
- 2009 *MAY'S at Carriageworks 2009* / [Tugomir Balog, Wendy Murray, editors], St. Peters N.S.W. : MAY'S, ISBN 9780980628005
- 2008 *Developing a visual language that engages with contemporary dissent and critical*, Benjamin David Kluss (a.k.a. Jamin), thesis, University of Tasmania, ID [51911533](#)
- 2008 *Contemporary Australia : optimism*, contributing authors, John Birmingham ... [et al.], South Brisbane, Qld. : Queensland Art Gallery, ISBN 9781876509576
- 2007 *First we take Paris, then we take the world*, Jamin, Devonport, Tas. : Devonport Regional Gallery, ISBN 9780977591367
- 2007 *Uncommissioned art : an A-Z of Australian graffiti*, Christine Dew, Carlton, Vic. : The Miegunyah Press, ISBN 9780522853759
- 2006 *Hatched '06 : national graduate show*, Hannah Matthews (ed), Perth, W.A. : Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, ISBN 1875386653
- 2005 *Stencil graffiti capital : Melbourne*, Jake Smallman & Carl Nyman, West New York, NJ : Mark Batty, ISBN 9780976224532