2005

An intimate monument (re)-narrating 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland: the Irish Linen Memorial 2001-2005

Lycia Danielle Trouton
University of Wollongong

An Intimate Monument

An Intimate Monument (re)-narrating 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland: *The Irish Linen Memorial* 2001 – 2005

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

Doctor of Creative Arts

University of Wollongong

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Certification

I, Lycia Danielle Trouton, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Creative Arts, in the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Lycia Danielle Trouton

Date _____

Figure 1: Australian Indigenous artist Yvonne Koolmatrie (left) with Diana Wood Conroy, 2002 Adelaide Festival of the Arts, South Australia.

Woven Together

> The wider political fabric is composed of like and unlike groups of people woven together. The comedy of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* had analysed the various parts of the carding, spinning and weaving of wool as a way of resolving bitter conflict. In all the struggles for political control in the Hellenistic and early Roman period weaving could still be a 'sign' that demonstrated the bringing together of dissimilar elements – warp and weft… (1999:126)

From 'Oblivion and Metamorphosis: Australian Weavers in Relation to Ancient Artefacts from Cyprus'

By Diana Wood Conroy, *Reinventing Textiles Vol.1: Tradition and Innovation*

(ed. Sue Rowley)

Care

Care is the thread that weaves through the disjunctures of a divided society (1998:55).

From 'Identity, Location, Plurality; Women, Nationalism and Northern Ireland'

By Elisabeth Porter, *Women, Ethnicity and Nationalism: The Politics of Transition*

(ed.s Rick Wilford and Robert L. Miller)

Figure 2: First exhibition of *The Irish Memorial*: *Between Worlds – The Common Body*, September 7, 2001, USA.

Thanks to The Canada Council for the Arts, 2001, & The Canadian High Commission, Canberra, ACT, 2004.

Dedication

To my first Fine Arts teachers who encouraged me to pursue my 'calling' at a young age –

Carolyn Kramer, Painter

Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, California, USA

BS(Art Ed) Kent State University, Ohio, USA

Gay Wisdom (nee Scrivener), Actress

In memory 1914-2000

The Old Vic Theatre School, London, UK

Hon. FTCL, FTCL, LTCL (Honorary Fellow, Fellow, Licentiate) Trinity College London, UK

and

To my relatives and friends in Northern Ireland who live with trauma.

Time

The side bar of this book lists all the names of those killed,
following the updated 2001 publication of *Lost Lives:*
The Stories of the Men, Women and Children who died
as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles
by David McKittrick, Seamus Kelters, Brian Feeney and Chris Thornton.

The time code, which also substitutes as a page number,
represents the time it takes to read aloud one column of names per page.

For assistance with the design and technical requirements of this document, my thanks go to:

Stan Gielewski, BSc (Eng) of *Cre8rix*

Tiffany Patten BI Arch (Hons.)

Steve Perrett, PhD (Psych.) and computer coach

Wes Wickham, MCA of *No Logo Design Co*.

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Figure 4*:* Solo thesis exhibition, accompanying installation: *The Mending Room*,
Materials: galvanised steel tray, vegetable oil, projected moving image on large format LCD monitor (above):
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> [T]he ability to carve out a space in her life where she feels free to pursue certain subjects and to achieve a degree of autonomy.

This thesis has been influenced by my involvement as a research assistant for three years, 2001 to early 2004, with the Australian Research Council (ARC) large grant project called, *The Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial*. This interdepartmental research was a venture between Creative Arts (textiles and material culture) and English (specifically Commonwealth literature and Postcolonial studies, feminism/women's literature and cultural studies) departments under the research streams of the Institute of Cultural Difference, (ICD), the Institute of Society and Cultural Identity (ISCCI), and the Cultural Research Performance and Text, (CRIPT).

My advisors for the assistant research position were Paul Sharrad (literature, cultural studies, trade, identity and nation), Diana Wood-Conroy (tapestry, textiles and archaeology), Dorothy Jones, Honorary Fellow (literature, feminism, embroidery, Canadian and Australian studies), and Anne Collett (literature, feminism, performance, Canadian and Irish studies). There were two inspiring visits by Janis Jefferies, Goldsmiths College, University of London. Jefferies was the keynote conference speaker, December, 2002 and launched the *Fabrics of Change* exhibition, February, 2004. I will remember with fondness Jefferies' feminist and intercultural political concerns, lateral thinking, and her sense of humour. She is a tireless pioneering spirit regarding a cultural paradigm shift for the elevated status of textiles in avant-garde art. Conference proceedings were published in *Reinventing Textiles: Postcolonialism and Creativity*, Vol 3, by Telos Art Publishing, Bristol, UK.

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This period of my studies has involved a certain passage of mourning and grieving. During this time I developed a sculptural commission for a private memorial garden in Seattle, Washington, USA, to Cameron Miles Smith, 1960-1996, son of Bob and Akemi Smith.

Figure 5: Visit to studio-home of Musqueam/Coast Salish weaver, Vivian Campbell (center), with Jill Baird (left) from the Museum of Anthropology, and Lycia Trouton (right), Vancouver, B.C., Canada. 2003 (photo: L. Trouton)

Figure 6: My father, Robert Trouton, with a sculptural detail from The Greek Theatre site of my 'labyrinth' installation, Cranbook Educational Grounds, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, U.S.A, 1991.

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Figure 10: *Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial* conference Dec. 2002. Dr. Dorothy Jones (L), artists Kay Lawrence, (centre), Janis Jefferies (R)

Abstract

The Irish Linen Memorial creative project is an ongoing site-conscious memorial-installation which seeks to re-narrate the almost 4,000 deaths which took place during the fraught period in contemporary Northern Ireland, called 'the troubles'. The dead, far from being gone, remain as a powerful part of the community. How we think about the dead, and the stories we tell about the relationship between the dead and the living, are central to imagining new forms of community and narratives of nationhood. An intimate, yet public, monument to those killed, *The Irish Linen Memorial* is created on white, linen handkerchiefs, with the names printed and overstitched with embroidery, and spotted with sewn hair.

As an adjunct to this counter-monument, I constructed a personal installation on the subject of 'mending', developed through a residency at The Gunnery studios in Woolloomooloo, Sydney. In addition to *The Irish Linen Memorial*, in 2002 and 2004, I invited fellow artists to dialogue with the work that, in turn, produced a dance-theatre performance and a seven-channel sonic- surround original music composition. As well, in 2005, new media components were a part of the installation. In all, this project comprises this exegesis, several gallery installations, a DVD that documents the artwork and a portfolio of images in a booklet.

The exegesis outlines the complexities of a hybrid memorial grounded equally in contemporary sculpture and textiles. I have outlined the historical context of the material culture of linen and presented a general overview of the socio-political landscape of contemporary Northern Ireland from a feminist postcolonial perspective.

My case studies center on how installation artists tackle socio-political issues of national concern. The thesis exegesis reflects upon the new theoretical positionings of feminist theory in relation to sculpture and textiles, text and textiles, feminist theories of the public and the private, the greater visibility of the migrant artist, in particular, the self-consciousness of the migrant artist in Australia, together with the increasing conflation of High/Low, Art/Craft arts practice into an elastic hybridity.

The case studies I examine to explore these themes are the work of USA artists Richard Serra (b. 1939) and Maya Lin (b. 1959); in particular Lin's *Vietnam Veteran's Memorial*, 1982, an anti-monument on a reconciliatory theme of national importance, and Serra's *Tilted Arc,* 1979 - 89, a courageous exposition of the working chiasmatic power of a federal, pedestrian plaza. My other case studies are contemporary artists Narelle Jubelin (Australian, currently based in Spain, b. 1960) and Doris Salcedo (Colombian, educated in New York City, b. 1958), whose installation artwork is based in sculpture and textiles, and both of whom address touch as an important component of their work. Jubelin addresses national issues through the extreme juxtaposition of petit point needlework with large-scale architectonic forms. Salcedo works with art-as-a-witness, re-configuring furniture and clothing, leaving the viewer with the affect of the terror, grief and trauma of living with daily political violence.

The dimensions of this book are the size of the handkerchief used in the creative project. The side bar of the exegesis acts as a reminder of the central concern of my artwork from 2001 – 2005: honouring equally *all* those killed in the troubles, listed chronologically. Thus, the exegesis becomes another artwork: a site, displaced and conveniently mobile, as is *The Irish Linen Memorial* and the book upon which it is based, *Lost Lives: the stories of the men, women and children who died as a result of the troubles*, 2000. The exegesis seeks to pick, unpick and rethread a sense of the fragile, recuperative work involved in a community emerging from conflict, the place of my birth.

Figure 11: Solo thesis exhibition of ***The Irish Memorial*** 2005.
Faculty gallery, Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, February, 2005.

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Introduction

The Irish Linen Memorial (The ILM) is a site-contextual installation and counter-memorial[i], which commemorates over 3,600 persons who were killed during the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland during in the years 1966 – 2001. The names of those who died during this period, commonly known as 'the troubles', were chronologically recorded in the book *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*, (*Lost Lives*) by David McKittrick, Seamus Kelters, Brian Feeney and Chris Thornton, an anti-monument itself. My creative project, *An Intimate Monument: The Irish Linen Memorial*, are dimensions of the contemporary history of Northern Ireland, mid-1960s to present. The names of those killed were printed on to several hundred white linen handkerchiefs. My specific focus is on the temporal-spatial concerns of a public 'chaismatic' or 'interface' site, together with the intimacy or 'affect' produced by an embroidered and sewn artwork on linen. *An Intimate Monument: The Irish Linen Memorial*, is situated in the intersection between the grief and bitterness caused by sectarian divisiveness, and invites reflection upon new narratives of citizenship and plural ways to engage a 'parity of esteem' within sustainable community relations in contemporary Northern Ireland.

Background to my concept development of *The ILM*

It has taken me some years to acknowledge how the Northern Ireland troubles have partly determined my identity as an artist. *The ILM* has provided the vehicle for me to deal overtly with my Northern Irish (North Belfast) heritage and my interest in the intersection of politics and art. The memorial was conceived after my participation in an international sculpture exhibition in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1999, which was the first time I had returned as an adult to my place of birth. Upon my return to Canada, my adopted home since 1970, I read the book entitled *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles,* published for the millennium. I consider this memorial a contemporary counter-memory monument. *The Irish Linen Memorial* is a testament to the fact that grief is a universal human emotion, yet I am not naïve to the fact that certain deaths or trauma may be used for political gain in particular contexts.

The promotion of public art as an excuse to gentrify certain inner-city environments after poverty and violence is a strategic tactic used in recreation, urban planning and culture departments of local governments around the globe. *The ILM* is not meant to serve, unwittingly, as a promotional device for tourism which has

been an aspect of the new climate in Northern Ireland since 1994, as indicated in this passage from a book on the intersection of urban planning with public art:

> In 1991 the Northern Ireland Tourist Board boasted its best year ever in terms of visitors to the province since the start of the troubles (Brien 1991), this sat uncomfortably with widespread press reports that a significant number of tourists were actually attracted by the abnormality of Northern Ireland's urban centres rather than the image of pastoral tranquility projected by the Tourist Board (Thornton 1991; Sharrock 1991; Moore 1991 qtd. in Neill 1995:69).

Children of 1970s Belfast emigrants to North American and Australia, such as me, are a part of this tourist board data in the 1990s. Having grown up at a distance from the troubles, we seemed to have needed to process the direct and indirect messages we received both from our parents and the media during the 1970s and 1980s. The violence was viewed/experienced safely in our living rooms across the globe; intercontinental telephone calls were still expensive, and email and 'immediate' internet or mobile phone text-messaging did not exist. The 1990s and new millennium was a time to reflect upon our place within a community we never knew but seemed to have lost, to understand both sides of a dialogue about violent differences and inequalities we knew, by right of birth, that we were meant to be positioned for or against, and to integrate this peculiar understanding with our new knowledge of having grown up in other places, among other races, religions and cultures. In my family these things took on a seriousness, which, when coupled with my artistic practice, drew me to conceive of this memorial in late 1999. Australia, with its history of extensive Irish migration, has been a fruitful and appropriate place to research my processes and techniques for this creative project.

The Creative Project

The Irish Linen Memorial is unique, in that it is in-process, and has been exhibited several times in different venues, from 2001 to 2005. Outlined in this exegesis are the objectives that underline the creative project, placing it in its socio-historic context, and addressing theories that assist in examining the work and analysing its objectives. The thesis is informed by the University of Wollongong *Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial* project, an Australian Research Council (ARC) large discovery grant upon which I worked as a research assistant from 2001 – 4. That project explored the interdisciplinary arena of literary textual analysis, including post colonialism and feminism, with material cultural analysis. Through my memorial-installation creative project, a text on linen that hangs in space, this thesis exegesis endeavours to explain my hybrid art practice, positioned between sculpture and textiles. My case study on the Australian artist, Narelle Jubelin (currently residing in Spain), specifically serves to explore that interdisciplinary arena. My practice is held in that elusive intersection between the public-political and objective, (historically designated as male Art and highly revered) and that which is intimate-domestic, corporeal and subjective, (historically positioned as female craft and typically dismissed or

erased). Theorists, such as Elizabeth Grosz and Anna Chave, have stimulated more ease and elasticity between notions of the public and the private, sculpture and textiles, diminishing the decrees of Clement Greenberg and the binary oppositions of High/Low art.

My graduate training was based in site-specific sculpture, and I examine site-conscious spatial concerns in my case studies of Richard Serra and Doris Salcedo. Also, I study the hybrid memorial work of architect-artist Maya Lin, whose public sculpture is educational and situated outside the gallery context.

In further case studies, my research focuses on needlework projects that have been used to draw attention to political issues in the public arena. It considers the history of women's activism and positions *The ILM* works as a feminist anti-violence project and is commemorative.

The ILM is a project that re-imagines post-conflict Northern Ireland (N.I) in the wake of mid-1990s peace talks, and draws upon the work of Northern Ireland theorists Elizabeth Porter, Paul Allan and Allen Feldman. Through this artwork-installation-memorial, I suggest new connections across the ethnic divide in Northern Ireland, proposing fresh narratives of peace and reconciliation across difference. Throughout this document are some autobiographical references. These are 'the private and ambiguous processes of memory' as might be stated by Australian historian Joy Damousi (2004). Such reflections are about my art practice, my Protestant Northern Irish heritage and the personal passages of migration in the multicultural milieus of Canada, 1970 – 84, the USA, 1984 – 2000, and, most recently, Australia, since 2001.

The materials for examination comprise of a DVD, a small picture booklet, and several versions of *The Irish Linen Memorial* in gallery contexts, including in 2005 at the Faculty Gallery, the University of Wollongong. The thesis exegesis graphic design format is itself a reflective commemorative narrative, which can be experienced simply though the turning of the pages, and thumbing the sidebar listing those thousands killed in Northern Ireland, from 1966-2001. The time code at the bottom of each column reflects the time it takes for the oration of the individual names, to recall and remember those persons who have been killed.

Together, *The ILM* and the accompanying personal artworks comprised of my '*Mending*' series, proffer a reconfiguration of the relationships within the living and the dead, and between the living and the dead, and are intended as a modest intervention in the project of (re)imagining a peaceful and just Northern Ireland.

[i]The terms 'counter-monument' or 'anti-memorial' mean neither heroic nor static with officialdom's version of the events. James Young describes this as "the metamorphosis of the monument from the heroic, self aggrandizing figurative icons of the late nineteenth century celebrating national ideals and triumphs to the antiheroic, often ironic, and self-effacing conceptual installations that mark national ambivalence and uncertainty of the late twentieth-century postmodernism" (2000: 96).

Several theorists in the 1990s including Australians: artist Janet Laurence, Sue-Anne Ware (2003); others, such as Caroline Wiedmer and Andreas Huyssen, have discussed the implications of the anti-memorial or counter-monument.

Counter-memory involves questions about the following, for example:

"The political site of memory practices is still national, not post-national or global. This does have implications for interpretive works…one must always ask whether and how the trope enhances or hinders local memory practices and struggles, or whether and how it may perform both functions simultaneously." (Huyssen 2003:24).

"How should even local, regional, or national memories be secured, structured, and represented? Of course, this is a fundamentally a political question about the nature of the public sphere, about democracy and its future, about the changing shape of nationhood, citizenship and identity." (Huyssen ibid.; 35)

"Memory…can be no substitute for justice, and justice itself will inevitably be entangled in the unreliability of memory. But even where cultural memory practices lack explicit political focus, they do express a society's need for temporal anchoring when, in the wake of the information revolution and an ever increasing time-space compression, the relationship between the past, present and future is being transformed beyond recognition." (Huyssen ibid.; 37)

Australian public artist, Janet Laurence, (co-creator of the Australian war memorial in London, UK) in a lecture delivered at the Memorial Art and Architecture Seminar at the University of Queensland, August 2003, stated that the anti-memorial has a special corporeal function that engages the body and the viewer enters the space; that inscriptions should be engaged with slowly and that such memorials work against the structure of forgetfulness.

Caroline Wiedmer references the 'memoryscape' created by artists Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock in Berlin, 1993. This memorial to 6,000 lost German-Jews is a series of 80 double-sided signs attached to lamp posts in the neighbourhood of Bayerischer Viertel. The images or inscriptions on the posts were Nazi laws and decrees from 1933-45. Unlike a traditional monument, this one is 'plurally-sited' and asks the onlooker to take a more complex, active role than that of simply mourner/survivor. The active viewer-reader is provoked into assuming the guise of a possible collaborative-perpetrator in the intertextual narrative as it unfolds within a walking tour of the area's streets and it transforms temporal experience into spatial (Wiedmer 1999: 107 and 112-13).

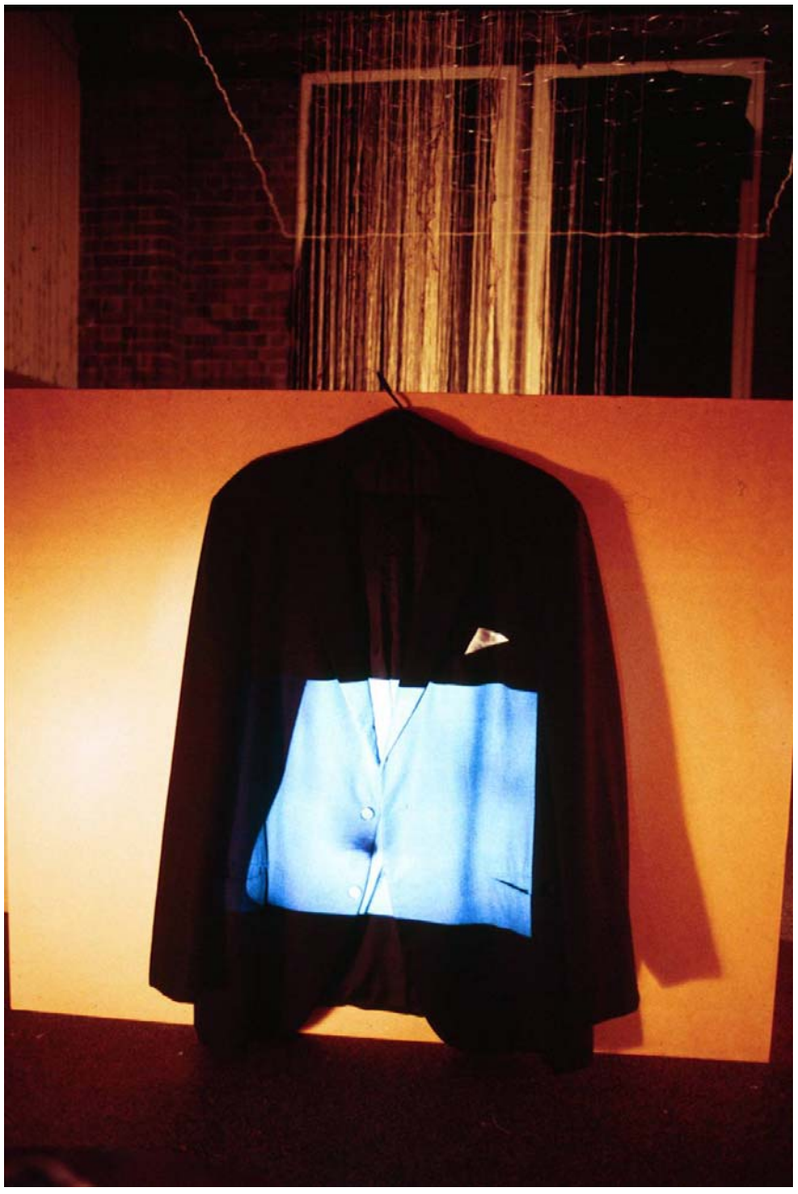

Figure 1: Installation: *Excavation of Being at Rest: Make Do and Mend*
Artspace-The Gunnery 2004

Chapter 1

My Creative Project: *The Irish Linen Memorial*

My *Irish Linen Memorial* (*The ILM*) is a feminist intervention, in an intimate medium, of 'a modest witness'[1] (Haraway 1997:45) to the Northern Irish 'troubles'. The 'troubles' is the period of thirty years of violent conflict in Northern Ireland (N.I) from the late-1960s to 2000. *The ILM* is an artistic contribution based on the book *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland troubles* (*Lost Lives).* The artwork-memorial seeks to work against the tide of continued violence and terror in Northern Ireland. *The ILM* places all those who died as part of the contemporary, post-colonial nation of Northern Ireland[2], regardless of their origins, allegiances or affiliations. As such, my creative project is a quiet, national anti-memorial[3], not a large-scale, permanent and aggrandizing monument. It is a counter-monument which serves to emphasize the banality and horror of each, individual death. *The ILM* serves to efface any inequality between deaths, re-working N.I's divided community in alternate ways.

00:00:00

Figure 13: Irish linen handkerchiefs:
'Ormo' Handkerchiefs – acknowledged to be amongst the best …
advertisement by McBride & Williams Ltd. Ormeau Avenue Belfast.
***Belfast an Industrial City* Jonathan Bardon, Blackstaff Press Ltd., 1983. p. 223.**

1966

John Patrick Scullion

Peter Ward

Matilda Gould

1967

Francis McCloskey

Samuel Devenney

Herbert Roy

1968

Patrick Rooney

Samuel McLarnon

Michael Lynch

John Gallagher

Hugh McCabe

Gerald McAuley

David Linton

`James Dempsey

Jack Todd

William King

Victor Arbuckle

George Dickie

Herbert Hawe

Thomas McDowell

The ILM creative project outlined in this exegesis has been in process since 2001. It is a traveling memorial consisting of over four hundred white, diaphanous Irish linen handkerchiefs commemorating over 3,600 persons who were killed in Northern Ireland during the sectarian violence, more commonly referred to as 'the troubles'. The names of persons killed are listed in chronological order of death – from 1966 to the millennium. The objective of this memorial is to acknowledge the cost of human life lost in sectarian violence and to contribute to the repatterning of community relationships through an artistic ritual of remembrance.

00:01:36

Figure 14: Detail of chain stitch embroidery with sewn 'hairy spots' and label, Irish Linen handkerchiefs of *The ILM*

David McKittrick, Seamus Kelters, Brian Feeney and Chris Thornton's meticulously researched *Lost Lives*, underpins this creative work. In an "act of public service journalism,"[4] the writers used public records to pinpoint the moment of death and catalogue factual information about those killed. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland's troubles*, from which I obtained the ordering of the names, is always displayed along with the memorial at each site, so that the viewer can find the particular story about a certain victim. This enormous tome documents each individual who was killed or died as a result of the troubles, together with a description of their moment of death[5]. Some of those mentioned in the book were neighbours and

Liam McParland

Patrick Corry

1970

Richard Fallon

Thomas McCool

Carol McCool

Bernadette McCool

Alexander Gould

William Kincaid

Daniel Loughlins

Robert Neil

Robert James

Joseph Coyle McCurrie

Henry McIlhone

John Thomas Reid

Williams Burns

Charles O'Neill

Zbigniew Uglik

Thomas Carlin

Patrick Elliman

Daniel O'Hagan

Samuel Donaldson

Robert Millar

David Murray

Michael Kane

friends of my parents; others were an intimate part of the lives of people I met in Belfast in 1999. Visitors to the memorial, since 2001, have related stories about those killed, stories which I have begun to archive. Others have left behind mementoes, gestures towards the hope for peace, healing and possible reconciliation. For some, the sorrow of visiting *The ILM* taps into grief from legacies of their own experiences, and helps explore ways towards the expression of a desire to end all violence.

Figure 15: Maki-san and Akemi Endo of Tokyo, Japan
with their 300 origami paper cranes, called *senbazuru*, for peace, 2002.

The particular ordering of the names of the dead in *Lost Lives* is highly controversial and it is central to my memorial, which is non-hierarchical: perpetrators or terrorists are listed alongside victims; persons on either side of the sectarian divide are listed one after another according to time of their death. As an artist, I do not make any attempt at categorization according to people's religious or political affiliations. Without judgement, the different categories of the dead have been established, for reference, in the book, *Lost Lives*. My artwork, *The Irish Linen Memorial* extends the authors' research by presenting their

00:03:12

`Liam Walsh

Peter Blake

Tom McGoldrick

Desmond Lagan

Arthur McKenna

Alexander McVicker

Andrew Jardin

1971

John Joseph Kavanagh

James Saunders

Bernard Watt

Robert Curtis

Albert Edward Bell

John Aiken

Harry Edgar

George Beck

William Thomas

Malcolm David Henson

John Lawrie

Cecil Patterson

Robert Buckley

William Jolliffe

William Halligan

Charles Hughes

John McCaig

unsensationalised facts in another medium – that of linen. My transposition of their research into textiles places a feminist emphasis upon the body and the private rituals of grief, mourning and healing, without losing sight of the divisive social-historical context within which those killings occurred. In so doing, this creative project explores conceptual themes governing the binary opposites of intimacy/politics, and suggests a movement beyond such divisions through an exploration of the excluded middle (Grosz 1989:xvi), so working to dissolve, undo or unpick, the binary difference. *The ILM* is an artwork based on new research at the intersection between grief and post-traumatic stress, drawing on contemporary memory studies. It is also informed by my personal artistic journey as a member of the Irish Diaspora to the countries of Britain, Canada, U.S.A., and Australia.

Throughout the creation of the memorial, I have imagined its eventual unveiling as a public art piece in an interface neighbourhood in Belfast or Omagh, Northern Ireland. In 2006 to 7, the memorial will be displayed at Glencree, one of two Centres for Peace and Reconciliation in Ireland, the other being Corrymeela, in Northern Ireland. Throughout this exegesis, I emphasise the methods by which the poetics of art traverses politics, and how new theories of kinship may provide a resource for sustaining community relations in places such as Northern Ireland.

00:04:48

The Irish Linen Memorial is a site-contextual artwork (see Weschler on Robert Irwin)[6], which is permanent, but not sited permanently. The several hundred handkerchiefs which make up *The Irish Linen Memorial* are easily folded up, packed/re-packed for travel and reconfigured for installation. The hanging of the handkerchiefs in various configurations can be quite dramatic. First devised in 2000, the memorial has been mounted in three different countries so far, and exhibited in seven locations:

Joseph McCaig
Dougald McCaughey
Kenneth Easthaugh
Tony Henderson
Isabella McKeague
William Reid
Robert Bankier
Michael G. Willets
Martin O'Leary
Seamus Cusack
Desmond George Beattie
David Walker
Richard Barton
Henry Cole
Harry Thornton
Malcolm Hatton
Patrick McAdorey
Leo McGuigan
Sarah Worthington
Hugh Mullan
Frank Quinn
Joan Brigid Connolly
Noel Phillips
Daniel Teggart
William Atwell
Francis McGuinness

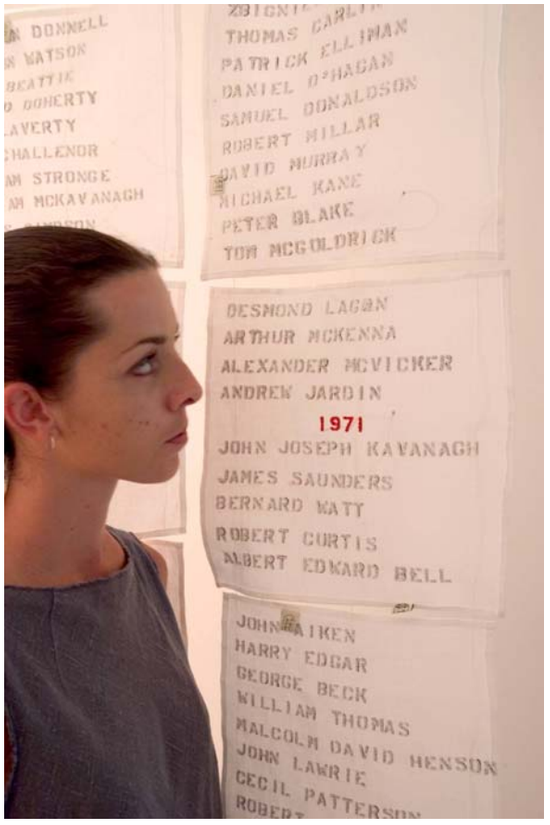

Figure 16: Embroidered handkerchiefs of *The ILM* model: Bodie O'Dell; photo: Sean Maguire

1) The original artwork was conceived and developed in 2000-2001, with Canada Council funding, and was exhibited from September 7 to October 20, 2001 as part of the *Natural Causes* exhibit, in Ellensburgh, near Seattle, Washington, USA, by curator Cheryl Hahn. The art work entitled, *Between Worlds: The Common Body* was part of a group exhibition on the theme of how identity or autobiography influences one's ecological/ environmental or landscape art practice. I created an installation 'room' where the drapery formed four walls of a memorial, beneath a blacked-out skylight in a foyer at the top of a flight of over twenty-five steep steps. In the centre of this room was a coffin-sized configuration of blocks of compressed peat moss (similar to Irish bog oak), upon which an image of a body was projected.

00:06:24

Desmond Healey
Hugh Herron
Winston Donnell
Norman Watson
John Beattie
Edward Doherty
John Laverty
Paul Challenor
William Stronge
William McKavanagh
Seamus Simpson
Paddy McCarthy
Alphonsus Cunningham
William Ferris
Eamonn Lafferty
Eamonn McDavitt
James C. O'Hagan
John McKerr
Joseph Murphy
John Robinson
George Crozier
Harry Beggs
Joseph Corr
Ian Armstrong
Clifford Loring
Francis W. Veitch

2) *The Irish Linen Memorial* was displayed in two Protestant Churches in British Columbia (B.C.), Canada: the Canadian Memorial Church and Centre for Peace and the Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church in Vancouver, B.C.; also in St. Matthew's Catholic Church in Portland, Oregon, USA. (see accompanying booklet)

Figure 17: Installation 'Horrific Hankies': *The Irish Linen Memorial* University of Wollongong, Cloisters Gallery, Faculty of Creative Arts. Nov. 1 – 11, 2002. Photo: Sean Maguire.

3) In November 1 to 11, 2002, I hung *Horrific Hankies* which was the first phase of this inter-disciplinary performance-installation with fellow University of Wollongong creative arts colleagues. The exhibit *Horrific Hankies* was mounted in the de-centered space of a long academic corridor in the Creative Arts building at the University of Wollongong, called the Cloisters Gallery (Curator: Jelle Van Den Berg with assistant curator Natasha Younie). The memorial included a seven-channel sonic surround by fellow DCA candidate Thomas Fitzgerald, entitled *The Seeming Insanity of Forgiveness*. An opening night dance-theatre performance, entitled *Linking the Living with bandages of Linen and Lace*, was choreographed by Elizabeth Cameron Dalman.

00:08:00

Angela Gallagher
John Warnock
Annette McGavigan
David Stewardson
William McGreanery
Martin Leonard Carroll
Paul Carter
John Ronald Rudman
Peter Herrington
Samuel James Nelson
Robert Leslie
James Glenn Finlay
Gerald O'Hare
Rose Curry
Alexander Andrews
Earnest Bates
Peter Sharp
Terence McDermott
Patrick Daly
Brian Hall
Winifred Maxwell
Roger Wilkins
John Thompson
Cecil Cunningham
John Haslett
David Joseph Thompson

Figure 18: composer, Thomas Fitzgerald, with screenwriter, Rie Natalenko, Wollongong, 2003.

00:09:36

4) In December 2002 a small-scale artwork, titled *Distressingly Delicate Domestic Linens…Listening*, was included in the *Unfolding Territories* group show which accompanied *The Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial* conference, at the University of Wollongong.

5) In 2004, *The Irish Linen Memorial - Transformation of Tears*, was installed at Craft ACT (Australian Captial Territory) Gallery and Design Centre, during the Canberra National Multicultural Arts Festival, February. It was a memorial-installation with an accompanying sonic composition and a dance-theatre performance by three Mirramu Dance Company professionals (see booklet). The viewing of *The ILM* was enlivened at this exhibition in Canberra as many who came to see it identify themselves as part of the Irish Diaspora, including the recent wave of 1970s-80s Irish migrants from Northern Ireland.

Joseph Hill

Graham Cox

George Hamilton

John Bennett

Maura Meeham

Dorothy Maguire

Sean Ruddy

Thomas James McLaughlin

Robert Anderson

Martin Forsythe

Robert Patrick Lindsay

Robert George McFarland

Ronald Dodd

Peter Graham

Angus Stephens

David Tilbury

David Powell

Norman Booth

Michael McLarnon

Alfred Devlin

John Copeland

Ian B. Docherty

Thomas Malcolm Kells

Stanley Corry

William R. Russell

John Cochrane

6) During a residency at Artspace-The Gunnery in Woolloomooloo, Sydney, in 2004, I investigated a process indispensable to the human condition: the breath. Installation artwork was subsequently developed on the theme of *'Mending'*. At my studio, the preliminary installation generated another piece entitled '*Excavation of Being at Rest: Make Do and Mend'* (view in the moving image on the DVD, enclosed). My works, based in materialist sculpture[7], explored ideas about memory and trauma surrounding *The Irish Linen Memorial*.

00:11:12

Figure 19: 3 oil pan and hair

7) The memorial was exhibited in the Faculty of Creative Arts, at the University of Wollongong in February, 2005. The public memorial, itself, is an intimate monument, where individual deaths have been subsumed into a larger whole – a quilt-like arrangement in space. A partner exhibit, entitled *The Mending Room*, was an

Molly Jane Gemmell
William Jordan
Stephen McGuire
Frank McKee
Christopher Quinn
Kathleen Thompson
Paul Genge
Ian Curtis
Dermot Hurley
Thomas J. W. Moore
W.E.L. Rena
Edwin Charnley
Michael Crosse
Brigid Carr
Colin J.L.Davies
Paul Nicholls
Jimmy O'Neill
Ian Hankin
Robert Malcolm Benner
Vivienne Gibney
Denis Wilson
Philomena McGurk
Maria McGurk
James Cromie
Edward Keenan
Sarah Keenan

accompanying intimate installation, held in a small adjacent room – a space that focused upon the individual pain of each death and the personal aspects of grief and healing.

Figure 20: Solo thesis exhibition: *The Irish Linen Memorial*
Faculty of Creative Arts Gallery, University of Wollongong. February 2005.
model: Bodie O'Dell; photo: Sean Maguire.

00:12:48

Therefore, *The ILM* is best understood as a reflection on the meaning of deaths from the troubles, as they recede in time and as hope emerges for ethnic and civil pluralism (see chapter two) through the fragile joint-authority government. Yet, after the election of Members of Parliament with extreme views, in November 2003 and May 2005. To date, there has been a lack of success in the efforts of conflict-management and 'coercive consociation' (see O'Leary and McGarry 1993:5), or a lasting resolve to sectarian divisiveness (see also Lijphart 1977 and 1991). In each incarnation of the work I seek to invite/provoke a somewhat different response of remembrance and mourning from the viewers.

Subtle variations on the theme of trauma, grief and new definitions of the possibilities of reconciliation are reflected in the different memorials, their context, location or accompanying performance, sound or new media elements. Each installation documents the evolution of a personal journey

John Colton
Thomas McLoughlin
David Milligan
James Smyth
Francis Bradley
Thomas Kane
Philip Gary
Kathleen Irvine
Edward Laurence Kane
Robert Charles Spotswood
Mary Isobel Thompson
Anthony Gerald Nolan
Jeremy Snow
Sean Russell
Kenneth Smyth
Daniel McCormick
Harold King
Tracey Munn
Colin Nicholl
Hugh Bruce
Joseph Parker
Jack Barnhill
Martin McShane
Anthony Aspinwall
James McCallum
John Bateson

towards a deeper understanding of the complex socio-political issues and/or the varying emotional reverberations of the troubles spanning from 1967, when I was born in west Belfast, N.I, through my formative years in Canada and the USA, into the present in an Australian context, apparently far from sectarian violence.

Linen was chosen as the medium to chronicle the names of those killed. Irish linen is also pivotal to an appreciation of the artwork in its material culture (see chapter three). Needlework stitched atop the printed names has been a long-term, crucial process for *The ILM* creative project and with connotations with to utilitarian needlework (as in repairing and mending[8] see Reynolds 1999:327-37) and decorative embroidery. The white-on-white chain stitch embroidery and sewn hair[9] contrasts with the larger, spatial considerations of each installation. The minutiae of the needlework require the viewer to pause and closely examine the dedication of each name, and reflect upon the pattern between the thousands of deaths. The creative aspects of touch, (exemplified by textiles hand-crafting and handkerchief units), visuality, (light passing through the linen), and the perceptual, (moving through space and time in an installation structure or enclosure), are co-existent parts of the complete memorial.

00:14:24

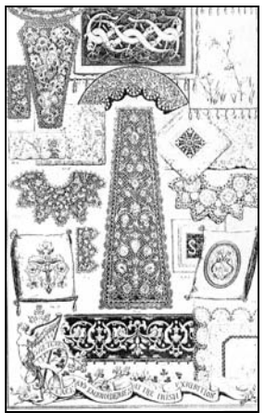

Figure 21: Kells Art Embroideries 1886
'Working Bodies, Celtic Textiles and the Donegal Industrial Fund 1883-1890.'
Janice Helland, *Textile: Journal of Cloth and Culture*, July 2004, Vol.2, Is.2,
Berg, London. p. 143.

Martin Lee

James Joseph Sheridan

Margaret McCorry

John F. Lavery

Gerald McDade

Richard Ham

Jack McCabe

1972

Keith Bryan

Daniel O'Neill

Peter Gerald Woods

Michael Sloan

Raymond Denham

Maynard Crawford

Eamonn McCormick

Sydney Agnew

Charles Stentiford

Peter McNulty

Peter Gilgunn

David Montgomery

Raymond Carroll

Jack Duddy

Pat Doherty

Hugh Gilmore

Bernard McGuigan

In chapter three, I describe how the industrialization of linen production in Northern Ireland – on the periphery of Europe – forged links with the rest of the world, especially in the last part of the nineteenth century. Linen manufacture, a quintessentially British colonial development, thus resulted in disseminating positive (Northern) Irish identity traits, high culture, and economic development throughout the globe. In this artwork, quality white dress linen handkerchiefs of everyday use have been transformed into a medium expressing the affectiveness of sectarian violence - an accompanying tragic legacy of colonial progress into the twentieth century. The memorial invites viewers to think and feel the ways that textiles can be a repository of national identity and circulate with the Irish Diaspora. Textiles and cloth also underline how women's utilitarian and/or decorative labour symbolically suture differences and offers hope of reconnection after trauma and displacement.

Key artists whose conceptual preoccupations underline particular aspects of my installation practice and construction of the memorial have informed this doctoral project. The case studies, each of which is the subject of one chapter, help to illuminate the underlying socio-historic developments and contemporary context of my art practice, as expressed in *The ILM*. The site-contextual exhibitions of the memorial also include elements that reference an autobiographical process or journey. If the memorial is didactic, then some accompanying installation elements work with 'affect.' Australian theorist Jill Bennett[10], known for her research on art, politics and trauma, describes the exploration of "a certain *affective* quality of space …to evoke modes of subjective experience: of loss, trauma or of a past that continues to haunt the present" (my italics 2005: 3).

My creative project development, as shown in the case studies, was influenced by the artists Narelle Jubelin (needlework, assemblage, postcolonial and memory studies), Richard Serra (chiasmatic space and materialism in sculpture), Maya Lin (hybrid memorials or counter-monuments and concrete poetry), and Doris Salcedo (Colombia, 'juncture space' and art as witness). My exegesis also discusses public needlework projects led by women artists from the 1970s to the present. Finally, I have

00:16:00

James Wray
Michael Kelly
William McKinney
Gerald McKinney
Kevin McElhinney
John Young
Gerald Damien Donaghy
William Nash
Michael McDaid
Robin Nigel Alers-Hankey
Ian Roy Bramley
Thomas McIlroy
Louis O'Neill
Phelim Grant
Charles McCann
David Seaman
Paul McFadden
Bernard James Rice
Patrick Casey
Joseph Cunningham
Ian Harris
David Champ
Thomas Francis McCann
Thomas Callaghan
Michael Fredrick Prime
Elizabeth English

included a brief synopsis of the influential work of Kathy Pendergrast (Northern Ireland, displacement and memory).

Figure 22: 'Transformation of Tears': *The Irish Linen Memorial* Performance by *Mirramu Dance Company* (see moving image on DVD) CraftACT Gallery 1, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. February 2004.
Photo: Creative Imaging photography.

Descriptive Details

The Irish Linen Memorial is made up of manufactured handkerchiefs purchased on the internet with the aid of a Canada Council grant (2001), from The Irish Linen Company in Belfast. I made an aesthetic decision to print on the back, or underside, of the handkerchief in order to display the manufacturer's label[11]. This tag, or brand name, then acts as a visual element on the seam of the hankies (protruding from one of the various sides) in the larger display configuration. When viewed from afar, this miniature green-bronze label creates an additional visual component in the white grid created by the configuration of handkerchiefs in the greater memorial. Making the label noticeable puts emphasis on the fact that those

killed on either side of the sectarian divide are unified through the Northern Irish troubles in death[12]. The memorial enables the possibility of sharing grief, together with the hopeful proposition of potential reconciliation.

Sean Johnston
Gerard Crossan
Thomas McCann
Bernadette Hyndman
Patrick McCrory
Colm Keenan
Eugene McGillan
William Logan
Anthony Stephen Butcher
Christopher Robin Cracknel
Carmel Knox
James O'Hanlon
Ernest McAllister
Bernard O'Neill
Sydney Bell
Ernest Dougan
Samuel Trainor
James Macklin
John Taylor
Sean O'Riordan
Patrick Campbell
Ingram Beckett
Joseph Forsyth
Robert William Mitchell
Ruby Johnston
Martha Crawford

Details of technical processes and international collaboration

Each handkerchief bears the name of ten persons who died. The printing of the names was completed over many hours with the aid of a borrowed old-fashioned industrial punch letter machine (from 'The Ideal Stencil Machine and Tape Company', Belleville, Illinois, USA). The list of names was drawn up from the book *Lost Lives*, punched on to oil-boards and then inked on to the hankies, ten names per handkerchief. This process was completed from June to August 2001, in preparation for the first exhibit in Washington state.

Since mid-2003 my maternal aunt Margot Damon (née McGladdery)[13] in London, England, joined in 2004 by my mother, living in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada have hand embroidered the names. The technique is white chain stitch, in silk mercerized cotton, over-top of printed names in black ink. Therefore, the making of this memorial-artwork has been an international collaborative experience as packages of handkerchiefs are sent from one side of the globe to the other and back again. As well as being creative, this process has maintained my kinship relations, at a distance. One handkerchief per week is embroidered by each relative, with each name taking almost thirty minutes to complete and an entire hankie taking four to six hours. It will take several more years to complete the memorial in its entirety. The laborious, non-commodified handiwork process adds to the careful, considered naming of each person's life, and aids in the commemorative process of those who have been killed in horrific circumstances. This meticulous process of embroidery illustrates a monumental undertaking of long hours devoted to precision hand-labour with precious linen. I made a decision that it is valuable to display the memorial whilst the embroidery is in-process, as well as when the needlework is eventually complete.

00:19:12

Interdisciplinary collaborative work with *The ILM* (see accompanying booklet, DVD)

The cross-disciplinary focus of the Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong is one of its strengths. In 2002 and 2004, Australian colleagues were invited to work on *The ILM* installation. Music and dance, so important to traditional Irish culture, served to contextualize the linen references and gave a haunting tone to the memorial. This interdisciplinary work added an inter-cultural dimension and gave movement to the static quality of a printed list of names. For mainstream viewers, less familiar with avant-garde contemporary artwork, the familiar elements of music and voice[14], together with the narrative of a dance-theatre piece allowed for a more ready engagement with traumatic and difficult subject matter.

Conclusion

In 1969, my parents decided to emigrate to Vancouver, B.C., Canada. When I came to Australia from North America, I was the same age my mother was when she left Belfast. My family was lucky to have physically and psychologically escaped the period of the troubles that deeply affected our country of origin. It took the lives of seven of our family friends, one of whom was only a boy of fourteen in the wrong place at the wrong time, Stephen Parker. My grandfather and uncle were almost killed at point blank range in their home, and a fire bomb ruined their house. My grandmother and great aunt were left traumatized, developing a dependence upon anxiety medication, routinely prescribed to women at the time. My mother had been sensitized to the troubles, stemming back to a childhood during World War II. Her father, Daniel Ritchie McGladdery, had been called up as a part of the Territorial Army in 1938 (before war started) and was away for the duration of the war. Like many returning soldiers, he became politicised and was keen to create a more democratic society as he saw it; eventually he became a senator in the Northern Ireland parliament, from 1958 until it was prorogued, 1972. In the 1970s and 80s my maternal grandparents, out of a sense of duty to their mixed

00:20:48

Bernard Calladene
Henry Millar
Peter Deacon Sime
Samuel Hughes
Charles McCrystal
John McErlean
Eric Blackburn
Brian Thomasson
Elizabeth McAuley
Joe McCann
Sean McConville
Martin Robinson
Geard Bristow
Nicholas Hull
Patrick Joseph Magee
Patrick Donaghy
James Elliot
Martin P. Owens
Gerald P. Donnelly
Francis Rowntree
Joseph Gold
Laurence Jubb
Rosaleen Gavin
David Curry
Victor Andrews
John Ballard

community, refused to leave it – even as the troubles encroached upon their neighbourhood in north Belfast. At the same time, in Canada, my mother felt close to the troubles because of ongoing international media publicity. Northern Ireland is "the most internally politically violent of the recognizably continuous liberal democracies during the period of 1948 – 77 (in absolute numbers killed and in the per capita death toll)" (O'Leary and McGarry 1993:13). It has taken me some years to acknowledge how the Northern Ireland troubles have determined, to some extent, my identity as an artist. *The ILM* has provided the vehicle for me to deal overtly with my Irish heritage and my interest in politics and art.

00:22:24

Figure 23: Irish necklace of leprechaun on toadstool and horseshoe with Connemarra marble; on linen handkerchief.
Gifts sent to me as a child in Canada from my materinal grandmother.

The scourge of ethnic violence and trauma continue to affect many parts of the globe. With the new 'war of terror' since '9/11', Australia and the USA are not immune. This artwork-memorial, although with a focus on my own cultural heritage, attempts to address the importance of inter-cultural creative projects in the public realm.

The ILM was originally conceived with the idealistic vision, that through the recognition of past tragedies, persons may find ways of living in peaceful co-existence in diverse communities, and attempt to solve problems other than by violent means. *The ILM* may express the wishes of many in the Irish Diaspora who are concerned with social justice in their original homeland of Northern Ireland/Ireland. The peace and reconciliation process has been underway since 1998. *The Irish Linen Memorial* engages a narrative memory process in the post-conflict period. My memorial was inspired by the tragic personal stories which constitute the book *Lost Lives*. It is an artistic contribution towards sustainable community-building (between neighbours and former enemies, perpetrators and victims, the living and the dead) in what is becoming hopefully a place where peaceful co-existence takes precedence to violence.

Figure 24: Victims of the Omagh Bombing printed in the newspaper Tyrone Constitution, Northern Ireland, on August 20, 1998.

Paper lent to me by Margaret Barman, formerly of Newtownsteward and Omagh, N.I, who migrated to Sydney, Australia in 1957 and returned 'home' only days after the bombing in 1998.

In 1998 there were the IRA and loyalist ceasefires and the Good Friday Agreement which included Ulster Unionists and Sinn Fein. The Omagh, County Tyrone, bombing in mixed (60-40 Catholic-Protestant) community at 3:08 p.m. Saturday, August 15th 1998, shocked the world. 29 persons were killed, one of the highest death tolls of the troubles, "possibly the worst single incident of the troubles" (McKittrick et al 1437).

00:24:00

Geraldine McMahon
Joseph Fitzsimmons
Jackie McIlhone
Martin Engelen
Harry Crawford
Edward McDonnell
Mary Clarke
Thomas Wardlow
Leonard Gerard McAteer
Joan Scott
Michael Bruce
Marcel J. Doglay
Victor Husband
Brian Robertson
Gerald Murray
George Lee
Charles E. Coleman
Sam Donegan
Norman Campbell
Edward Megahey
Roy Staunton
Jean Smith
Marion Brown
Hugh Sean Madden
Joseph Campbell
Norman McGrath

Endnotes

[1] Haraway's modest witness is the theorist who would acknowledge her location and partiality and think of her relation to the world as one of articulation rather than objective representation. Modest witnesses are those who attend to the stories produced about the world. There is no clear split for them between stories and facts. For these witnesses, 'Changing the stories, in both material and semiotic senses, is a modest intervention worth making' (45).

[2] There is debate within Irish Studies whether or not Ireland/Northern Ireland is 'post-colonial'.

[3] The reference 'anti-memorial' refers to a 'counter-monument' that is neither heroic nor static with officialdom's version of the events. James Young describes this as "the metamorphosis of the monument from the heroic, self aggrandizing figurative icons of the late nineteenth century celebrating national ideals and triumphs to the antiheroic, often ironic, and self-effacing conceptual installations that mark national ambivalence and uncertainty of the late twentieth-century postmodernism" (2000: 96). Several theorists in the 1990s including Australians: artist Janet Laurence and Sue-Anne Ware (2003); others such as Caroline Wiedmer and Andreas Huyssen, have discussed the implications of the anti-memorial or counter-monument.

Counter-memory involves questions about the following, for example:

> "The political site of memory practices is still national, not post-national or global. This does have implications for interpretive works…one must always ask whether and how the trope enhances or hinders local memory practices and struggles, or whether and how it may perform both functions simultaneously." (Huyssen 2003:24).
>
> "How should even local, regional, or national memories be secured, structured, and represented? Of course, this is a fundamentally a political question about the nature of the public sphere, about democracy and its future, about the changing shape of nationhood, citizenship and identity." (Huyssen ibid.; 35)

00:25:36

> "Memory…can be no substitute for justice, and justice itself will inevitably be entangled in the unreliability of memory. But even where cultural memory practices lack explicit political focus, they do express a society's need for temporal anchoring when, in the wake of the information revolution and an ever increasing time-space compression, the relationship between the past, present and future is being transformed beyond recognition." (Huyssen ibid.; 37)

Australian public artist, Janet Laurence, (co-creator of the Australian war memorial in London, UK) in a lecture delivered at the Memorial Art and Architecture Seminar at the University of Queensland, August 2003, stated that the anti-memorial has a special corporeal function that engages the body and the viewer enters the space; that inscriptions should be engaged with slowly and that such memorials work against the structure of forgetfulness.

Caroline Wiedmer references the 'memoryscape' created by artists Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock in Berlin, 1993. This memorial to 6,000 lost German-Jews is a series of 80 double-sided signs attached to lamp posts in the neighbourhood of Bayerischer Viertel. The images or inscriptions on the posts were Nazi laws and decrees from 1933-45. Unlike a traditional monument, this one is 'plurally-sited' and asks the onlooker to take a more complex, active role than that of simply mourner/survivor. The active viewer-reader is provoked into assuming the guise of a possible collaborative-perpetrator in the intertextual narrative as it unfolds within a walking tour of the area's streets and it transforms temporal experience into spatial (Wiedmer 1999: 107 and 112-13).

00:27:12

[4] John O'Farrell in a statement upon the publication of the book, said, "A book of the dead, a book of resurrection. It is a crowning achievement for the authors, who have undertaken a massive task with little hope of recompense. This is public service journalism at its finest." 2000.

[5] The way persons met their death is noted but no comment on the rationale is stated, leaving readers to reach their own conclusions as to why a person was killed.

[6] Robert Irwin, an artist from the west coast of the United States, is known for his installation work with light since the late 1960s-1970s, and subsequent

Hugh Clawson
David Fisher
Gerald McCrea
James Howell
John Patrick O'Hanlon
Denis Quinn
Malcolm Orr
Peter Orr
Samuel Robinson
Lawrence McKenna
David Andrews
Gerald David Turkington
James Joseph Fleming
Brian McMillan
Angelo Fionda
John Dougal
Margaret Gargan
Noel Fitzpatrick
Patrick Butler
David McCafferty
Terence Jones
Charles Watson
David McClenaghan
David Colin Poots
Charles Alan Meehan
Gerald T. M. Gibson

architecturally-based investigations into perception/space/presence/ the nature of vision; the peripheral quality of "both there and not there" (Weschler 113). I have been highly influenced by his work, along with the work of his one-time associate in 1968, James Turrell. Therefore, my reference to the term 'site-contextual' is meant to refer to the specifics of the legacy of their artwork. (Yet, in the 1990s, Miwon Kwon, contemporary architect and theorist, might, instead, term my work 'site-conscious.')

> "For what Bob [Irwin] was trying to capture in these efforts was the incidental, the transitory, the peripheral – that aspect of our experience that is both there and not there, the object and not the object of our sensations, perceived but seldom attended to. These transparent phantoms disappeared into their environments, and yet, upon occasion, almost at the corner of our eye, there they seemed to shiver – a gleam"(Weschler 113).
>
> "The [acrylic] column [Northridge Shopping Centre, outside Los Angeles, California, 1970] was an indication of my wanting to get out and treat the environment itself. I don't mean in the sense of building buildings or being an architect, but rather of dealing with the quality of a particular space in terms of its weight, its temperature, its tactileness, its density, its feel – all those semi-intangible things that we don't normally deal with"(Irwin qtd. in Weschler 114).

00:28:48

[7] Materialism in sculpture is associated with the twentieth century removal of illusionistic space ("at the center of ...inert matter...was a source of energy which shaped it" eg. the work of Henry Moore) and the non-object oriented work of 1970s USA sculptors, Richard Serra, Carl Andre and Robert Morris. Materialism became associated with process art, and the finding of the form of a work through the procedures of its making -- allowing gravity to shape or complete the some phase of the sculpture (eg. the work of USA sculptor Eva Hesse). (Krauss 1977:253 and 272; Morris 1975: 65 and Morris 1993)

Materialism can also be understood through critic Douglas Crimp (known for his radical, political critiques of art in public space and art in relation to exhibition practices or economic and ideological contexts), upon writing about 'rigging' in

Paul Beattie
Jack McCabe
William Cochrane
Martin Rooney
Henry James Russell
Kenneth Charles Mogg
Thomas Burns
David Meeke
Hugh Wright
Robert Watkin
Williams Wynn
Kenneth Canham
Francis McKeown
Peter Heppenstall
James Reid
Terence Toolan
John Tegwin
Herbert Williams
Louis Scullion
Edward Brady
Jane McIntyre
John H. Young
Robert D. Laverty
Felix John Hughes
John Mooney
Tobias Molloy

the work of Richard Serra. He stated that the professional labor of others is used not only for the "manufacture of the sculpture's material elements but also to "make" the sculpture...to put it in its condition or position for use, to constitute the material *as* sculpture" (his italics, 1986: 44).

[8] In World War II, the British Board of Trade promoted a 'Make do and Mend' campaign. It encouraged the nation's women in self-reliance and in contributing to the war effort through the recycling of household linen and family clothing or textiles. My mother and her sister, (who have been embroidering *The Irish Linen Memorial),* may have been influenced by the generally high profile of home sewing in accompaniment with the sentiment of 'duty to one's country' espoused during their childhood as well as the campaign's influence on the continuation of rationing in the post-war period in the UK when they were young women (see Woods, 1989 and Reynolds 1999). Rationing had the effect of equalising resources as every item of clothing had a coupon value regardless of quality or price (see Reynolds 328). Although my aunt's skills and training in home economics and her enjoyment of embroidery is far greater than my mother's, both my mother and my aunt have sewn the names ('repairing' the bold black printing on the handkerchiefs with the more elegant white handiwork of stitching) perhaps as a charitable duty of service as if symbolic of 'mending' for 'their country'.

00:30:24

Figure 25: Poster designed by Donia Nachsen for the 'Make-do and Mend' campaign; no date; From The Imperial War Museum,`Your Clothes Are Materials of War'. Helen Reynolds, *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking,* (ed. Barbara Burman). p. 335.

James Lee
Terence Graham
James Joseph Jones
Thomas Mills
Alan Jack
Leslie Leggett
Harold Gray
Anthony Davidson
Robert Gibson
William Kenneth Crothers
William Irvine
Thomas Killops
Stephen Cooper
Philip J. Price
Margaret O'Hare
Stephen Parker
Brigid Murray
Joseph Rosato
Joseph Downey
Patrick O'Neill
Rose McCartney
Francis Arthurs
Robert McComb
George Bunting
James Casey
Fredrick Maguire

[9] The handkerchiefs are both sewn and embroidered; the embroidery is in white, chain stitch while the sewn "hairy spots" link the handkerchiefs in a haphazard, yet schematic way and further reflect Irish identity and the fragile need for connection with each other.

[10] Bennett co-curated a 2005 exhibition in Sydney which included Northern Ireland artists Willie Doherty and Frances Hegarty entitled Prepossession.

[11] Saidie Patterson, a well-known Northern Irish textile labour activist and peaceworker recalls how linen flour sacks were frequently reconstituted into underwear and that having the brand name or trademark showing was a matter of 'mortification'. My emphasis on the visibility of the trademark for the memorial seeks to reverse shameful connotations about the label "Irish/Irishness," anti-Irish bigotry, or negative sentiment about the troubles being simply a 'tribal' Irish problem.

Figure 26: Kay Lawrence and various Indigenous artists.'Murray River' exhibition, Adelaide, 2002.
Note: the pair of flour sack underwear, with the label showing.
Similar undergarments would have been made out of linen sacks in Ireland.

[12] "While the violence and fatalities of the Northern Ireland troubles have centred in that region, predominantly in Belfast, the troubles have included approximately

00:32:00

200 deaths in Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere in Europe (from Gibraltar to western Germany)" (O'Leary and McGarry 1993:9).

[13] My aunt, Margot Damon (née McGladdery), born 1937, grew up in Armagh and Belfast, Northern Ireland. As a young adult, she trained in Home Economics in Belfast, followed by a postgraduate year in Glasgow, Scotland with further training in Liverpool, England and an MA in London, approximately 1960s. She had a career as a lecturer and, then, as an inspector for schools and colleges with the Inner London Education Authority. From 1985 to approximately 2000, she lived in Southeast Asia, working part-time for the Curriculum Development Unit in Singapore. Margot Damon currently resides in London with her husband and her voluntary contribution to the artwork is most gratifying to me. See appendix for futher information, such as her approach to the memorial process in her own words, reflections upon her father, (my grandfather), and the contribution she is making to those killed in the troubles who have passed on.

[14] The dialogue with Australian artists added a new dimension and furthered the work. When I invited Thomas Fitzgerald to participate, I had conceived the music as a violin solo or a lament for the dead. Fitzgerald's family had migrated to Victoria, Australia in the late nineteenth century, perhaps during the Great Irish Famine. Fitzgerald's first love is the violin and he seems influenced by his maternal heritage from County Clare, Ireland. Once we began to collaborate, a broader version of the piece emerged and we agreed upon an inter-cultural interpretation with pre-recorded chants to the dead from around the world, including from Indigenous cultures, as well as different sorts of Irish music and spoken voice.

00:33:36

Figure 27: Violinist/composer Thomas Fitzgerald (centre), 2003,
Lycia (left), theorist Marta Cabrera (back), Luz Hincape (Colombia),Wollongong.

Henry Creighton
Patrick Joseph Connolly
James Jones
Colm Murtagh
Anne Parker
Michael Clarke
Frank Wynne
Thomas Madden
Arthur Hone
David Anthony Storrey
Brian Hope
Charles McNeill
Patrick McGoldrick
William Spence
Michael Boddy
Philip Anthony Faye
Ronald Rennie Layfield
Richard Jones
James Neill
James Lindsay
Frank Quinn
Patrick Joseph Murphy
Marshall Craig Lawrence
Michael Joseph Gillesse
Joseph Fegan
Oliver Plunkett Rowntree

For further information on the music composition by Thomas Anthony Fitzgerald see the appendix, enclosed CD, and Fitzgerald's University of Wollongong Doctorate of Creative Arts (DCA) thesis, 2005. Also see appendix on the contributions to the sound collage from my colleague, Geraldine Finegan, an Irish-American of Catholic background from Baltimore, USA, regarding Buddhist chants for the dead, 2001-2.

My collaboration with choreographer-dancer Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, OAM, has been thoroughly documented in the article enclosed in the appendix, a conversation-interview, published in Vol. XXVI, No. 2 of *Kunapipi: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, as well as in a radio interview with Sylvie Stern in Canberra, 2004 (see appendix).

00:35:12

Figure 28: embroidered handkerchiefs by Margot Damon windows looking out onto civic plaza, *'Transformation of Tears': The Irish Linen Memorial* at CraftACT Gallery, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. February Photo: Creative Imaging photography, 2004.

Noel John Madden

Patrick Hughes

John McCann

James Fredrick Johnston

Alan P. Tingey

Arthur W. Whitelock

Ian Hunter Caie

James Edward Eames

Alfred Johnston

James Carlan

Martin F. Curran

John Michael Nulty

Patrick F. Kelly

Thomas John Boyd

Anthony Metcalfe

William Herbert Trotter

Ian Roderick Morrill

Ronald Anthony Rowe

Roy Christopher

David Griffiths

Patrick Vincent Devaney

Eamonn McMahon

Robert Cutting

Victor Smyth

Briget Breen

Samuel Waring Boyde

Chapter 2

Northern Ireland Context: A brief overview of the troubles, 1968 – 98: feminist (re)imaginings of political communities in Northern Ireland.

> The absolute death-toll from internal political violence in Northern Ireland alone places the UK as the 41st most violent state in the list of 150 states covered in the *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, and as the most violent continuously liberal democratic state in the world in the thirty years 1948 – 77 (O'Leary and McGarry 18).

From *The Politics of Antagonism*.

> Ulster is British says one; Ulster is *Uladh*, an ancient province in Ireland, says the other. On one side of the march drain[1], you say potato. On the other side, I say potato. Such contradictions are part of being alive as a member of the human species (Heaney 2002: 54).

00:36:48

From *Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971 – 2001*

Seamus Heaney, Northern Ireland's Poet Laureate, who grew up 'undislodgeably in-between' on the River Moyola, the border between Catholic, Nationalist Bellaghy side & Protestant, Loyalist Castledawson.

> The words we have written may read like journalism, but readers will quickly become aware that between the lines lie much grief and tragedy. We hope readers will be affected, as we have been, by the powerful message they convey of what violence can do to individuals, and families and communities (David McKittrick et al 2000:13).

From *Lost Lives: the stories of the men, women and children who died as a result of the Northern Ireland troubles*.

Robert Ritchie McKinney
Robert Johnston
William Moore
Duncan McPhee
Douglas Richmond
William A. McIntyre
Patrick Doyle
Robert James Warnock
Andrew McKebben
Martha Smylie
John Davies
Anne Murray
Sinclair Johnston
Michael Joseph Quigley
John Van Beck
Edmond Woolsey
Frank Bell
Thomas Albert Stoker
Joseph McComiskey
Thomas Bullock
Emily Bullock
William Matthews
Stewart Gardiner
Minnie Malcolmson
John Michael Barry
Paul McCartan

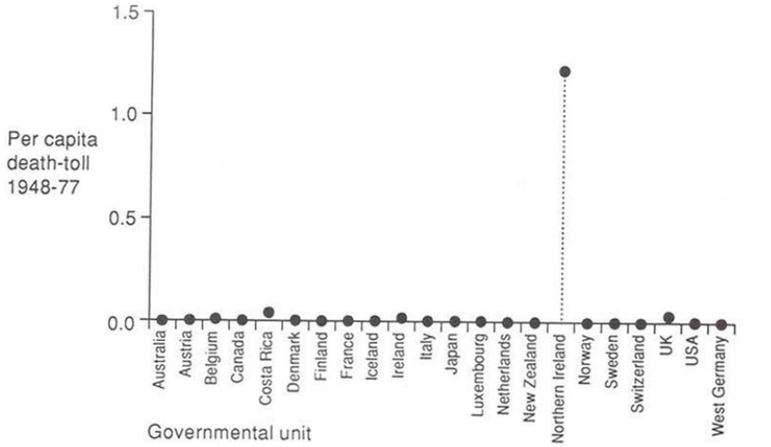

Figure 1.2 (b) The per capita death-toll from internal political violence in liberal democracies, 1948–77. Sources: Taylor and Jodice (1983: Table 2.7) and IIP (1990)

Figure 29: from *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland.* Brendan O'Leary and John McGarry, The Athlone Press, London. 1993, p. 15

Introduction

'The troubles' is a term that applies to the period of violent conflict spanning the late-1960s to the political promise of peace declared in The Belfast Agreement (also known as The Good Friday Agreement) signed April 10 1998[2]. Since then, Northern Ireland (N.I), or Ulster (see glossary), has been emerging slowly from conflict and engaged in peace and reconciliation practices. This chapter outlines an explanation of the controversial non-hierarchical listing of the names, from different sides of the political divide, on the memorial. Thousands of years of settlement and division, North and South, have contributed to the current situation in Northern Ireland. The enormously complex background to the troubles and the recent moves toward conflict transformation are beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a synopsis from *A Concise History of Ireland*, by historians Maire and Conor Cruise O'Brien (1972) is provided in the appendix. Also in the appendix, to aid in understanding the troubles and the present-day sectarian divide, is an 'Irish history since 1921' by Aidan Moore, who gave the introduction to a presentation of my creative project in Canberra. There are thousands of publications on Northern Ireland that attempt to understand "The Ulster Problem". Yet, as Sabine Wichert of

00:38:24

George Lockhart
Daniel Rooney
James Joseph Boyle
Daniel McErlean
Alexander Greer
Edward Pavis
Jimmy Quigley
Ian Stewart David Burt
Patricia McKay
Thomas Paisley
Michael Hayes
Francis Peter Lane
Thomas Rudman
John Kelly
Patrick McKee
Edward Stuart
Edward Patrick Bonner
Seamus Wright
Kevin McKee
James Patrick McCartan
Geoffrey Hamilton
Patrick Connolly
John Magee
Daniel McAreavey
Olive McConnell
Alex Moorehead

Queens University, Belfast states, it is only possible to move beyond the contemporary divide in N.I by assuming from the outset that every side is 'right' from their own perspective (1991:4).

This chapter focuses on the ways my understanding of the troubles has been shaped by new theoretical approaches offered by ethnography, feminism and cultural history, and how those insights have been visually expressed through my *ILM*. I write from the position of a migrant artist-researcher, born in Belfast in 1967, and living successively in Canada, the USA and Australia. My experience of the troubles was always at a distance, in rhetoric/information handed down to me from my mother[3], or through the international news media during my formative years in the 1970s and 80s. The violent spectacle of the troubles in the media and family associations with Northern Ireland have strongly shaped my sense of my self, my artistic identity and place in the world.

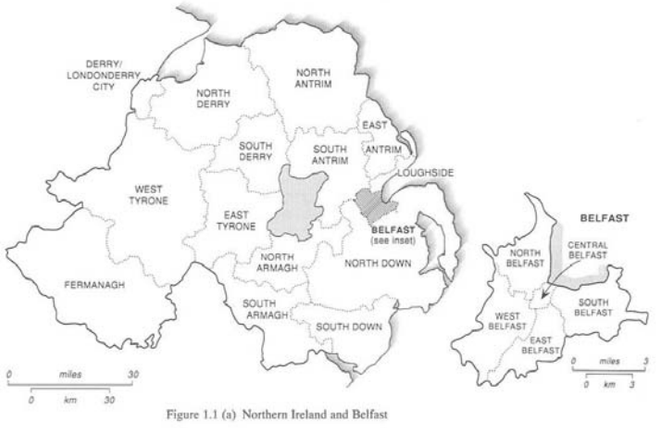

Figure 1.1 (a) Northern Ireland and Belfast

Figure 30: from *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland.* Brendan O'Leary and John McGarry, The Athlone Press, London. 1993, p. 9

Northern Ireland (N.I) Context

The colonial plantation of Ulster occurred in the seventeenth century. Since then, there has been a very difficult accommodation between the groups Scottish, English and Irish. Three ethnic communities, differing in language, dialect, political status and, of course, religion, constituted the territory of Northern Ireland: the Gaelic Irish, descendents from the Celts

00:40:00

John Ruddy
John Donaghy
Patrick Maguire
Joseph McKinney
Robert John McKenna
Robert Stuart Nicholl
Terence Maguire
Leo John Duffy
Thomas Marron
James Doherty
John Clarke
William Warnock
Hugh Henry Heron
John Patrick Mullen
Anthony P. David
Eleanor Cook
John Thomas Todd
James Arthur Gillen
Gordon Harron
Robin John Bell
Robert Mason
MichaelNaan
Andrew Murray
John Michael Morrell
Thomas McKay
Michael Vincent Turner

and Roman Catholic by religious persuasion, migrant lowland Scots – Presbyterian in conviction and the Anglican 'new-English' planters, primarily noblemen (O'Leary and McGarry 1993:59-60). Only in the nineteenth century did the Presbyterians and Anglicans develop a more incorporated identity as 'Irish Protestants' with British affiliations[4] (ibid., 62). In 1921, this island on the periphery of Europe, was partitioned into twenty-six counties called the Republic of Ireland, and six counties in the North that constituted Northern Ireland, which remained part of the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland contained a Unionist (Protestant) majority (see glossary), with a parliament at Stormont, Belfast, which maintained connections with Great Britain, until it was prorogued in 1972. The 1967-8 intercommunal civil rights[5] riots brought the small province of Northern Ireland to the attention of the world. Since then, Northern Ireland is classified as second only to Lebanon in terms of internal violence within the European Union (Arthur 145). Almost 4,000 people have been killed and approximately ten times that number has been maimed in the Northern Ireland conflict since the late-1960s[6]. As a proportion of population, these casualties equate to over 500,000 lost in the U.S.A. – over ten times the number of American dead in Vietnam (O'Leary and McGarry 1993:12).

00:41:36

After the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, power was devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly[7], consisting of elected representatives from across the community, such as the Ulster Unionist Party and Sinn Fein. This body has held a fragile government in Stormont, Belfast. It is this transforming political climate - still fragile, controversial and tentative – which has provided the context for the writing of *Lost Lives*, and for my reconfiguration of the authors' *Lost Lives* work in a textile-installation medium. *The ILM* imagines future civic comity and 'consociation' (O'Leary 2001:353-4) between the contemporary divisive communities in N.I, where nationalism/ethnicity/identity has long been coterminous with politics/culture/religion.

James Kerr
Richard J. Sinclair
Paula Stronge
Clare Hughes
Margaret Cunningham
Irwin Long
Joseph Henry Kelly
Ronald Michael Kitchen
John Joseph Gerard Kelly
Joseph McCrystal
Stanislaus Carberry
Stanley Evans
George Doherty
Joseph Calvin
William David Watson
James Strothers
William Clarke
Joseph McIlroy
Samuel Porter
William John Chivers
Rory Gormley
Robert Keys
John Columba Brady
James Peter Carr
Paul Jackson
Gerard Gearon

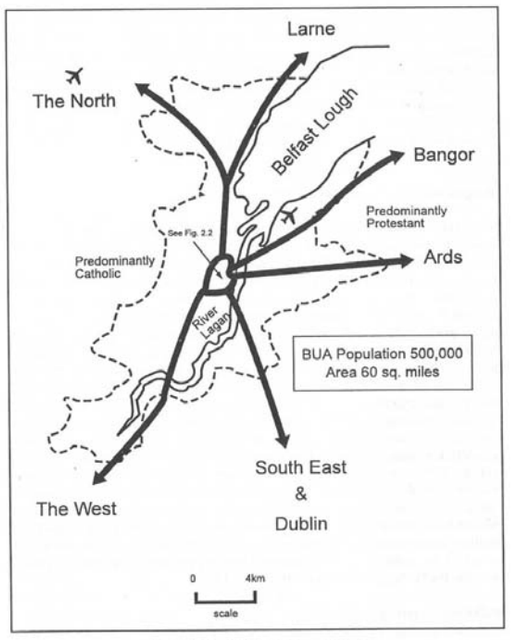

Figure 31: From 'Lipstick on the Gorilla?: Conflict Management, urban development and image making in Belfast,' William J.V. Neill in *Reimaging the Pariah City: Urban Development in Belfast and Detroit* (Ed.s William Neill, Diana Fitzsimons and Brendan Murphy), p. 59.

00:43:12

I consider *The ILM* a memorial or counter-monument, rather than an heroic shrine. It is the intimate intervention of a 'modest witness'[8] (Haraway 1997:45) to the troubles, underpinned by plural visions of citizenship (Porter 36) and women's narratives of 'an ethics of care'[9], which re-imagines the pattern of N.I's divided community in new ways. In listing the names of all those killed in the troubles, *The ILM* helps to imagine a future which recognises a 'parity of esteem'[10] (Opsahl 1993), a reordering of relationships (Ruane and Todd) and legitimacy of difference in identities. In the controversial move of equally commemorating all those killed in the troubles, and momentarily suspending differences between perpetrators, intended victims and innocent bystanders, this counter-monument represents an artistic envisioning of the urgency of reconciliation. The landscape of linen and names is a paring back of the voluminous research of authors David McKittrick, Seamus Kelters, Brian Feeney and Chris Thornton (a detailed log of the individual circumstances

Joseph McAuley
George Bradshaw
Thomas Duffy
Patrick Liam Benstead
Sandra Mèli
Samuel James Hamilton
Bernard Samuel Fox
William J. Bell
Roy Hills
William Bogle
Samuel White
Ernest Elliott
Jean McConville
John Raymond Joesbury
Henry Stewart Middlemass
James Joseph Ward
James A. Nixon
Kathleen Dolan
James Joseph Reynolds
George Chambers
Frederick Greeves
Louis Leonard
Joseph Blaney
William Johnston
David McAleese
George E. Hamilton

of each death). By offering a visual web of the shocking and bleak equality of death, *The ILM* bears witness. This is done in an emotional register, by emphasising the names with needlework, a more insistent and immediate methodology than the careful manuscript documentation of *Lost Lives: the stories of the men, women and children who were killed in Northern Ireland's troubles.*

Photograph 7.1 Peace line: hard edge of sectarian division

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00:44:48

Figure 32: From *Reimaging the Pariah City: Urban Development in Belfast and Detroit* Ed.s William Neill, Diana Fitzsimons and Brendan Murphy, p. 214.

Northern Ireland Contemporary Ethnography

New Northern Irish ethnography has attempted to identify the structural continuities and cultural reciprocities which mediate the ideological schisms between Nationalist/Republican ("Catholic") and Loyalist/Unionist ("Protestant") communities (McFarlane 1986 qtd. in Feldman 1991). In *Intolerance: The E-Coli of the Human Mind*, a series of lectures delivered at the Australian National University in 2004, Donald Akenson, a scholar of Irish and Australian colonial legacies, outlined the civil laws, religious codes, social claims, marital endogamy and educational segregation by which small 'filigrees' of Catholic-Protestant differences have been kept in place[11]. Akenson stated that:

> Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants – both in the Diaspora and in the homeland – have (a) for long moments in history believed

Alphonsus John McGeown

Charles B. Moore

Charles McCafferty

Bernard Kelly

Francis McCarron

Michael McGinley

James Mullan

Colin Harker

Eugene M. Devlin

Geraldine O'Reilly

Patrick Stanley

James McDaid

Hugh Martin

1973

Oliver Boyce

Briege Porter

Jack Mooney

James Hood

Trevor Rankin

Elizabeth McGregor

Henry Sandford

David W. Dorsett

Mervyn Samuel Wilson

David Williams Bingham

Arthur Francis Liggett

themselves quite separate species from each other, and (b) have done serious damage consequent upon their acting upon their beliefs (55).

Akenson's earlier 1988 book entitled, *Small differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, an International Perspective,* documents the hundreds of fine threads of "casually meaningless" cultural differences in belief between the two groups (55). His work on intolerance attests to the power of those filigrees[12] and fine threads of difference in constituting ethnic groupings, which make envisioning reconciliation in N.I a fraught and difficult process.[13] Akenson encourages reflection on the "conceptual congruities between modern nationalisms and ancient systems of sacred belief" while learning to "respect irreconcilable differences as well as to embrace comfortable commonalities" (1). "The Ulster colony became a major obstacle to the successful incorporation of Ireland into the emerging British nation" (ibid.; 62 and see Foster, 1988; Frame, 1990; Kearney, 1989).

The Construction of Violence and a Feminist Cartography of the Dead

00:46:24

In *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, Allen Feldman[14], offers an account of differences in N.I, which extends the threads of connectedness and divisiveness between ethnic groups beyond the living and into the realm of the dead. Feldman, an historian, has analysed the cultural construction of violence through both material culture and performative practice. He researched the oral histories, personal biographies, familial ledgers, and neighbourhood patterns of solidarity and political violence in Nationalist/Republican and Unionist/Loyalist communities in Belfast to understand "the symbolic forms, material practices and narrative strategies" of political agency (1991:1). In a chapter called 'Genealogies of the Dead,' Feldman employs the metaphor of cartography to think beyond a web of threads or filaments between the living, locating the "lineage of the dead" as equally bound into and tensioned against the "sociation of the living":

The dead died in certain places and at certain times that form

Joseph Henry Weir
Margaret Ann Rowland
William J. Staunton
Peter Joseph Watterson
James Trainor
Francis Smith
Philip Rafferty
Gabriel S. Savage
Patrick Eugene Heenan
William Boardley
James Greer
Patrick Brady
Robert Burns
James Alfred Fusco
Samuel Reynolds
James Sloan
Tony Campbell
John Loughran
Brendan Maguire
Ambrose Hardy
James McCann
John Boyd
Seamus Gilmore
Michael John Murtagh
Andrew H. Petherbridge
Robert Alfred Bennett

> conjunctures with institutions and events external and internal to the community. The genealogies are calendrical markers that anchor overarching events of historical magnitude in local temporalities and representations. The community marks itself with the cartography of dead events – the spaces of the dead. Local history, biography, and topography intertwine through the network of genealogy…The dead are placed at the origin of collective defilement and local history and in their narration continue to bear the burden of this qualification for the entire community.
>
> The genealogy of the dead is a direct inversion of the positivities of kinship and residence, once the central units of the moral order of the inner city neighbourhood …Social reproduction becomes organized around an absence: one's own dead and the dead of the other side…The lineage of the dead and the sociation of the living – exist side by side as mirror images of each other. The synchrony of the two social orders is a tensioned trope of the immanent inversion of the living by violence, past and present (1991: 65-66).

00:48:00

Like Feldman, I suggest that, in order to heal grief, trauma and anger, in the communities emerging from the troubles, alternative tropes and imaginings between the communities of the living and the dead must be proposed and woven into new, living community narratives. A production of new cartographies of dead events is integral to the possibility of a peaceful N.I based on a 'parity of esteem' between the two communities.

Schemes of knowledge and social practice centre upon rituals of the burial of the body, mourning, together with public and private responses to violent deaths. Politicalisation of the dead occurs through symbolic representation of active or passive victimology within the community. Lindsay Prior in *The Social Organisation of Death: Medical Discourse and Social Practices in Belfast*, 1989, states that narratives about sectarian divisions are continually affirmed and reaffirmed through the distribution of death and the social order/spatial segregation of the cemetery (121). Social relationships and collective beliefs distribute the geography of death and

the social morphology of the living into various structures and certain patterns (Zonabend; Warner; Young qtd. in Prior 1989:120). Therefore, my *ILM* uses the material culture of linen in (re)imaging the stories of individual deaths and the community of the dead. Linen's ancient, cross-cultural and sacred use in the rituals of burial may help imagine a re-ordering of identity-groupings in the living. A new cartography of the dead might emerge, bringing about subtly different connections and new meanings in social space(s). These, in turn, will challenge and provoke altered narratives of the living community and may help normalise an 'ethics of care' over legitimizing further violence and wreaking more trauma.

Figure 33: Kathy Prendergast, *Secret Kiss*, knitted wool, n/d, p. 173.
(The World May Be Fantastic): Sydney Biennale, curator Richard Grayson,2002.

Nationalism

A crucial condition for movement towards the common good in political community is the forging of a principled space, which includes both the legal recognition of Irish nationalism and an honouring of the culture of 'Britishness' (see Opsahl 1993 in Pollack 1993: 113 qtd in Neill 64). In 1983,

00:49:36

Raymond Hall
Anton Charles Brown
Peter James McGerrigan
`Frederick Milton
David Glennon
John Green
Joseph Leahy
Dennis Eccles
Alan Welsh
Edward Charles Sharpe
John William King
Larry McMahon
William Larmour Kenny
Michael Gay
Lindsay Jeffery Mooney
Robert Collins
Bernard McErlean
Richard Michael Muldoon
Barrington Joseph Foster
Thomas William Penrose
Ivor William Swain
John Huddleston
Ronald Macauley
Samuel Martin
Patrick McCabe
Andrew Somervell

Benedict Anderson proposed a definition of the nation as "an imagined political community," with the citizen's aspirations written into the narrative (15). Homi Bhabha built upon Anderson's definition within post-colonial theory in 1990, describing a process of "narrating the nation," where political communities are constituted through successive waves of stories, which place the audience within an imagined history. In the case of N.I, this requires an entirely new relationship to the notion of 'nationalism'.

A reworking of the definition of nationalism, which precludes the 'nationalism' usually associated with the Irish Republican 'Catholic'[15] requires active and self-conscious struggle. The Republican or Nationalist position and, by proxy, the militant (male-dominated) mobilization of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), has long been invoked against 'home rule', the 'union' of Northern Ireland with Great Britain, and for the independent state of the Republic of Ireland. Yet, it should be noted that in contemporary Irish studies, unionism denotes another type of nationalism.

00:51:12

Feminism and Nationalism

According to Elizabeth Porter, there must be a 'middle ground'[16] between commonality and diversity where pluralism can exist, and new connections may be imagined and performed (Mouffe 1992: 14 qtd. in Porter 54). Porter illuminates:

> While nationalism is a political identification, at its core lies a cultural claim, viz 'that national movements are motivated by a desire to assume the existence and flourishing of a particular community, culture… tradition and language.' The mindset of each community in Northern Ireland perpetuates cultural, political and religious differences… driven by clashes of different identities… For there to be any hope for peace and inclusivity in Northern Ireland, a plural acceptance of 'identities of nationality' is imperative (Tamir 1995:xiii and Geoghegan 1994 qtd. in Porter 1998:37).

One of the lasting legacies of second wave feminist is a feminist analytics of power, historian Joan Scott declared. Contemporary feminism has offered an analysis of the operations of difference and the workings of power in diverse arenas, which extend beyond a narrowly conceived sexual difference. It has taught us to be wary of categories, which are presented as a-historic, with essential and immutable differences, and has made us sensitive to the varieties of powers that inhere in all social relations. (Scott 2002:3) Since the early 1980s, feminist writers such as Nira Yuval-Davis, Floya Anthias and Chandra Talpade Mohanty have specifically focussed on an analysis of women and ethnic/national distinctiveness in a variety of national contexts, offering strategies and discourses for the critical consideration of, and commitment to, horizontal alliances across divisive boundaries. Writing in 1998, utilizing the work of theorists Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood, as well as Alan Finlayson, sociologist Elizabeth Porter builds on their work by using discussing what she calls transformational feminism to outline the situation in N.I:

> The way we define citizenship is linked intimately to the kind of society and political community we desire. A vision of citizenship that is viable in N. I. builds on an ethic of responsibility to fulfil common desires for justice, equality and socio-economic well-being and… to reflect the particularities of its multi-ethnic members (57).

00:52:48

In N.I., since 1998, a culture of tolerance has superseded a culture of the normalisation of violence (Arthur and Jeffery 1988:26 - 28), creating new opportunities for cross-community organisation in peace forums. Within such burgeoning new conditions, particular attention must be placed on the ideologically weighty construct of nationalism and women's[17] place in the hope for social change. Nationalism can be progressive or reactionary, liberal or illiberal, racist or multi-cultural, democratic or undemocratic (Pettman 1996:62). Nationalism is an unstable category of contested identities in which women, if granted access to political power, can activate plural identities of inter alia ethnicity and nationality (Wilford 1998:16) and cultural pluralisms (Yuval-Davis 1994)[18],

John McCormick
John Gaskell
Robert David Rutherford
Michael Joseph Leonard
Eileen Mackin
Thomas Ward
Joseph McKenna
Sean McKee
Barry Roy Cox
Arthur Place
Derek Reed
Sheridan Young
Robert McIntyre
Edward Coogan
Thomas Friel
John Ferguson Wallace
Ian Donald
Joseph Matthews
Paul Cromie
Margaret Hyrkiewicz
Thomas Holmes Curry
Gerard Barnes
Samuel McCleave
Sadie McComb
Alfred Acheson
Frederick William Drake

as well as cultures of resistance to previously male-defined imaginings to form post-nationalist definitions of citizenship (Geoghegan 1994).

Yuval-Davis and Anthias, outlined in 1989, that women are reproducers of the boundaries or distinctions of ethnic and national groupings, and are visible actors transmitting community values. Their definition is one of active participation as women are involved in the transition in societies emerging from divisive conflict. Under the duress of unequal access to political power and limited economic access to practical solutions, women are redefining and (re)imaging the meaning of nation-building or the construction of sustainable future community(ies).

The ILM as a feminist cultural project utilizing 'soft' power

The project of reconciliation is one played out in many registers. Cultural production is a contribution to re-imagining political communities. The arts and culture intervene in political situations using what is called cultural democracy (see Kurin 1997) and a strategy of what has been termed 'soft' power. Cultural projects with or about the victims of violence, such as *Lost Lives* or the radio-interview project in 1999, *The Legacy Project* (www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/history/legacy/index/shtm), and *The ILM* can reach a wider public at certain crucial phases of the peace and reconciliation process. According to Arthur, who quotes Nordstrom, cultural memory projects use "soft power" outside the parameters of formal, conventional diplomacy (149).

00:54:24

It is important to me how this commemorative artwork is positioned and received. *The ILM* is not a nostalgic, romantic project offering a simplistic worldview; nor do I intend that white linen connote sexual purity. Nor is the project, sewn by the hands of women, meant to be aligned with a bourgeois respectability and nineteenth century notions of femininity. It is not my purpose to position women as passive and idealised guardians of a public and private moral order with which to uphold the immutability of the nation (see G. L. Mosse 1985 on nationalism and sexuality in Modern Europe). Finally, neither does *The ILM* project adhere to gender-divided imaginings about a horizontal/homosocial

comradeship.

Societies-in-transition are concerned with the de-escalation of the normalization of violence through issues of temporal and emotional space, such as in the troubles 'culture' (see Arthur 143-145). Fortunately, the conditions for future tolerance in Northern Ireland -- for being able to reclaim one's human dignity, and for living with difference -- are beginning to exist (Foley qtd. in Arthur 151).

Brief Artist Case Study: Kathy Pendergrast and the Cartography of Loss

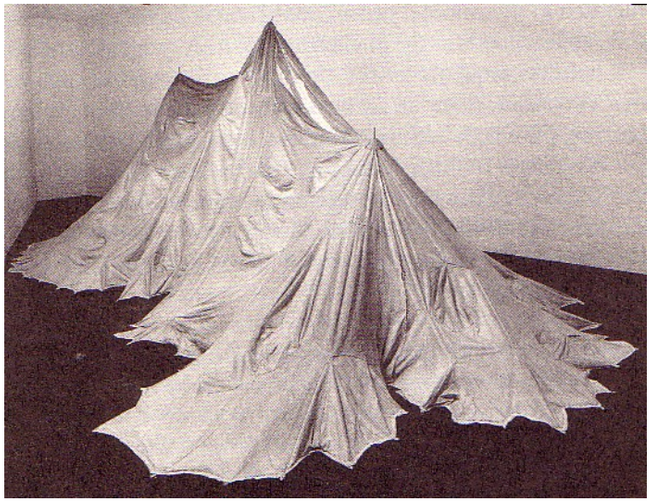


Figure 34: Kathy Prendergast, *Land*, fabric, 1991.
The Arts council Collection, The South Bank Centre, London 'Rethinking Mapping' *Writing Women and Space Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*. (Ed.s Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose) Gilford Press, New York, 1994. p. 242.

Kathy Pendergrast (b. 1958) is a contemporary Irish artist known for her sensitive examination of the body, the land, and ideas of colonial/postcolonial mapping of urban space. Although this artist is from the south of Ireland and currently resides in London, England, Pendergrast's importance to my exegesis stems from a practice equally based in intimate, wearable textiles and large-scale sculptural installation work. For example, Pendergast's canvas tent *Land*, 1991, and bronze sculpture, *Moving Mountain*, 1998, expressly illustrate how this artist asks

00:56:00

Reginald Benjamin Roberts
Robert Clarke
Patrick Bracken
Dorothy Lynn
Isaac Scott
Frederick Davis
Christopher Brady
Geoffrey Alan Breakwell
Owen Ruddy
Sydney Watt
Richard M. Jarman
Pauline Kane
Alphonsus Cunningham
Bryan Criddle
Paul Peter Linauer
Leonard Rossborough
James Farrell
Francis Joseph Mullen
Bernadette Mullen
Henry Cunningham
Patrick Anthony Duffy
Joseph Murphy
Joe Murphy
Norman Hutchinson
Seamus Harvey
Gerard McGlynn

questions which shift and reallocate Irish colonial equations between place/land ownership and political symbolism/personal identity (Nash 230). In a 1995 *Art in America* article on 'Art from the Edge: Irish artists on both sides of the border', Judith Higgins suggests Pendergrast is part of a group of women artists who investigate "public and political meaning [as] informed by bodily experience, personal narrative and intense empathy" (41).

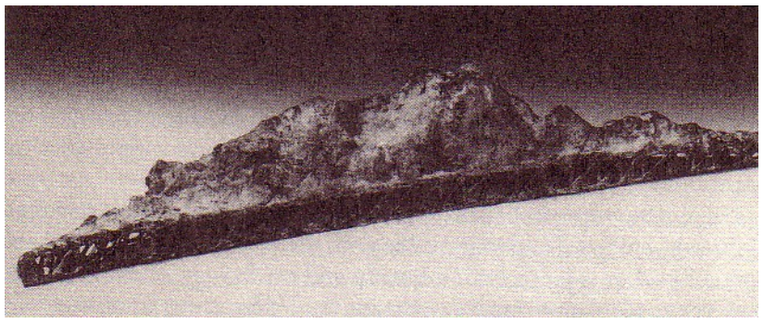


Figure 35: Kathy Prendergast, Moving Mountain, bronze, 'Remapping the Body/Land' *Writing Women and Space Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*. (Ed.s Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose) Gilford Press, New York, 1994. p. 243.

00:57:36

Pendergrast employs sketching techniques, textiles projects and sculptural work in bronze with equal conviction in the service of her conceptual concerns. She is "captivated by the use of time" and "the state of being lost" (Doherty 2002:174). In an essay on *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, Irish theorist Catherine Nash describes Pendergast's sculpture in terms of body/land, gender/identity and the "poststucturalist feminist use of ideas of place that allow for multiple perspectives without undermining the strategic, if provisional, adoption of any one position"(1994:241). This position reiterates that of historian Joan Scott on 'reverberations of difference', and Elizabeth Porter on living with 'pluralities of nationalism in N.I', as outlined in this chapter.

Pendergrast produces eloquent visual referencing systems of the interconnection between the susceptible human body and the nervous system, reiterating new cartographies of loss, trauma or death. She juxtaposes urban planning images (the modern grid marked by aggressive

development and possible violence) with delicately intimate, organic web-like structures. This is evident in her historical metropolitan city-centre sketches, 1992 onwards, entitled *The End* and *The Beginning I and II*, and, simply, *Lost*. These are a series of delicately-articulated overviews of the urban plans of city capitals. Each image is 24 X 32 cm and is arranged in a grid formation to form a whole. The name of each city is listed under the sketches on white squares which "read like the inscription on a mausoleum," (Ryan 6). Exhibited at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in The Sydney Biennale 2002, *(The World May Be) Fantastic*, the artwork is gently haunting, akin to archaeological sketches of lost abodes. Critic David Ryan considers Pendergrast's imagery as "the linked mapping of a brain, or a photograph of loss somehow found captured – the revelation of a moment from the past, articulated in an elaborate scar" (Ryan 1).

Pendergrast's use of textiles can be seen in her compelling creation of a knitted black head stocking built implicitly for two persons to commune or converse in a forced liaison. This is an example of textile art confidently conceived to carve out intimate spaces in the public arena. Pendergrast's work is an absorbing re-designation about loss, displacement and death from trauma. Her post '9/11' theoretical interests are about terror, remonstrations that now occupy many other artists globally.

00:59:12

Conclusion

My memorial art installation is a minor intervention into the complex and fraught field of political and social negotiation, an area also attempted by other contemporary Northern Irish artists, male and female. I intend my *ILM* to be a strong statement of feminist improvisation. The monument reiterates the absolute equality of death inserted into the contradictory medium of historically-feminised textile production. Placed in the public sphere, where feminist intervention has long been marginalised, *The ILM* contributes to a new wave of N.I stories since the mid-1990s. These narratives attempt to embrace, unravel and transform deep and unsettling societal wounds. My creative project designates 'social representations' as

having constitutive force, contributes to an endless political-cultural process, which produce different hegemonic meanings, makes for alternate connections in the social world, and creates re-visionary arrangements of identities. While I insert myself into the N.I socio-political arena with hesitation, my artwork nonetheless emerges from a lifetime preoccupied my neighbourhood of birth and my maternal grandparents' lifetime domain north Belfast. The district is a mixed economic, social and religious community and was much impacted by the sectarian violence. With the idealistic optimism of my multi-cultural Canadian upbringing, my *ILM* imagines alternate realignments of old enmities -- ethnic divisions that have so devastated sustainable community life in Northern Ireland for many years. In constructing this feminist project, I recall hidden pasts, the lived, the local and the everyday (Abramson 1999 qtd. in Damousi 2004:28). Through *Lost Lives*, together with the influence of my mother's family legacy, *The ILM* is an effort to compassionately re-imagine aspects of personal and collective identity. As an artist who works with the softer, empathetic art of memory studies/cultural history, I engage the subjective and the corporeal. At the same time I remain grounded in the rigorous training of a rational, site-contextual public artist as aligned with a 1960s notion of radical democracy and new ways of envisioning public space and plural modes of citizenship (see Serra 1989; Butler 2003). I invite readers-viewers to assemble/fabricate their own interpretations of a 'parity of esteem', as citizens of another Northern Ireland.

01:00:48

Endnotes

[1] Where 'one farm bordered the other'. Sometimes this was a hedge (Heaney 55).

[2] The Good Friday agreement was considered a watershed event in the transformation of divisive conflict and towards a more sustainable community in Northern Ireland. The authors of *Lost Lives* document those killed from 1966 to 2001.

[3] My maternal grandfather, Daniel Ritchie McGladdery was a senator (including a Parliamentary Secretary/Deputy Leader of House) in the Northern Ireland parliament under Prime Ministers Brookeborough, O'Neill, Chichester-Clark, and

Desmond Morgan
Ivan Leslie Charlton
Cyril McCaul
Robert Megaw
Joseph Martin Walker
James Gibson
James Hesketh
Maurice Rolston
Jim McGinn
Ivan Acheson Johnston
Rodney George Fenton
Edward Grant
Brendan Quinn
Aubrey Harshaw
George Hyde
Alexander Howell
Michael Joseph Logue
Thomas Niedermayer
Alan Daughtery

1974

John Whyte
Leo Francis McCullagh
John Crawford
John Dunn
Cecilia Byrne

Faulkner. I like to think my grandfather, although a Unionist (linked to the British Conservative Party) and Orange order member, and, certainly, my mother (as a private citizen) were a part of the "growing professional and educated middle class [who] were becoming less concerned with the border and more concerned about the system of political, economic and social discrimination which had enforced their compliance for half a century" (Elliott 269). My mother's political leanings were with The Alliance Party, associated with a type of middle ground. My grandparents were involved in community life in the mixed, lower middle-class North Belfast neighbourhood where they lived from 1945 until their deaths in 1981 (Daniel Ritchie McGladdery) and almost to the end of her life in 1984 (Eva McGladdery).

My father's family were middle class Protestants who lived in Bangor, Co Down. My paternal grandfather's leanings can be assumed by his signature (and blood) on 'Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant,' 1912 (given to my father by his brother in 2003), see appendix. The Ulster Covenant was signed by over 470,000 people and it acted as a register of unionists over the age of sixteen, as well as an emotive demonstration of the strength of opposition to home rule (Hegarty 1089-90).

01:02:24

Some of my ancestors were Huguenots from France, most were from Scotland. Most of my father's relations and colleagues either resided in the northern suburban stretch of Belfast, or migrated to Britain, Canada, New Zealand or Australia. Such people might fall more typically into the "silent watchers" camp which Elizabeth Porter outlines as "observing cautiously, keeping quiet in the attempt to not offend. This is the position many middle-class women (and men) take. Such persons enjoy a comfortable lifestyle, live in areas where an army presence, bombs, paramilitary community surveillance or police harassment, is rare. Therefore they do not have to confront the harsher realities to which those in working-class communities are subjected" (42). As such, my father never much discussed either his immediate family or the troubles when I was growing up. Until this thesis, I admit that I have tended to be a 'silent watcher,' socialised by my class and gender. Growing up in Vancouver, B.C., Canada, it was typical to let others assume that you were British and to omit, in 'civilised conversation,' that you were both Irish and/or had migrated from the 'pariah' city of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Ironically, it was not until my early twenties, through living in

Detroit (from January 1989 until December 1991) and attending art school in one of its suburbs, that I began to reflect upon ethnicity, politics and urban planning of Belfast, where I was born. While studying in Wollongong, the book by William Neill et al. *Reimaging the Pariah City: Urban Development in Belfast and Detroit*,1995, was very helpful about just such a comparison. As a young artist, my observation of the 'racial apartheid' of inner city (working poor) Detroit and its wealthy suburbs, Birmingham/Bloomfield Hills, USA, was an illuminating experience.

[4] There was a common allegiance across the social spectrum of northern landowners, industrialists, commercial and professional middle class, and industrial working class around Belfast which took precedence over class 'loyalty' in Northern Ireland politics. (Porter 45)

[5] The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was founded in 1967 and began demonstrating in 1968.

[6] "Over 33,000 have suffered serious injuries since 1968, a figure close to one fifth of the population. The social impact of such violence is easily imagined. Although the data include knee-capping injuries they do not include the mental injuries suffered by those who have been kidnapped, those held hostage in their homes during 'stake-outs', those arrested when guilt of no crime, or those maltreated by authorities; nor do they measure the distress caused by being the friend or relative of a victim of the conflict or being a witness to violent deaths, injuries, and other intimidating episodes." (O'Leary and McGarry 1993:40).

01:04:00

[7] It was called the New Northern Ireland Assembly to distinguish it from the Northern Ireland Assembly for which legislative provision remained at that time under the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973.

[8] Haraway's modest witness (see Chapter 1) is the theorist who would acknowledge her location and partiality and think of her relation to the world as one of articulation rather than objective representation. "Modest witnesses are those who attend to the stories produced about the world. There is no clear split for them between stories and facts. For these witnesses, "Changing the stories, in both material and semiotic senses, is a modest intervention worth making" (45).

[9] as distinct from 'essentialism' (see Porter 56-7).

Patrick Lynch
Gary Reid
Hugh McKenzie Harvey
Thomas Ian McClinton
Robert Thomas Moffett
Michael McCreesh
George Keatings
Billy Fox
David Albert Farrington
Michael Gallagher
Adam Johnston
Kevin Murray
Patrick McDonald
Noel McCartan
Philip Douglas James
Roy A. Bedford
Cyril John Wilson
Michael Joseph Ryan
Frederick Robinson
Michael Francis Herbert
Michael J. Cotton
Gerard McCarthy
Donald Farrell
John Hamilton
Joseph John Hughes
James Macklin

[10] Torkel Opsahl, human rights lawyer, stated in 1993 that parity of esteem should be more than an ideal; the legal recognition of Irish nationalism and a recognition of the culture of 'Britishness' for unionists.

[11] For information on a quantitative historical/sociological analysis on the Weber-Tawney-McClelland grid methodologies see Akenson's book, *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1921: An International Perspective* (1988).

[12] Held in place by "self-segregating social mechanisms and self-segregating cultural belief systems": denominational marital endogamy and segregation of the young in education. He warns that blaming segregation on colonialism is too simplistic (Akenson 55).

[13] See appendix: letter from Brian Feeny upon my embarking upon this project,'01.

[14] A historian of "genetic history of the symbolic forms, material practices and narrative strategies through which certain types of political agency are constructed in Northern Ireland" (1). The Northern Ireland situation has been informative in regards to the wider problems of political agency in late modernity.

01:05:36

[15] It may be more accurate to state 'from a perceived Catholic background'.

[16] Here Porter distinguishes between the weak middle ground of The Alliance Party politics in Northern Ireland, which she states conceals unspoken privilege, and her strong middle position that respects diversity, difference, and yet seeks common ground.

[17] In 2003, theorist Claire Connolly sums up "Recent developments in Irish women's history, in the social sciences and in folklore studies testify to a feminist move to (re)occupy the territory of Irishness, opposing versions of nationality that rely on femininity to form its metaphorical ground. This tension testifies to an ongoing struggle between women's material lives and cultural understandings of women as metaphor" (4).

[18] In the 1990s, these theorists worked with conflicted groups of ethnic minority women, such as the Croatians/Serbians and Palestinian/Israeli-Jewish women.

James Mitchell
Joseph Donnelly
William Thompson
Howard Mercer
Sean McAstocker
James Andrew Hanna
Paul Anthony Reid
Clifford Houghton
Linda Houghton
Lee Houghton
Robert Houghton
Leonard Godden
Terence Griffen
Michael Waugh
Leslie Walsh
John Hines
Ellen McDowell
Stephen Whalley
Daniel Burke
John Stevenson
George Walter Saunderson
David Harold Sinnamon
Norman McKenzie
George Robinson
Anthony S. Pollen
William McDonald

Chapter 3

Material Culture Context: Irish Linen, a cultural history of a memorial fabric

Figure 36: '*Transformation of Tears*': *The Irish Linen Memorial* CraftACT Gallery 1, Canberra, February 2004, Photo: Creative Imaging photography.

01:07:12

Linen, an iconic Northern Ireland material, is central to this memorialisation of all persons killed in the troubles. This chapter explores the historic and cultural associations of linen in Northern Ireland (N.I) and is divided into two sections: the first provides a brief account of the properties of linen and flax, together with the methods of flax farming and linen manufacture in Northern Ireland. It suggests how linen has emerged as a universal sign for the founding of N.I. The second part reviews the poetic characteristics of linen. It considers the ways linen holds memories associated with the maternal home and linen's cultural connotations with

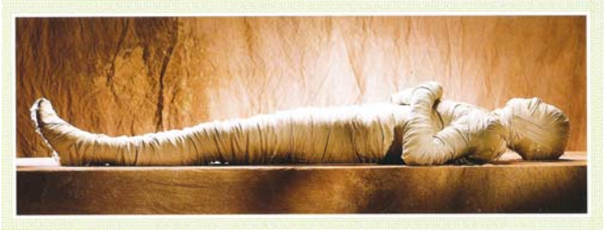


Figure 37: Egyptian mummy: European Community Publication booklet European Linen, *Masters of Linen*; Paris France.

Ronald Joseph Neill

Thomas George McCall

Seamus O'Neill

James Corbett

James Murphy

Mohammed Abdul Khalid

Thomas Morrisey

James Doherty

Thomas Ferguson

John Gallagher

William Joseph Kelly

Eva Martin

Albert Green

Patrick Jago

Frederick Leonard

James Desmond Devlin

Gertrude Devlin

Francis Rowe

Malcolm J. Ross

Brian Edmund Bell

Francis Brennan

Eugene Owen James

Martin

Sean McKearney

Colman Parnell Rowntree

Martin McAlinden

death. Irish linen served many purposes: intimate, private and domestic; symbolic public-political and ceremonial; as well as material for war. Pure, white linen was a prized dress and ecclesiastical fabric; other linens were used for bandages for the wounded, flags, sheets and handkerchiefs; and coarse, watertight linens were used in vehicles of war. The economic importance and extensive uses of Irish linen have made it a fabric loaded with symbolic associations.

Figure 38: Flax flower emblem for the Northern Ireland Assembly.

01:08:48

On 2nd December, 1999, power was devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly and its Executive Committee of Ministers. The Northern Ireland Assembly passed a motion on 24th October, 2000, to apply for admission to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly were held on 26 November 2003. The Assembly is currently suspended (Jan 2005).

Figure 39: William Ewart & Son, Ltd. Advertisement for all the principal markets of the world … 2 million yards of linen a month 1814 -1937, *Belfast: An Industrial City*, Jonathan Bardon, Blackstaff Press Ltd., 1983. p. 222.

Material trade and raw politics are behind textile metaphors, which define and support central items and values of culture (Sharrad 2000:2). Linen may be located as a socio-cultural/political sign or metaphor for the Northern Ireland context. In a *New Literatures Review* journal, *(un)fabric/ating empire,* Sharrad states that cloth, an object that circulates within and helps produce culture, provides a way of re-examining social, historical and economic conditions alongside, and over and apart from, literary texts (2000:1-2).

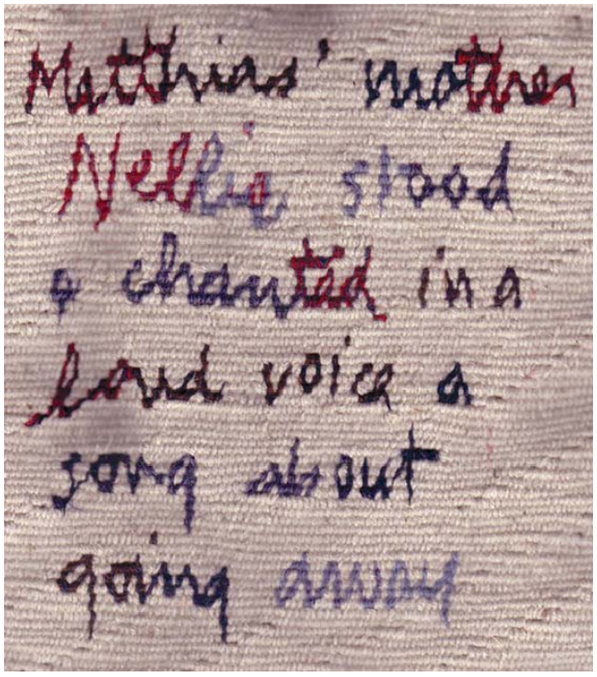


Figure 40: Diana Wood Conroy, Woven Tapestry, wool and silk weft on linen warp, 22.5 x 29.5cm ,2002

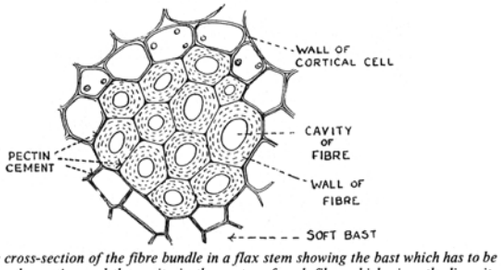
In 'Threading Words Together', Dorothy Jones, theorist of textiles and needlework, suggests various metaphors in the social semiotics of cloth, such as the delicate networks which constitute a well-functioning society:

> Cloth, with its immense semiotic potential, belongs in both the material and metaphysical realms, gathering a wide array of associations – literary, mythic, social and political. Ancient and

continuing analogies with language make it a ready metaphor of literary expression. 'Text' and 'textile' both derive from the Latin, 'texere' to weave. We spin a yarn, weave a story, follow the thread of narrative and fabricate or even embroider a tale. With the most up-to-date technology we communicate on the internet and the worldwide web while metaphors 'seamless' and 'unpick' have been incorporated into contemporary critical technology…

Ideals of womanhood and femininity are themselves fabrications to which textiles in their various forms have contributed both materially and imaginatively.

Whilst figuring importantly in national economics and trade exchanges, cloth also operates as a powerful symbol of social cohesion by evoking ideas of connectedness and tying (2000: 3-4).



Diagrammatic cross-section of the fibre bundle in a flax stem showing the bast which has to be removed during the retting and the cavity in the centre of each fibre which gives the linen its special insulating property.

Figure 41: Detail, cross section of the flax stem,
*Linen on the Green,*Wallace Clark, University Press Belfast Ltd., 1983. p.93.

Attending to the progressive industrialisation of (Northern) Ireland, through linen, forces the consideration of linen as a 'sign' of positive Irish identity traits; attributes which also circulated celebratory positive character traits, features for which Irish quality linen was prized. Those aspects are linen's durability, reliability or absorbancy /watertightness; 'purity' regarding the bleaching process as well as a smooth, fine finish in delicate dress or ecclesiastic linens. *The Irish Linen*

Memorial engages the imaginative textile connotations of civilised behaviour, links to the mother/land, caring for the wounded, and shrouding the dead. In this way, the material and methods of *The ILM*'s construction serve to bind metaphorically the divisive politics of sectarianism, stifle wounds and engage consanguinity between persons in 'post-colonial' Northern Ireland, as well as, perhaps, encouraging a type of 'surrender' of embedded anger about the troubles and those killed.

Dennis Alfred Leach
Paul Magorrian
Joseph McGuinness
Peter A. Flanagan
William Hutchinson
Philip Victor Drake
Patrick McKeown
William Elliot
Mary H. Bingham
Arthur Rafferty
Martin McBirney
Rory Conaghan
Frances Cooke
Michael McCourt
Patrick McGreevy
William McCully
Kieran McIlroy
Gerard Martin McWilliams
Ralph Laverty
John Cameron
Robert James Willis
Eugene McQuaid
Asha Chopra
Caroline Jean Slater
Ann Ray Hamilton
William Forsyth

Linen and Flax in Northern Ireland

William Clark, in 1982, in the introduction to an account of his family's linen business (the firm of William Clark and sons, established 1730) in Upperlands, Northern Ireland, claimed that linen was:

> The aristocrat of textiles. Strong as steel, delicate as silk…preferred by people of good taste for well over 4,000 years (x).

01:13:36

Throughout a history of sectarian strife in Ireland/Northern Ireland between Presbyterians, Anglican ascendancy and Catholics, linen and its accompanying farming, weaving and technical engineering accomplishments have been a part of the livelihood, landscape and quality of life for the Irish, at home and abroad. Throughout the political upheavals from 1641 to those of 1969, linen has contributed to the commercial prosperity and positive image of Northern Ireland, and both Protestants and Catholics share a pride in fine linen fabric from Ulster. The linen industry was promoted by migrants to Northern Ireland and went through cycles of boom and decline to find itself, along with the Irish Diaspora, situated elsewhere. In 2005, fine dress linen companies bear any number of Irish/Northern Irish associated trademark names, such as The Ulster Linen Company, physically situated in upstate New York in the U.S.A! Yet, memories of Northern Ireland as the biggest manufacturing centre of linen in the world during the industrial revolution remain. Flax is the only natural fibre still produced in the whole of Europe, giving it standing with a new breed of consumers sensitive to ecological interests or concerned with allergies (Collins 35).

The ancient Irish wore saffron linen and the Brehon Laws (see glossary) which governed the country required farmers (Brughaids) to learn the cultivation of flax (Charley 1862:1). William Charley, a juror and reporter of the Great Exhibition of 1851 stated that the first record of Irish linen occurred in the thirteenth century. The term 'linen' was from the Latin botanical name for flax, *linaceae* or the old Irish/Celtic name, *lhin*. Quaker weavers, referred to as settlers, colonists or planters, who came to Ireland from the north of England, encouraged flax planting and the weaving of 'bandle' linen[1]. From the early 1700s to the mid-nineteenth century, one third of the flax required for the colonies of the United Kingdom, and in South America, where Britain traded, was grown in Ireland (Lough 84). The linen industry brought prosperity and economic stability (for Protestant and Catholic workers) to the whole of Northern Ireland, from the late 1700s to the mid twentieth century, replacing the woollen trade in Ireland, which, by the seventeenth century, had declined because of acts passed by the British Parliament prohibiting the export of wool (Charley 1862:1-2). Thereafter, the manufacture of Irish linen, although in competition with the French and Flemish, was endorsed by Britain[2]. Import duties were lifted for export to the British colonies (Crawford 1783; Bardon 1996:97). Linen in Ulster arose as a domestic industry where families combined flax farming with the making of yarn and cloth (Bardon 98). Conrad Gill stated in his 1925 account of *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry*:

> Women in Ireland, as in other countries, were almost universally trained to spin in either wool or linen, and gradually during the eighteenth century they learnt the use of spinning wheels. The first census returns made in Ireland described a very large proportion of the women as spinners (38).

In the first decade of the eighteenth century, the Irish Parliament established the linen trade hall in Ulster, followed by a Board of Trustees to encourage invention, set standards, training and extend the manufacture and export (Charley 1862:2; Bardon 1996:97).

01:15:12

John Hunter
Paul Craig
Arthur Henderson
Albert Greer Lutton
James Hasty
Michael Edward McKenzie
Kieran Gerard Murphy
Michael James M. Hughes
Edward Eric Morgan
Michael Loughran
Samuel Malcolm Gibson
Dominic Donnelly
Michael Simpson
Anthony Duffy
Alan Coughlan
Michael Swannick
Gordon Catherwood
Michael Gerald Meenan
Lorenzo Rodney Sinclair
Ivan Clayton
Hugh Coney
Brian Allen
Stephen Windsor
Vernon Rose
John Charles Simpson
Richard Dunne

Figure 42: Workers at their births in a scutch mill where the atmosphere was thick with dust. *Flax to fabric, the Story of Irish Linen*, Brenda Collins, An Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum Publication, 1994.p.15.

01:16:48

Farming flax is the first step in the development of scutching[3] and spinning to final woven linen goods. Flax prefers the long light of the northern parts of Europe to grow effectively, between the 49th and 53rd degree latitude (Schneider 200). It was grown in areas where the water table is high (Dempsey 1975: 7 – 10), pulled, not cut, in place, dried out for two to three days, then 'steeped or retted,'[4] hand-gathered from the retting ponds, 'laid out in a meadow to be "grassed"' for three weeks to a month for fermentation (Schneider 201). Flax was broken and scutched, which was done mechanically, since the late 1900s and by hand, in small-scale family operations. Then the fibres are 'hackled' or 'heckled'[5] before spinning. The whiteness[6] of linen, as well as fineness of weave, determined the quality of the linen. Historically, the linen bleaching procedures were dependent upon the atmosphere and climate:

Figure 43: Removing Flax from Lint Hole, County Antrim, *Cloth and Human Experience,* Ed.s Weiner & Schneider, Smithsonian Institution Press, London, 1989. p. 194.

Ireland possesses the best climate in the world for linen bleaching, and it is this local advantage - this gift of nature - that has gradually given to her, and secures to her still, so high a position in this branch of commercial industry…The bleaching of linen was perhaps one of the healthiest employments in the world, and the men involved often reach a great age" (Charley 1862:105).

Figure 44: A weaver at a damask power loom. *Flax to fabric, the Story of Irish Linen*, Brenda Collins, An Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum Publication 1994. p. 29.

Maxine Hambleton

Ann Hayes

John Jones

Neil Marsh

Marilyn Nash

Pamela Palmer

Desmond Reilly

Eugene Reilly

Maureen Roberts

John Rowlands

Trevor Thrupp

Stephen Whalley

Geraldine Macklin

01:18:24

Michael Hanratty

Thomas Robert Gunn

Heather Thompson

John Thomas McClean

Mary Sheppard

William Clyde Hutton

James Murdoch

Patrick Cherry

John Ramsay

Thomas Trevor Hamilton

Thomas Chaytor

John Maddocks

James Davidson

In 1699 Protestant Huguenots fled religious persecution in France and settled in Lisburn, bringing with them their expertise and skill in the linen trade (Charley 1862:2). In his research, Wallace Clark stated that French Huguenots supplied the weaving expertise, and Dutch Huguenot migrants, introduced the finer aspects of the important bleaching processes (19).

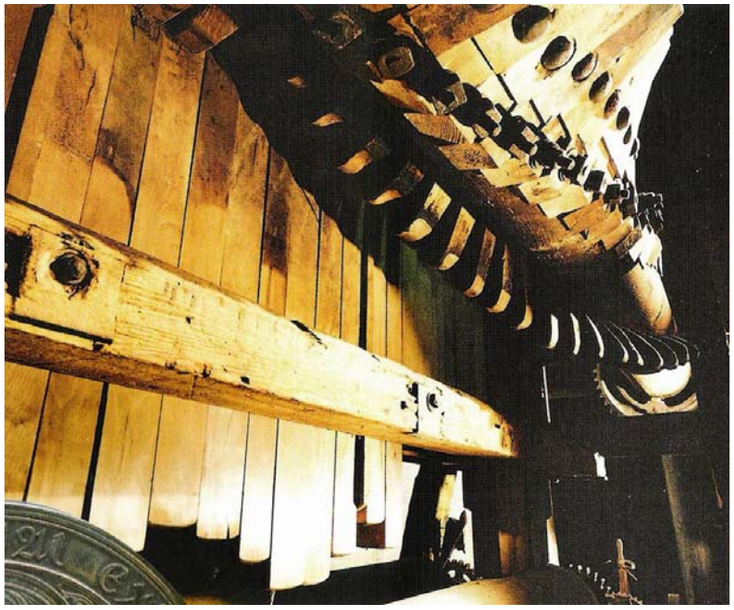


Figure 45: "Eighteenth century Beetling Engine" brochure, Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum, Northern Ireland tourist Board, 1996.

Until about 1760, when the bleaching chemical vitriol replaced sour buttermilk (or previously, a combination of wood, bone or pot ash, seaweed and fermented bran or lye or, even, cow dung) the bleaching process could take up to seven months[7] and several acres for rinsing (by rivers and tributaries), beating and drying (Collins 18; Schneider 202). Finally, chlorine bleach replaced vitriol by the turn of the eighteenth century. The areas the cloth was laid out in long strips to air for long periods[8] were called 'Bleaching Greens', common in historic photograph collections of the Ulster landscape. The "high price of linen, as compared with cotton, was attributable to the bleaching expense" (Charley 1862:103). Clark gives a memorable description of the bleaching process, 1720s-60s:

Ethel Jean Lynch

John Raymond McDaid

James Craig

David James McNeice

John Mallon

George Arthur

Joseph McDermott

Brian Fox

Ellen Maxwell

Emma Patterson

Anthony Morgan

Michael Edward Gibson

Maurice Thomas Knowles

01:20:00

1975

John Francis Green

Patrick J. Toner

Kevin Coen

John Stone

John Kelly

Thomas F. Lea

Edward Wilson

Robert McCullough

George Coulter

Colette Brown

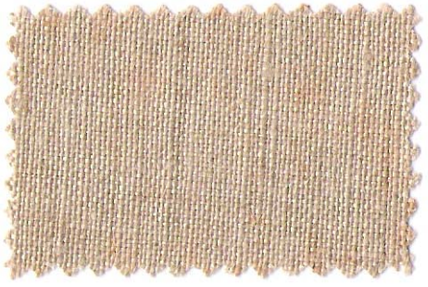
William Robson

A field might be set aside for bleaching as today one would allocate a few acres to grazing or silage. Farm labour and carts were needed to cut and dry the huge quantities of turf used for boiling the cloth. Manure and sour milk were needed for processing, so every bleacher needed a dairy farm. There was plenty of weaving carried on by the cottars in the district, the bleaching process being carried out by the weavers' wives. The traditional method was to 'bowk' or 'boil the cloth in cow dung for an alkali, then sour or neutralize it with buttermilk. The cloth had to be subjected to this several times, between weeks spread out on the grass to be whitened by the atmosphere. After this, to close the yarns together and produce a smooth surface, it was a woman's job to stand in the river and beat the cloth against stones with a wooden club called a beetle[9]. Any piece of flat ground could do for a bleach green provided it could be intersected with trenches from which water could be thrown onto the cloth with a long-handled wooden scoop (Clark 10).

01:21:36

Anglo-Irish inventors harnessed water power for linen processing, also described by Clark:

Ireland is blessed, more than most countries, with rivers of a fall [ratio] of about one in thirty, and width around thirty feet; of a flow which a private individual could dam, ideal for waterwheels. There were plenty of men to harness them, so linen could be bleached and beetled there to a higher standard and at a fraction of the cost of anywhere else in Europe (19).



James Sullivan
Gerard Kiely
Kevin Ballentine
Joseph Fitzpatrick
Eugene Doyle
Arthur Mulholland
Samuel Christopher Mein
James Breen
Hugh Ferguson
Gerald McKeown
Robert John Thompson
Brendan Doherty
David McConkey
Chris John Fox
Michael Convery
Wesley Black
Stephen Tibble
Thomas Truesdale
Eamon Molloy
Edward Clayton
Michael Adamson
Joseph Desmond Clarke
Raymond Carrothers
Marie Doyle
Robert Skillen
John Fulton

Figure 46: Linen Triangle, Map of Ulster. *Flax to fabric, the Story of Irish Linen*, Brenda Collins, An Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum Publication,1994.p.17.

The production processes of flax[10] and linen thus became a feature of the Ulster countryside from the 1700s to 1930 (Collins 11; 32). Vertical waterwheels and bleach yards were created along rivers such as the Upper Bann, the Lagan, the Callan[11], the Agivey, the Main and the Sixmilewater (Bardon 1996:98). A 'linen triangle' developed from Dungannon, east to Lisburn, and south to Armagh and Newry. Clark stated that in the mid-1700s the outlook for the linen industry was uncertain, even while it was firmly established. Colonial markets were unstable, and fabrics which competed with linen were cotton[12] from Egypt and silk from France, yet "linen had stiffness and durability which no other fibre could match and might continue to hold its own"[13] (20). Although flax farming and linen was an industry which grew up in the whole of Ireland, north and south, it was the drapers[14] of the trade who, in the late 1700s, established Ulster as its centre and foresaw linen and Belfast as playing a key role in the industrial revolution that followed (Bardon 1982:98-99).

In Britain, Lancashire cotton, a larger-scale production system, competed with Belfast cotton and linen during the Industrial Revolution (Gill 1). By the end of the Industrial Revolution, with the inventions of the

01:23:12

Stephen Goatley
Mildred A. Harrison
Thomas Smith
David Halliday
Robert Emmanuel Allsop
William Elliott
Dorothy Trainor
Patrick Cachart
Allen John Simpson
Martin Anthony McVeigh
Kevin Kane
Michael Coyle
Joseph Bell
Alan Madden
Nathaniel Shaw Adams
William Andrews
Albert H. Fletcher
Thomas Robinson
Daniel Loughran
William Archer
Gerard Michael Mclaughlin
Hugh McVeigh
David Douglas
Robert H. Wadsworth
Paul Crawford
Arthur Penn

cotton spinning frame, jenny and mule (1769 – 79), the British saw fit to develop the cotton industry, in Ulster. The importation of raw cotton from the tropical colonies was more cost-effective, allowing European soils to be left for food staples (Slicher van Bath 1963). In 1811, 50,000 persons in greater Belfast had been re-employed in cotton mills or home hand-loom weaving (Collins 20). New inventions from the cotton industry were translated to linen, resulting in a 1780s flax spinning process, only applicable to 'coarse linen yarn', the type used for canvas (Collins 20 - 21). In 1805 the linen board offered incentives for the invention of machinery for spinning flax into sail cloth, (as shipbuilding was fast becoming the other staple industry in Belfast) (Bardon 1982: 128). Belfast manufacturers increased profit through the invention of the wet-spinning of flax which was perfected, in Leeds, in 1825 (Bardon 1982:70):

> The valuable experience gained in making cotton was to be used to make Belfast the greatest centre for linen production in the world later in the century (Bardon ibid.:).

01:24:48

The American Civil War and the devastation of the cotton-growing states starved Lancashire production mills, (Bardon 1982:117), and helped resurrect Belfast's linen industry. Specialist engineering firms, such as Preston, Blackburn and Bury, developed power looms to work with fine linen. With its lack of elasticity, (Bardon 1996:145; 1982:117), linen became the closest substitute for cotton, supplying the British market in a boom that lasted from 1862 - 1865. In 1865, Ulster exported most of the 255 million yards of linen from the United Kingdom (Bardon 1996:146), and continued to dominate the world market through to 1870 (Bardon 1982:117). W.H. Crawford describes the "far-reaching consequences" of the domestic linen industry, including its impact on the political economy and, eventually, in relations between Protestants and Catholics.

Elizabeth Carson

Agnes McAnoy

Mary McAleavey

Marie Bennett

Robert Kennedy

Stafford Meredith Mateer

Marion Teresa Bowen

Seamus Eugene McKenna

Michael Oliver McKenna

Michael Mulligan

Owen Boyle

Samuel William Johnston

John Feeney

Joseph Toman

Brendan O'Hara

Billy McMillen

George Brown

Samuel Grieson

Alexander Millar

Paul Gray

Francis Anthony Rice

George Potsworth

Gerard Alphonsus De'ath

John McErlean

Thomas McErlean

Noel Davies

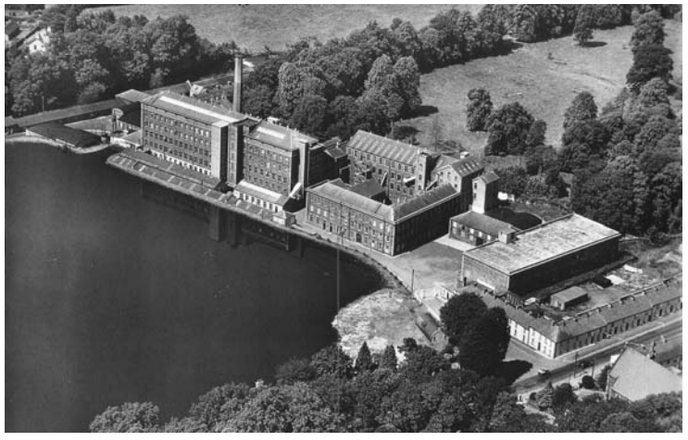


Figure 47: Gilford Mill, Co. Down, N. Ireland.
from a 1999 brochure for its re-development as a shopping mall and arts centre,
Gilford Creative Arts, Peter R Matson, Director.

In eighteenth-century Ulster the pace of change had been very rapid. The domestic linen industry had swept through the province dividing and subdividing the townlands into a myriad of small farms, while cultivation had advanced settlements along the mountain valleys. The new farms were served by thousands of miles of new roads that linked a complex network of market towns and villages and imported the products of the new industrial culture. Urban life with its esteem for education and commercial progress, introduced politics, organisation and administration that served as hallmarks of nineteenth-century Ulster society (Crawford 156).

01:26:24

Figure 48: employees of a Belfast Linen mill,
Belfast an Industrial City Jonathan Bardon, Blackstaff Press Ltd. 1983. p.217.

Further, shipping and engineering, linen mills and textile machinery firms fueled Belfast's prosperity into the late nineteenth century. Conflict across the globe caused another boom in the linen industry, particularly in 1914, with the start of World War I (mainly for coarse linens for military tents, shipping and aeroplane fabric, and for bandages). By 1920, after the Great War of 1914 -18 and after the doubling of flax acreage there was a decline in the use of linen, especially dress linens due to more informal habits and domestic home environments that required less "exclusivity" (Collins 32). By the 1920s there were complaints that linen manufacture was "the destruction of agriculture…a spectacle for which we must go to Ireland" (Horner 1920: 52).

Figure 49: DNA reflections (detail) 2000.
Jacquard weave, cotton, rayon and linen threads 1080x1060mm.
Artist, Kelly Thompson, Locus Operandi exhibit at Dunedin Art Gallery, 2001.

Edited from Artist Statement: Travelling between and becoming located/dislocated involve space and it is in space that Thompson's working processes are manifest… Spaces of self and other can today be conditional upon our technologies of conversation: that is, upon the tools were use to communicate with one another. The expansion of textual media (allowing, for instance, email between communication between Dunedin and Montreal) links people in disparate times and places and thus the self can be created without being self-present. This for the shaping of the self through textual forms and making/writing practices variously attaching to or separating from those we are in conversation with… The image of the map is often quite definite in the artist's work and sometimes barely hinted at through the longitudes and latitudes of the weave. In whichever guise, it makes it impossible to forget the process of travel so pervasively suggested in the work. … the native plant is simultaneously an emblem of national identity and a device for the critical questioning of its assumed authenticity; and the digitally scanned chromosome references the continuously hybridising practice of colonist expansion.

01:28:00

In 2005, Northern Ireland linen yarn is still widely available. I have bought it for use in my art installations in Seattle, USA at a store supplying warp threads for making carpets. Since 2000, high-tech redesign improvements have salvaged the flagging Irish textile industry, in a forced competitive edge to maintain its quality and pedigree. Specialised computerised Jacquard damask looms are a part of such redevelopments. Flax farming has been taken over by Belgium, Austria-Hungary and France with other leading producers Poland, Germany, Rumania, the Netherlands, and some grown in New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Argentina and Egypt. Linen is manufactured in Prague and Russia (Bardon 1982:124). In contemporary times, linen supplies 2% of the world textile demand, but linen is the only fabric in which the European Economic Community (EEC) dominates the rest of the world (Clark 147). In Northern Ireland, some decommissioned linen mills have been redeveloped into museums or heritage shopping malls for tourist value. However, it was not simply linen's economic importance, but its poetic resonance, that makes it evocative as the fabric of my memorial.

01:29:36

The poetics of linen

Investigations into the practicalities of linen help explain the associations of this ancient fabric with the body of the mother, with 'motherhood' tasks, and connections with the motherland. The making of cloth or involvement in rituals with cloth, create and reiterate intimate systems of meaning or relationships fundamental to genealogical narratives and domestic social obligations, which are echoed in the reproduction and sustainability of civil society.

I see myself as a part of a greater community of single Irishwomen who have migrated to Australia in the last two centuries. Our lives have been informed by the domestic duties of sewing and cleaning. For some, this has been in the form of paid work, which might necessitate working with and caring for linen. Tapestry weaver and art critic, Diana Wood Conroy, writing on the influence of displacement and migration in the creative oeuvre of contemporary Australian weavers, details her own

William J. Meaklin
Samuel Llewellyn
Cecil Anderson
Norman Kerr
Linda Boyle
John Finlay
David Davidson
William James Daniel
John McGleenan
Patrick Hughes
Colm Gerard McCartney
John P. Farmer
Robert Wilmot McCreight
Thomas Morris
John Barry
James Templeton
Stephen Geddis
Roger Goad
Robert James Frazer
Denis McAuley
Joseph Reid
Thomas Taylor
Leslie James Shephard
William Ronald McKee
James McKee
Nevin McConnell

familiarity with linen:

> The linen thread has slight irregularities and a rigid quality familiar to me, as a weaver who has struggled to maintain an even tension in linen (1999: 124).

Indeed, while weaving is an accomplished art, more often hand-stitched cloth fragments are the only surviving records of the achievements of women. In the 1995 exhibition, *Secure the Shadow*, artists Anne Brennan and Anne Ferran commemorated this "mute testimony" through the "everyday cloth of empire" (1999: 112) in the housing of emigrant, indigent and infirm women at The Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney, 1848-1886. Many of these women had fled from The Great Irish Famine/*An Gorta Mor* (in Gaelic) of 1845-48.

A fragment of material woven of linen from the ancient era is rare. Wood Conroy underlines "the fundamental association of fabric with the body" (1999: 124) in notes accompanying her sketched illustration of Kyriacos Nicolaou's mid-twentieth century find of a second century linen, now in the Paphos Museum:

01:31:12

> This piece of cloth provides invaluable evidence for an everyday fabric of the second century, a linen garment or bag preserved through chance rather than as carefully chosen grave good or as a dedicatory offering to a deity.
>
> The greatest area of cloth is 3 by 3 cm. The plain woven tabby cloth is set at approximately 14 threads to the centimetre both vertically and horizontally (warp and weft) to make a comparatively coarse linen cloth. The direction of the twist appears to be S-spun, from right to left. This is the opposite of the typical modern spun thread, which is Z-spun from left to right…Egyptian linen cloth is often much finer; for example, fragments of Coptic linen cloth from Tell el Amarna in the Nicholson Museum, Sydney, have up to 40 threads per centimetre (Nicholson Museum no. 62.649)

Ancient textiles survive only through extreme conditions, either very arid, such as the tomb finds from Egypt, or in deep-frozen soils as in Pazyryk in Siberia (Wood Conroy 2000:228).

In notes from Wood Conroy's published archeological journal she says:

Figure 50: Fragment of linen cloth, 7.5 cm in length. House of Dionysis, second century AD. *The Fabric of the Ancient Theatre* Diana Wood Conroy, Moufflon Publications Ltd., Cyprus, 2004.

I did a meticulous watercolour drawing of each thread of the fragment, feeling a contained excitement to see the slight wobble in the spin of the linen fibre (2004:126).

Since the mid-1990s, a series of journals entitled *Reinventing Textiles* has worked to reinvigorate the position of textile craft traditions, specifically in relation to contemporary avant-garde practice. It is a movement that has a similar dynamism to the feminist valorization of domestic handicrafts in the 1970s. In a paper in this journal, Wood Conroy emphasized the importance of not overlooking textiles because of their "essential transience in the archeological record" (1999:120). She states that dismissing or leaving unexamined archeological evidence of preserved textiles may erase the significance of the "relationships formed by their making" (ibid.:126). She presents some general theoretical connections

01:32:48

Mark Dodd
Fred Aubrey Reid
Samuel Swanson
Andrew Freeman
William John Stevenson
Alice McGuinness
David Smyth Love
Richard McCann
David Edward Gleeson
Graham Ronald Tuck
Ernest Dowds
Sean McNamee
David Anthony Wray
Andrew Baird
Stewart Robinson
John Greer
Bernadette Friel
Billy Wright
Thomas Osborne
Gordon Hamilton-Fairley
Peter McKearney
Jane McKearney
James Emmet Griffen
Robert Elliman
Eileen Kelly
Seamus McCusker

about the relation of textiles to migration and displacement; to rituals regarding lamentation, identity and the body; to Indigenous relationships to the land; to kin/genealogy; and argues for a complex perspective on women's historical position between the public and the private. Her concluding statement has informed my memorial project: that material forms of thread, cloth and weaving, particularly by migrant artists to Australia, "allow metamorphoses, transformations from all the forgettings, all the loss, in a fresh sequence of 'handing on'" (ibid.: 129).

Wood Conroy has documented the ways in which linen has been used for sacraments, ceremonies and vestments in religious ceremony, and is the chosen fabric to shroud the dead in a number of cultures. Irish historian, Brenda Collins, offers similar remarks in the introduction of her publication, *Flax to Fabric*, for the Lisburn Museum and Irish Linen Centre:

> St Matthew's Gospel tells how Joseph of Arimathea was given the task of wrapping the body of Christ in a shroud of linen cloth…The ceremonial use of linen expanded with the spread of Christianity (Collins 7).

01:34:24

Wood Conroy overtly references an 'other-worldly' realm, as well as considering how memories of kinship, are held within the smell and tactility of embodied textile fragments:

> The understanding that textiles were part of the bodily realm appears in an influential book by the fourth-century philosopher Porphyry…He points out, 'The body is a garment with which the soul is invested' just as the 'heavens are called by the ancients a veil' because they are like 'the vestments of the celestial Gods' (Porophyry translated by Taylor 1991: 37-8 qtd by Wood Conroy 1999:126-7).
>
> Like relationships…textiles such as those described by Porophyry… can be seen indirectly through an imprint on a harder material, a kind of negative casting. In a [Cyprus] tomb…knives were found that had been wrapped in a series of

Thomas Berry
Columba McVeigh
James Fogarty
Stanley Irwin
John Bell
John Kelly
Joseph Nesbitt
John Martin Brown
Owen McVeigh
Jack McAllister
Comgall Casey
Michael Duggan
John Francis Batey
Thomas McNamee
Thomas James Haddock
Joseph Clements
Audrey Edgson
Theodore Williams
Simon John Francis
James Duncan
Peter McDonald
Michael Sampson
Francis Crossan
Robert Scott
Patrick Maxwell
Samuel Clarke

plain linen cloths – the grid of the cloth is corroded into the knives as the fibres of linen became permeated with the metallic oxides from the bronze (Todd 75-193 qtd in Wood Conroy 1999: 127)…like strange, cross-gendered objects (ibid.:127).

Figure 51: My mother, Maureen Trouton, ironing the linen handkerchiefs Canada, 2002.

Seamus Heaney, Ireland/Northern Ireland's poet laureate, recalls ideas of intimate connectedness through textiles – specifically in the repetitive, shared performance of folding linen sheets. He wrote the poem as a memorial to his mother, entitled 'In memoriam: M.K.H, 1911- 1984'. The following is an excerpt from it:

> The cool that came off sheets just off the line
> Made me think the damp must still be in them
> But when I took my corners of the linen
> And pulled against her, first straight down the hem
> And then diagonally, then flapped and shook
> The fabric like a sail in a cross-wind,
> They'd make a dried-out undulating thwack.
> So we'd stretch and fold and end up hand to hand

Ross McWhirter
Archibald Waller
John Hayes
John Houston
Noel Shaw
Paul Fox
Laura Crawford
Charles McNaul
Alexander Mitchell
James Lochrie
Sean Campbell
Ronald Trainor
Cyril McDonald

01:36:00

Colin McInnes
Jack Rooney
Hugh Waters
Michael Francis Donnelly
Patrick Donnelly
Trevor Bracknell
Christina Hughes
Seamus Anthony Mallon
Richard Beattie
William Scott

1976

Sylvia McCullough

For a split second as if nothing had happened
For nothing had that had not always happened
Beforehand, day by day, just touch and go,
Coming close again by holding back
In moves where I was x and she was
Inscribed in sheets she'd sewn from ripped-out flour sacks.

Heaney uses the reconfigured bed sheets made out of linen flour bags as a metaphor to movingly evoke the sentiments of touch, intimacy and love (24). He references longing for the maternal and those everyday rituals between family members, which structure the intimate patterns of everyday ritual and dialogue in the family setting. "Hand to hand" and "just touch and go" summon up imagery of the fragile, repetitive conditions needed to create togetherness and dialogue. The constructed linen bed-sheet was pieced together from an earlier, rougher version of linen bags used to transport flour. His poetic example speaks to my creative project, not only in its reference to linen in everyday life for a certain generation in Northern Ireland, but in its documentation of the material as a focus and a linking object in the repetitive/reverent 'dialogue' between two different, but intimate persons. As in the discussion of sculptor Richard Serra's work discussed in chapter six, Heaney's imagery suggests how repeated encounters with a complex object bigger than oneself can be of great benefit to gaining awareness, as well as in sustaining connectivity between persons in civic life.

01:37:36

Chain

John Martin Reavey
Brian Reavey
Barry O'Dowd
Joe O'Dowd
Declan O'Dowd
Clifford Evans
Robert Walker
Joseph Lemmon
Reginald Chapman
Walter Chapman
Kenneth Worton
James McWhirter
Robert Chambers
John McConville
John Bryans
Robert Freeburn
Henry McAdams
John Marks
Michael Dickson
Edward McQuaid
Ian Gallagher
Mary Dornan
Martin McDonagh
Rosemary Bleakley
Samuel Millar
Sarah O'Dwyer

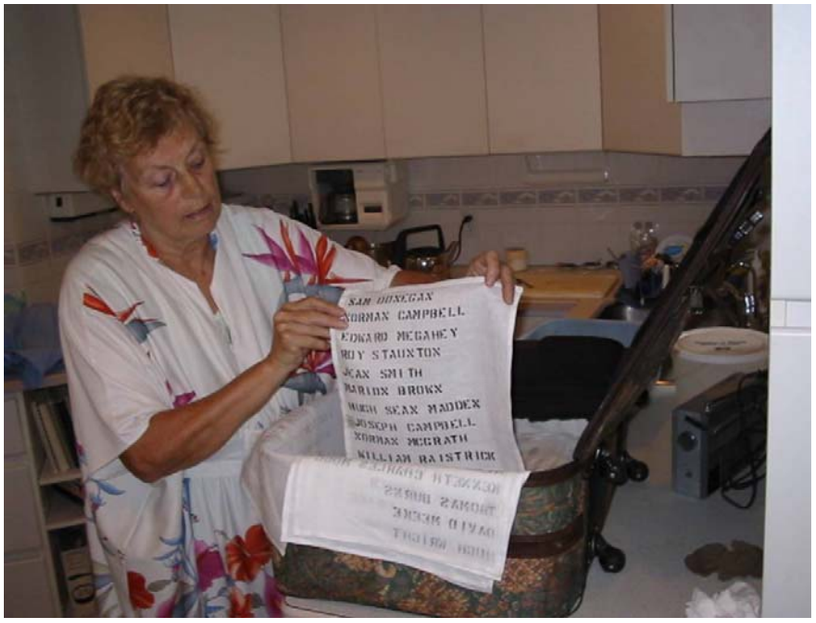
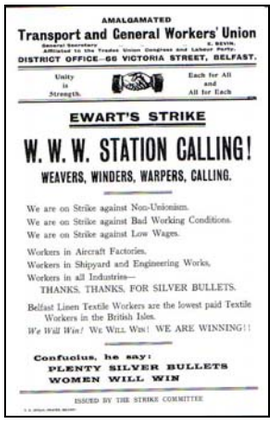


Figure 52: My mother, Maureen Trouton, in her kitchen
Vancouver, B. C., Canada,
helping me prepare the linen handkerchiefs to travel to Australia. 2002.

01:39:12

That connectivity can occur in the most unexpected circumstances. Ulster's industrialisation was gained, in part, by the central role of the linen trade. Yet, Northern Ireland's first female textile trade unionist leader, Saidie Patterson, reflected in 1986:



AMALGAMATED
Transport and General Workers' Union
DISTRICT OFFICE—66 VICTORIA STREET, BELFAST.

Unity is Strength. — Each for All and All for Each

EWART'S STRIKE

W. W. W. STATION CALLING!

WEAVERS, WINDERS, WARPERS, CALLING.

We are on Strike against Non-Unionism.
We are on Strike against Bad Working Conditions.
We are on Strike against Low Wages.

Workers in Aircraft Factories,
Workers in Shipyard and Engineering Works,
Workers in all Industries—
THANKS, THANKS, FOR SILVER BULLETS.

Belfast Linen Textile Workers are the lowest paid Textile Workers in the British Isles.
We Will Win! WE WILL WIN! WE ARE WINNING!!

Confucius, he say!
PLENTY SILVER BULLETS
WOMEN WILL WIN

ISSUED BY THE STRIKE COMMITTEE

Figure 53: Historic strike leaflet of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union.

James Reid
Mark Ashford
Seamus Brendon O'Brien
John Arrell
Kieran McCann
Niall O'Neill
John Morrow
George Bell
Neville Cummings
Patrick Joseph Quail
David McDowell
Samuel Fulton Neill
John Patrick Tennyson
Joseph Raymond Mayes
David McGilton
William Peter Armstrong
Joseph McAlinden
Martin McCrossan
Anthony Reavey
Samuel Hollywood
John Smiley
Hugh Woodside
John Edward McGready
Thomas Gerald Rafferty
Rachel McLernon
Robert McLernon

> We produced the finest linen in the world, yet some of our women had to go home at night and eat from a table covered with yesterday's newspaper (14).

01:40:48

Figure 54: Sadie Patterson with a sample of her linen and lace work.

From the early nineteen twenties she had been active in the Belfast Girls' Club Union, an organization established for mill workers in the Victorian era by women from wealthy industrial families, and recalled the unintended political lessons learnt there through practical activities like needlework:

> Certainly, I've yet to meet a girl who doesn't like beautiful underwear, but far more important we were teaching them, Protestant and Catholic together, what we could do on the basis of self-help and cooperation (19).

Patterson used her experience as a linen mill worker and union leader as a peace activist in Northern Ireland in the 1970s. In 1976, she organized one of the largest marches for peace in Northern Ireland. Saidie Patterson formed an unusual alliance with two notoriously divided,

Mark Bunting
James Blakely
William Henry Murtagh
Thomas Joseph Quinn
Archibald Hanna
Raymond Carlisle
William Hamer
Sean Bailey
Frank Stagg
James O'Neill
William Wilson
Anthony Doherty
James McGrillen
Mary Veronica Sloan
Mary Sloan
Doris McGrath
Colin Lynch
Paul Best
Desmond Finney
Marjorie Lockington
Joseph McCullough
Kenneth Leneghan
Harold Blair
Alexander Jamison
Myles O'Reilly
Patrick Anthony O'Reilly

violent working class areas of Belfast, the Shankill (Protestant) and Falls (Catholic) districts.

Figure 55: Sadie Patterson planting a memorial peace cross for her nephew, 1979.

01:42:24

Conclusion

A 'pieced-together' fabric memorial embodies the memory of the rupture of sectarian violence. The intimate monument in a linen grid of handkerchiefs is a metaphor for the possibility of a newly blended, post-1998 Northern Ireland. The specifics of flax farming and linen manufacture reference the settlement and colonisation of all peoples

Figure 56: 2002-4 Logo made by Lycia for the *Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial* project, University of Wollongong: an investigation of the links between textiles, literary theory(text) and colonialism.

Patrick Mohan
Samuel Smyth
Robert Dorman
Harry Scott
Alexander Sherwood Frame
Nicholas White
Julius Stephen
John Donnelly
Andrew Small
James Francis McCaughey
Joseph Kelly
Patrick Barnard
Mary Fegan
Donald Traynor
Roderick Bannon
John Pearson
David Ferguson
William John McCutcheon
Robert Lennox
Margaret Gamble
Robert McConnell
Sean McDermott
Gillian J.B. Liggett
William Herron
Elizabeth Herron
Noeleen Herron

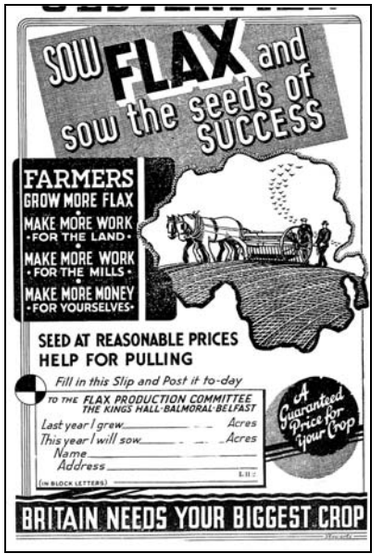


Figure 57: brochure, Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum, Northern Ireland tourist Board, 1996.

in the North of Ireland: the Anglican ascendancy, Presbyterians and Catholics. On the memorial, the names of those killed are from various differently-perceived political backgrounds. Irish linen is a part of a rich material culture from its colonial trade history, particularly during the Industrial Revolution in Ulster's 'linen triangle'. Romantic images of Northern Ireland evoke smelly rural flax retting pools, scutching

01:44:00

Figure 58: 'Bleaching Greens' at Glenmore, Lisburn, Northern Ireland. *Cloth and Human Experience* Ed.s Weiner & Schneider, Smithsonian Institution Press, London, 1989. p. 203.

Patrick Dillon
Francis Mallon
Michael Sweeney
Peter Cleary
Vincent Hamilton
Harry McAleese
Rachel Hyams
John Cummings
William Ronald Crooks
James Edward Byrne
Robert Joseph Hawkins
Matthew Campbell
Edward Richard Stewart
Seamus Ludlow
Stanley Arthurs
Gregory Brown
Henry Francis Keys
Francis Joseph Kettyles
Thomas Henry Evans
Felix Clancy
Sean O'Hagan
Robert McCullough
Henry McMahon
Francis Heaney
James Hunter
Kenneth David Nelson

mills thick with heavy dust, and beautiful-looking bleaching greens with swaths of lengthy linen bolts rolled out beside the river. Rural and industrial processes of spinning and weaving linen, together with the wear and care processes of Irish linen fabric have taken on a mythology of their own in Irish literature and the arts. White linen has an appeal to a symbolic idea of intimacy which seems universal and ancient: a material that is sacred to life's defining moments of ritual celebration, and was used extensively in daily domestic situations in the bedroom and dining room, if one could afford it. White linen handkerchiefs are still used in gift-giving at points of departure, and my maternal grandmother sent me many over the years. Archaeological findings show us linen's fragility over time, but also its durability and eternal qualities. Saidie Patterson's biography links the importance of inter-communication, between groups from different sides of the political divide in textile mills, to her later activism on behalf of peace in N.I. Linen in *The ILM* can be seen as a material sign of cultural change to celebrate various versions of Northern Irish identity; together, the handkerchiefs make a pattern showing the interdependence necessary in a society which honours care and a stable home life.

01:45:36

Endnotes

[1] A narrow banded linen cloth (made for sale up until the eighteenth century) (Bardon 1982:97).

[2] A sense of the patronising British attitude to the linen industry on Irish soil is stated by H.S. Tremenheere, a gentleman Commissioner, who was sent from parliament to report on the 'colonial benevolence' of linen manufacturers in Ireland, in 1856. Tremenheere describes employers as full of kindness and generosity, possessing the "affection and respect of their work-people, who often, in the difficulties and dangers of life, look up to them for counsel and support."

[3] 'Scutching' is separating the brittle, woody, outer parts of the stem to make the flax more fibrous. The first scutch mill was set up in Holywood, County Down, in the 1740s. River power drove the rollers and wooden blades. In the eighteenth century, scutch mills were crucial to the industry and, by approximately 1850 there

were around 1000 flax scutching mills in Northern Ireland; by World War I, production had fallen.

Working conditions were hazardous with poor ventilation from the dust, which was thick with fibre in the air (Collins 15). The work was mainly done by women who worked barefoot as the factory floor would be flooded with water. Many workers fell ill with tuberculosis and/or foot problems.

[4] 'Steeping' or 'retting' flax is arranging one layer and anchoring this with stones "just below the surface of a slowly flowing stream or pond. This process takes from ten days to two weeks, loosens the cellulose fibres from the plant's woody core and surrounding bark. The water ferments the resins and gums that hold these parts together, yielding as a by-product a fetid, pungent smelling scum and sediment capable of killing fish. This explains the many laws that govern the disposal of retting water, as well as the places where retting could take place (Warden 1864: 36-40 in Schneider 201). Bog-holes in Ireland did very well for retting flax (Charley 1862: 132).

[5] 'Hackling' or 'heckling' was a process whereby flax stalks were twisted, shaken and beaten to remove all the remnants of gum, resin, and short fibres or 'tow'. This was done with graded combs made by a blacksmith. The shredding of long fibres to remove such impurities took considerable skill and was done by itinerant workers (Schneider 202). Also, it was thought to be 'women's work' and men had to learn an'artificial weakness' to engage in it (Horner 1920: 379 qtd. in Schneider 202).

01:47:12

[6] Traditionally, cellulose fibres have been difficult to dye.

[7] at least 4 – 7 weeks, according to the season and weight of the fabric (Charley 1862:102-3).

[8] There are many accounts of the hazards of shortening this process (by lime or acid which over-oxidizes "the delicate fibres" (Coons and Koob, 1980; Horner 1920; Trotman and Trotman 1948 qtd. in Schneider 2002).

[9] 'Beetling' is the name given to the process in which linen webs are pounded or stamped, for a day to a fortnight, to flatten and close the threads together and impart to fabrics their highly prized gloss-sheen (Clark 152).

Christopher Byers
Paul McNally
William Palmer
Edward Walker
Liam Prince
Daniel McCann
Gerard Stitt
Patrick Meehan
Robert Craven
Wesley Nicholl
William Rankin
Edward Anthony McNeill
Richard Doherty
Sydney McAvoy
Francis Dominic Rice
Gerard Henry McMahon
John Martin
Ruby Kidd
Francis James Walker
Joseph McBride
Daniel Mackin
John William Freeburn
William Snowdon
Bernard Coyle
Charles Oliver Eaton
Brian Palmer

The beetling engine, 1730, replaced hand-beating. One of the first beetling engines to have been set up was by a Dutchman in 1725 on the Lagan river at Drum Bridge. Drapers embraced and adopted this new technology (which used water power) (Bardon 1982:98).

[10] By the mid-1800s, Irish flax cultivation and linen production was pressured out of the international market by the gradual introduction of the Scottish and English systems of large-scale tillage farming. Flax farming had suited the small-scale Irish peasant, because tenant-farmers cultivated flax on rotation between the potato-growing seasons but competition from cheaper cotton goods further undermined the subsistence economy of the people in Ireland:

> View the north of Ireland and you behold a whole province peopled by weavers; it is they who cultivate, or rather beggar, the soil, as well as work the looms…The lands are infinitely subdivided (and the) weaver…has always a piece of potatoes, a piece of oats, a patch of flax, and grass for a cow." (Horner 1920: 52 qtd in Schneider 203-4)

During the 1920s and 30s the world market for linen declined. "Ulster provided about two thirds of all American linen imports in the 1930s and maintained other important markets in the Empire. Ulster's position as a world provider was still unrivalled – only the market size had declined" (Collins 32).

[11] According to Bardon, bleach works began in 1743 on the Callan river, with 36 (along banks and tributaries) in 1771 which finished 108,500 pieces and 2,712,500 yards of linen (1982:98).

[12] The inventions necessary for spinning and manufacturing cotton warp had not yet occurred. The cotton spinning frame, jenny and mule were invented 1769 – 92. By the end of the Industrial Revolution, with the inventions of the cotton spinning frame, jenny and mule (1769 – 79), the British saw fit to develop the cotton industry, in Ulster. The importation of raw cotton from the tropical colonies was more cost-effective, allowing European soils to be left for food staples (Slicher van Bath 1963). In 1811, 50,000 persons in greater Belfast had been re-employed in cotton mills or home hand-loom weaving (Collins 20). New inventions from the cotton industry were translated to linen, resulting in a 1780s flax spinning process, only applicable to 'coarse linen yarn', the type used for canvas. (Collins 20-21).

01:48:48

Frank Scott
Oliver Woulahan
James McCallion
Earnest Moore
William Miller
Samuel Gerald Gardiner
Vincent Heatherington
William Miller
James Rooney
Mervyn McDonald
Rosaleeen McDonald
Thomas McKenzie
Gerald Gilmore
James Francey
Peter McElcar
Patrick Cannon
Gordon Liddle
Christopher Ewart-Biggs
Judith Cook
David Evans
Patrick Francis McNeice
George Johnston
Joseph Watson
Daniel McGrogan
Robert Scott
John McLeave

[13] Interlinings were the main product from linen.

[14] A class of middlemen who bought the cloth from the weavers for cash and had it bleached and exported. Originally distinct from bleachers, by the 19th century the two categories merged (Clark 10 & 152).

01:50:24

John Mackey

James Doherty

Thomas Cush

William John Bovaird

Cornelius Neeson

Alan Trevor Watkins

Robert Thompson McCreight

James R. Borucki

Joanne Maguire

Andrew Maguire

Daniel Lennon

John Maguire

Michael Quigley

Majella O'Hare

Betty McDonald

Gerald McGleenan

Robert Walker

William Creighton

Thomas Passmore

James Heaney

Joseph Dempsey

Jeanette Dempsey

Bridget Anne Dempsey

Patrick John Cunningham

Samuel Hunt

Case Studies

Chapter 4

Public Needlework Projects led by Women Artists

This chapter focuses on how women communicate messages of interconnectedness and anti-violence, through the medium of textiles-needlework. The interface between the intimate practice of needlework in small women's groups, public installation-performance art in the political arena is explored. Monumental textiles-based projects can be considered 'new genre public art' (see Lacy 1995) combining textiles with performance-process work, installation and public site. The projects I have chosen to research are Justine Merritt's *Ribbon around the Pentagon*, 1982-85, Suzanne Lacy's *The Crystal Quilt*, 1987 and *Women-In-Black*, 1988 to the present.

01:52:00

Gloria Orenstein, USA, known for her writing on the women surrealists since the early 1970s, posits that expressive creative gatherings can be catalysts for political and social change:

> The ceremonial aspect of art is now understood to be potent enough to…evoke visions…thoughts, and images that, when merged with the energy of political acts (such as the protests at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant, the Livermore Weapons Lab, the Nevada Test Site, the women's peace camp at the Greenham military base in England, and the Women's Pentagon Action [The Ribbon Around the Pentagon]) can create a critical mass powerful enough to alter the energy field of the participants. The rituals enhance and augment the political actions, binding the participants together in a shared spiritual community and creating the opportunity for healing (1990: 279).

Thomas Hall
Charles Victor Moody
Peter Gerard Johnston
Albert Graig
Joseph Paton
Seamus Muldoon
Pauline Anne Doherty
George Samuel Rankin
Fredrick McLoughlin
Michael Boothman
Rosaleen Kyle
Victor Thomas Dormer
Kevin Oliver Mulhern
Brian Stewart
Catherine O'Connor
Francis Thomas Nolan
Arthur McKay
Roy Hamilton
Yvonne Dunlop
Sean Patrick McCrystal
Anne Magee
Annie Brennan
Peter Francis Woolsey
Edward Donnelly
William Henry Corrigan
Paul Marlowe

Figure 59: The public performance, 1982-1985.
Linda Pershing, *The Ribbon around the Pentagon: Peace by Piecemakers*,
University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1996.

New and important contemporary associations are emerging in the sculptural and public art use of textiles, particularly in the exploring of postcolonial identity issues in textiles installation art. Textiles and clothing are an ideal 'mobile' medium to represent the late twentieth century migrant experience. Janis Jefferies, fibre sculptor/critic and digital textile designer, has identified distinct political subtexts which are part of the theoretical developments of art textiles. She and her colleague Sarat Maharaj, formerly at Goldsmiths College, University of London, outline the interconnected text/textile references and its impact on contemporary art in Britain in the early 1990s. Jefferies emphasizes the connection of textiles with the body and the comforts of home by quoting Maharaj from his essay, 'Textile Art – Who are you?':

> Should we comprehend 'Textile Art' under the chameleon figure of the [Derrida's] 'undecidable'? …However much the 'quilt' aspires to the state of 'artwork'…we never quite manage to set aside its ties with the world of uses and functions, with the notion of wrapping up, keeping warm, sleep and comfort, some feeling of hearth and home. In all of this, it is no less easy to blank out memories of its links with the domain of processes, crafts and techniques … Half-on-wall, half-on-floor, it stands/lies/hangs before us: everyday object and artwork in one go. Domestic commodity which is at the same time the

01:53:36

> conceptual device…Not entirely either and yet both, an 'undecidable'…"Has the quilt not always straddled such a double-coded space, an ambivalent site of this sort? (Maharaj qtd. in Jefferies 2001: 5).

My interest lies in textile objects as they represent simultaneously both the sacred, in their historic, ceremonial, or religious use, for rituals of life's defining passages, as well as the profane, e.g. the use of cloth to care for a body inflicted with wounds or debased by violent acts. Textiles are symbolic of interconnectedness, as touch is an inherent component of cloth. Textiles/needlework has been used as a vehicle by which international and local women's groups. These groups often are led by female artists or crafts workers, who have emphasized publicly interconnection and the need for a safe, secure community in which to live. Such creative projects may be both progressive and conservative at the same time, tending to fall between 'the simultaneous elements of social conformity and critique' (Pershing 1993: 333). The use of non-confrontational techniques has been intrinsic to both women's domestic craft practices, and the socially accepted means by which women have historically congregated for personal discussion, often on political issues.

Women have felt comfortable with the intimacy-secrecy whereby needlework processes and techniques can convey 'encoded political statement,' (Pershing 1993: 338), communicating controversial ideas specific and dear to them, which could be seen as radical or divisive in the greater public arena. Linda Pershing, USA, has pointed out in *Peace Work out of Piecework* how armed conflict endangers existence, metaphorically causing strain and wear in the greater social fabric (ibid.: 341, 345). Analyses of women's moral and ethical decision-making processes, as articulated by educational psychologist Carol Gilligan, USA, reflect a prioritization of the values of interrelationship and care. Community sewing and crafting groups bear such hallmarks, showing:

William Derek Kidd
Maurice Murphy
John Toland
Joseph Glover
Andrew Crocker
James Loughrey
John Joseph McLoughlin
Philomena Green
Frank McConnellogue
Elizabeth Luney
Joseph Scott
Geraldine McKeown
Howard Edwards

01:55:12

Roy Young
Norman Campbell
Patrick Michael McGeown
John Joseph Savage
Thomas Easton
Josephine McGeown
Samuel G. Armour
Paul Kerr
James Liggett

1977
Graeme Dougan
David Hind

> How people relate to and manipulate objects in order to express themselves, their notions of identity, and their personal and cultural values (see Bronner, 1983, 1986; Jones, 1980; Sherzer and Sherzer, 1976) (Pershing 1993: 335).

My interest in textiles projects by women is not an embrace of essentialism or an idealistic call towards maternalism. I acknowledge that early feminist politics such as the activism of Marie Verone, France, in World War I, took as its basis "the moral infallibility of women" (Scott 2002:13), yet the extension of "the reach of our [women's] politics well beyond protests against gender discrimination" echoes "an old feminist claim that women's interests are society's interests" (Scott 2002:13).

Armed conflict, and its attendant violence, are disrespectful of life and shatter home and community interrelations, where women have often exercised significant degrees of control. Women artists have used textile metaphors to particular effect in public needlework projects, to subtly remind a mainstream audience of the civilized social order, where interconnectedness between people of difference and the value of the rhythms of ordinary domestic experience. My evolving mobile memorial, *The Irish Linen Memorial*, takes such a sculptural-interdisciplinary approach to needlework. Both the intimate craft processes and the public aspect of my needlework project typify two contradictory aspects of stereotypical femininity. Embroidery, as has been well documented by Rosita Parker, 1984, is symbolic of feminine virtuousness and duty. In contrast, the spots of sewn hair that mar the white linen, remind viewers of the baseness of the body and the human emotional states inflicted by trauma, such as hysteria, often considered a peculiarly feminine pathology.

01:56:48

As well as being complex, crafted objects in themselves, textiles inherently define movement through costuming in performance. My collaborator, choreographer-dancer, Elizabeth Cameron Dalman explains:

The symbolism of the material becomes a part of the choreography. Lycia's work interests me because of the human rights issue and anti-war expression. I think the arts are a very powerful vehicle to be able to reach people's hearts; to actually reach people on a human level, different from the political, and make people think about the issues. (Radio interview with Sylvie Stern and Lycia Trouton, 2XX FM, Canberra, February 9, 2004).

Description of Artwork: *The Ribbon around the* Pentagon, 1982-5.

Figure 60: on-site protest
Linda Pershing, *The Ribbon around the Pentagon: Peace by Piecemakers,* The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1996.

Cameron Dalman's approach is reiterated in the objectives of the major public work, *The Ribbon around the Pentagon*, (*The Ribbon*) USA, (1982-85). This work was conceived by Justine Merritt. Merritt, an educator and needle-worker, (who entitled her classes 'Embroidered Memories'), had been inspired by the communal needlework of Judy Chicago's exhibit, *The Dinner Party*, late 1970s. *The Ribbon* was conceived as 'an immense …decorated fabric to tie around the Pentagon,' in preparation for the commemoration, August 4, 1985, of the fortieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and

01:58:24

Rory O'Kelly
Myles Scullion
John Reid
Norman Sharkey
William D. Brown
James Nicholson
David McQuillan
Alexander Watters
Daniel Gerard Carville
Larry Potter
David Graham
Hester McMullan
Francis Cassidy
Hugh William Clarke
Sean Prendergast
Gerald C. Cloete
John T. McCracken
Kenneth Sheehan
Myles Vincent McGrogan
Kevin McMenamin
John Short
William Edgar
Trevor McKibbin
William Strathearn
Sean Campbell
Brian Smith

Nagasaki, (Pershing 1993:327). 'It acted as a ceremonial plea for peace' with embroidered text and imagery signifying things which Merritt described as, 'I cannot bear to think of as lost forever in a nuclear war.' The Pentagon was chosen, in Merritt's words as 'a symbol of my nation's violence and of my own.' (Philbin 1985:11; Pershing 1993: 328) The final production involved a crowd of thousands and a ritual-performance with the 'flowing band of cloth' composed of 25,000 panels, 'more than fifteen times the number needed to surround the Pentagon.' (Pershing 1993: 1-2). Mary Francis Jaster, its national coordinator, spoke about touching "enough individuals [so that] 'the powers that be' could be challenged by that" (ibid.: 332).

The Ribbon around the Pentagon's impact was felt not just in its performance, but even more strongly in the making process. Dialogue among the women[1] occurred through this comfortably familiar crafting, as they produced and planned a monumental display of the group's closely held values, typically estranged in the greater public arena. This was a safe way for primarily Caucasian, middle-class women, to build a national community over a two-year period, in a meaningful artistic and conceptual project. *The Ribbon* communicated a moving, easily communicated message which drew upon the emotive sentiment of touch, through handicraft, together with its aligned ideas of connection, healing and life-giving values. Although the Reagan's governmental military or nuclear policy was not altered as a result, a critical mass of the American public witnessed this cultural event, and participants felt transformed by the exhibiting of anti-violence concepts, in a beautiful way, which was 'a matter of conscience' to many (Pershing 1993: 332-3).

The political use of textiles was prefigured by other twentieth century women's protests. In 1995, Jefferies commented on how the primary means of communicating and staging such a message through event-demonstrations is often accomplished specifically through the fabric arts:

02:00:00

John McBride
Brendan O'Callaghan
Patrick Joseph Devlin
Eric Shiells
Edward Coleman
James Green
Robert Edward Crawford
Harry Bradshaw
John Geddis
William C. Hobbs
Douglas Deering
Robert Nairac
Robert North
Daniel McCooey
Christopher Shaw
Rowland Hill
Malachy Gregory
Samuel Derek Davison
Kenneth Norman Lynch
Hugh Martin
James Boyd McClurg
Gerald Tucker
Robert Walter Whitten
John Wesley Milliken
Gerald McCullough
Michael Harrison

> …Textiles have been mobilized as banners for Suffragette resistance, trade union rights, wrapping the Greenham Common [anti-nuclear protest] fence and honouring those who have died of AIDS (1995:164).

The Ribbon project illustrates what USA architect Miwon Kwon calls 'art in the public interest', artist Suzanne Lacy calls 'new genre' and USA critic Lucy Lippard labels 'community-based' public art[2]. By the mid-1990s, this kind of monumental public art became a common method of expression for women and minorities with limited opportunities for site-specific public commissions in the high-end fine arts market. *The Ribbon* involved non-commodity, site-contextual ways of working with public ritual in an era known for its overt materialism.

Description of Artwork: *The Crystal Quilt*, 1987

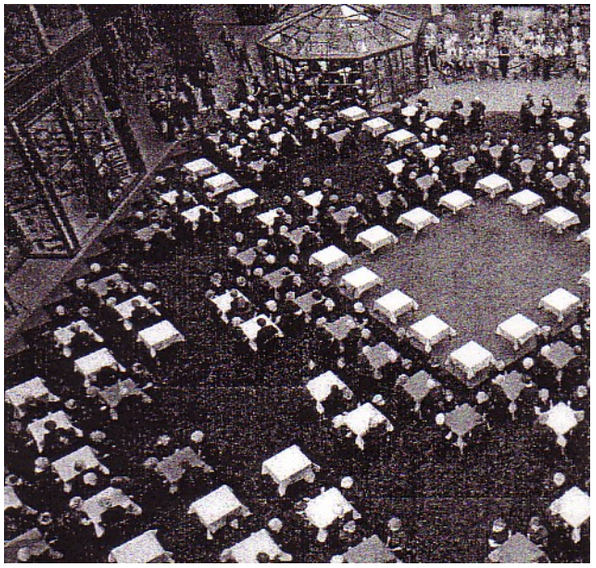


Figure 61: *The Crystal Quilt* installation – performance.

Suzanne Lacy advocates for the genre of large-scale public art or 'enormous, community art projects' which involve collaborators and participants (Cheng 129). Hers is a feminist-based practice

emphasizing the sociological themes of anti-violence and anti-racism. As a way of engaging the local population of a place and national media, Lacy expands the role of artist to include that of producer/coordinator during the lengthy planning period leading up to an event-installation. Meiling Cheng, *In Other Los Angeles: Multicentric Performance Art*, 2002, stated that there is a distinct contemporary Lacy School apparent – one that reconsiders "the space between artist and audience, or the participatory other/selves, and one which witnesses the affectability of the artwork-event" as central to the artistic project (authors' italics; Cheng 130-131).

Lacy's *The Crystal Quilt* (*The Quilt*), 1987, although not specifically addressing anti-violence, has strongly influenced my artwork. *The Quilt* involved five hundred women-participants, twenty staff and fifteen collaborating artists, including painter Miriam Schapiro and sound artist, Susan Stone. *The Quilt* was displayed in the Philip Johnson-designed Crystal Court atrium of the prestigious high-rise, The IDS Centre, Minneapolis, Minnesota on Mother's Day, 1987. Elderly women were seated at each of the four sides of square tables, positioned in a configuration designed by Shapiro to mimic a geometric canvas, as seen from a plan view and from upper balconies of the high-rise. The women were choreographed to fold and unfold yellow and red table napkins atop black tablecloths. Their movements were timed and each complemented one another's tables. The sound element of the event was pre-recorded, making intimate conversations public on the day of the large gathering. This audio recording involved conversations between the women on issues pertinent to older women's lives.

Mammoth group effort, shown in the organized public display of the minutiae of needlework, can make a 'felt impact' through its accompanying conceptual ideas and positive ethical values – the intergenerational survival skills of women. Thus, *The Crystal Quilt* positioned women's expressive behaviour -- aesthetics, values, politics -- within a well-situated setting, that of a centralized

George Wilson
Denis Michael Neill
Walter Kerr
Patrick Shields
Samuel Murphy
Marcia Gregg
Colm McNutt
Paul Harman
James Clifford
Gordon Quinn

1978

Cecil Grills

02:03:12

Bernard Brown
Martha McAlpine
Jack Eaglesham
William Gordon
Lesley Gordon
Mary Smyth
Michael Scott
Ian D. Corden-Lloyd
Thomas Neeson
Sandra Morris
Christine Lockhart
Ian McCracken
Elizabeth McCracken

international corridor of power. The juxtaposition of that which is intimate or personal, to public life and procedures is a crucial part of this artwork. By situating craft processes within a significant architectural space, as did *The Ribbon* when it encircled the Pentagon, domestic concerns are made to occupy a status of equal importance to the historically male-privileged public space. Thus, *The Crystal Quilt* installation-performance, held on the day of the year which celebrates 'mothering,' added another layer to the narrative and memory of the building itself.

As part of *The Crystal Quilt,* Lacy developed a state-wide leadership organization for older women. Values associated with motherhood and/or the interests of older women, were fore grounded through *The Quilt*'s aesthetically pleasing, orderly choreographic ensemble. The expanded role of older women as knowledgeable spokespersons in contemporary community and public affairs was, thereby, reiterated and given visibility though this artwork and the silent or secretive needlework-quilting metaphor was turned on its head and made public.

02:04:48

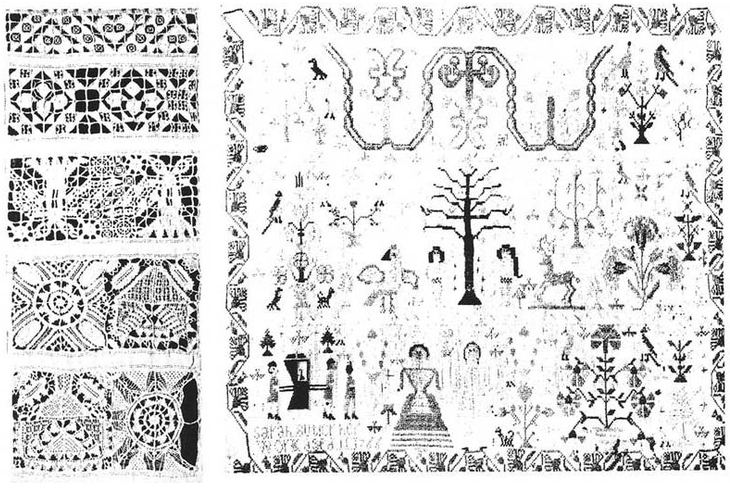


Figure 62: example of drawnwork

Contemporary folklore theorist Linda Pershing has encouraged the expansion of research into quilting metaphors over

the last twenty years, into other needlework symbolism, like that of drawnwork. Drawnwork uses a complex and difficult technique of de-threading to enhance the borders of napkins, tablecloths and other domestic linens, 'elevating their status as everyday objects' (Jasper 1987:3; Pershing 1993: 345-7). A drawnwork metaphor may be used to discuss critical aspects of interpreting public protest in needlework-based artwork by 'those who are often trivialized or ignored by legislators and policymakers'. Drawnwork evokes the removal from the fabric of civil society of those life-affirming values in public policy-making (Pershing 344-5).

Description of Performance: *Women-in-Black*, 1988 – ongoing.

19

Figure 63: *Women-in-Black* documentation in a group exhibition, October, 2002.Seattle Community College, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. Curator: Susan Platt, PhD. Photo: Lycia Trouton

Women-in-Black, a global protest movement, outside of the gallery system of contemporary art has attracted the membership of significant female artists, such as Seattle-based Selma Walden. Using broad-based textiles symbolism, *Women-in-Black* have a motto that 'silence is visible.'[5] *Women-in-Black* stand still in quiet vigils (with 'time-and-place' parameters), wearing the dark color traditionally associated with mourning (in western countries).

Women-in-Black began demonstrating in 1988, specifically at a traffic intersection in Jerusalem, to protest the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Historian Joan Wallach Scott analyses *Women-in-Black* in a paper delivered at The Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, (a caucus of the American Historical Association) in 2002, as an effective anti-violence strategy and intelligent feminist methodology put into practice. Scott describes *Women-in-Black* as a feminist reverberation that honours difference, acknowledging the "complex realities of politics that acknowledge interconnected histories" (Scott 2002:11-12). Scott states that presumed fundamental differences among feminists and the possibility of "mutual recognition rather than the dissolution of differences" bears silent witness to abuses of power (ibid.:11-12). According to their 1998 annual report, *Women-in-Black* is opposed "to ethnic homogenization and militarism." The group "takes the domain of large-scale politics as its own"(Scott 2002:12). The *Women-in-Black* concept has taken hold internationally and solidarity vigils have been held in response to the particulars of personal and state violence at various sites around the world, since 1991, (some more dangerous than others).

02:08:00

The intercultural underpinnings of the movement are summed up in this statement by Betty Reardon:

> While there may be no common definition of peace with which all women throughout the world would agree, there are emerging notions of what constitutes peace and how it can be achieved (1996: 219).

Conclusion

A plurality of exhibition strategies and integration of non-traditional concepts, materials and methods have been reviewed in this chapter. Various United States women artists, working in groups, have used textiles-needlework symbolism as well as aspects of drapery or cloth, to protest violence, endemic in colonialism and postcolonial times. The new millennium may become a time when the tiresome

William McAlpine
Howard G. Donaghy
William Crawford
Brian Russell
Samuel McHugh
Tony Fisher
Joseph Skelly
James Taylor
Charles Henning
Letitia McGrory
Graham Lewis
William Smyth
Gareth Wheddon
Wesley Orr
Patrick Duffy
Albert Miles
Robert Batchelor
John McTier
James Burney
Glen Ling
Graham Duggan
Kevin Johnston

1979

Francis Mary Donnelly
Laurence Montgomery

definitions between High art and Low art, as put forth so persuasively since 1939 by Clement Greenberg, are in the process of being replaced. The women artist-organisers discussed in this chapter are visually redefining what it means to honour differences between persons. Their strategies are examples of how to give voice to creative practices which prioritise 'community(ies)-of-care'. In the processes of the creation of symbolic artistic-political ritual in the public arena, these artists are 'rethreading' the fragile, recuperative development work necessary in a society, such as Northern Ireland, emerging from conflict.

As the former High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, and former President[6] of the Republic of Ireland, Mary Robinson, related upon the receipt of a Sydney Peace Prize:

> This has to be the century when women make a difference. Let me pay a special tribute here to…both international and local women's groups – in peace building…the Security Council and the General Assembly [has recently] afforded proper recognition to the leading role of women as actors for peace (2002).

My installation practice is guided by a form of social protest through needlework. New genre, public needlework art, such as those practices described in this chapter, may be a suitable methodology to follow. Such artwork may be considered fraught in its references to the historical (Victorian) socialization of middle-class (settler) women, or, conversely, too closely aligned with performance and the body/intimate processes of the body to be taken seriously politically. Yet, interactive, interdisciplinary collaborations which involve public participants make for imaginative strategies by which to implement and maintain Robinson's edict.

02:09:36

Arthur Lockett
Patrick Mackin
Violet Mackin
Patrick Sills
Steven A. Kirby
James Keenan
Martin McGuigan
Robert McNally
Peter Leslie Woolmore
Richard Sykes
Karel Straub
Gerald Anthony Evans
Airey Neave
Martin Paul McConville
Anthony Dykes
Anthony Thornett
Christopher Shanley
Thomas Armstrong
Michael Cassidy
Noel Alexander Webb
Paul Moore Gray
Robert Lockhart
Richard Alan Baird
Agnes Jean Wallace
Paul Rodgers
Stephen Rumble

Endnotes

[1] Although some men were involved and two were state coordinators, 98% of the ribbon panels were made by women. This is documented in two surveys of *The Ribbon* project by sociologists Gabriella Miller and Carol Cockrell at Texas Woman's University, 1985-6 (Wilcox 1985:18; Pershing 329).

[2] Suzanne Lacy outlines 'new genre public art' in *Mapping the Terrain*, 1995, and Lucy Lippard evaluates the criteria and models of public art in her 1997 book, *The Lure of The Local: Senses of Place in a Multi-centred Society*, p. 24 and p. 286. Architect Miwon Kwon in 'For Hamburg: Public Art and Urban Identities', 2004, describes three paradigms of public art practice in the USA over the last thirty years: (a) art in public places (b) art as public spaces and (c) art in the public interest/'new genre public art'(1).

John Graham

William James Carson

Samuel Gibson

Fredrick John Lutton

Robert Maughan

Norman Prue

Andrew Webster

Jack McClenaghan

David Stanley Wray

George Thomas Surgeoner

David Alan Dunne

David Stinson

Stanley Hanna

02:11:12

Kevin Thompson

Alexander Gore

Joseph McKee

Peadar McElvenna

John Hannigan

Francis Barney Sullivan

John Henry Scott

Joseph James Porter

Alan John McMillan

Michael Kearney

Patrick O'Hanlon

Silvia Crowe

Jim Wright

Chapter 5

Narelle Jubelin: delicate pétit point materiality critiques national identity.

Introduction

My practice spans conceptual minimalism (including text-based art) in sculpture with embroidery. Fabric arts (the umbrella of art textiles, fiber art and/or needlework), until recently, were relegated to folk, outsider art and women's decorative craft practices (Carlisle and Padovani qtd. by Hemmings 2005:32 - 3). The dominant cultural inscription labelled such work trivial. In the late 1960s and 70s second-wave feminism and installation-body art practices used textiles to valorise 'the domestic,' along with the overt sexual-revolution message 'the personal is political.' Pitted in apparent juxtaposition to this performative art movement, based on the West Coast of the U.S.A and in Europe, was New York-based conceptual minimalist public sculpture. Thirty years later, in the 1990s, the international art world became a very different, plural and hybrid place. Women, together with minorities and gays, had entered the art world in significant numbers and, while overt political critique was subsumed by finely-tuned aesthetic and tough intellectual strategies, the modifications to this rarefied world have been radical (Johnson 1990:1).

Australian Narelle Jubelin (b. 1960, currently based in Spain) is an artist whose work became aligned with the international art arena in the 1990s – a particularly defining moment when the High/Low divisions, had begun to dissolve. A 1990 Venice Biennale Aperto[1] representative, Narelle Jubelin's body of work straddles minimalism and conceptualism in painting and pétit point needlework. Her work bears the hallmarks of an acute self-consciousness of context and exemplifies the inter-related concerns of intimacy/politics and public/private memory (Wood Conroy 1993:1) which I investigate in this thesis. Although Jubelin's oeuvre is broader than these considerations[2], these concerns constitute the focus of my DCA creative project *The Irish Linen Memorial*.

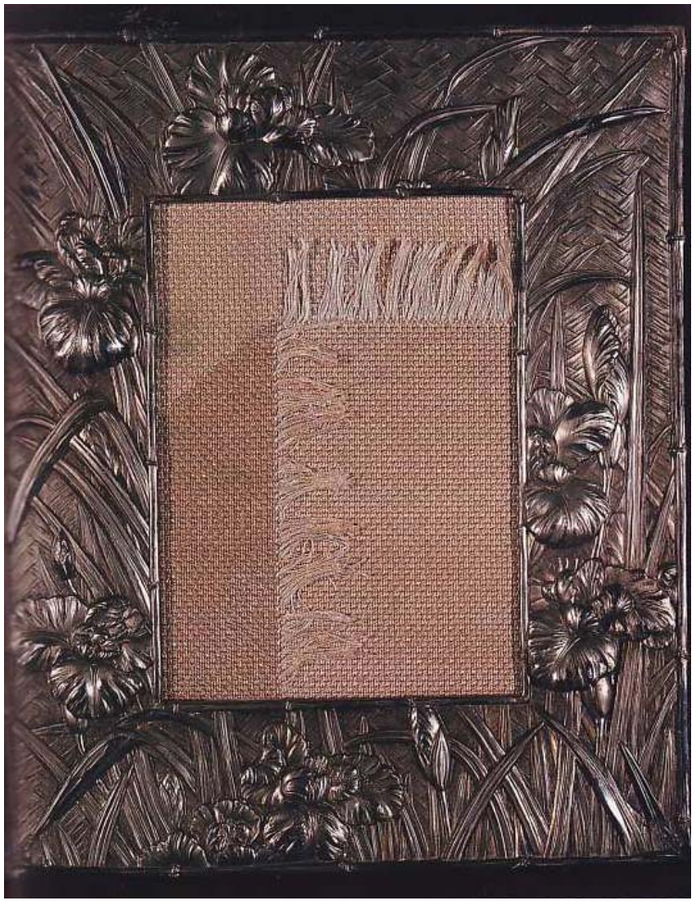


Figure 64: Pétit point *Rendition of Hand Hemmed Tiwi cloth,*
Irish linen, circa. 1974 (made at 'Tiwi Designs' (see image below).
Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities by Wood Conroy et al., p.25

Jubelin's exhibition record from 1990 – 2005 may be seen as representative of this shift. It demonstrates how the historic contribution of feminist concerns has been taken with renewed seriousness in the public cultural arena. Jubelin's work interrogates systems of exhibition practices and the circulation of cultural commodities. In the following case study, I primarily examine her work through her combined painting and pétit point methodology which references historic associations with a woman's art practice, and the contributions of women, patriotic, subversive, rigorous and seductive, to the project of national history and the internationalism of the culture. Then these issues are related to the

construction of my *Irish Linen Memorial* and how Jubelin's practice has influenced mine.

Jubelin as Painter

In the early 1990s, the historically positioned binary-opposition between the decorative arts or crafts, – together with folk or Indigenous art (often traded and circulated as commodities) – versus that of architecture and western-based conceptual art as it influenced sculpture and painting – were still firmly in place. The hybrid inter-relationship between craft or needlework/everyday domestic rituals and the high art disciplines, such as tapestry and sculpture, were only beginning to be theorised by feminist artists and art historians, like Wood Conroy, Jones, Jefferies, and Rowley. Changes in scale and conceptual underpinnings played a marked role in how artwork from these different fields was viewed, critiqued and, therefore, how it would circulate.

The mid-1990s, with collapse of the 'commodity' argument, and increased familiarity with aspects of the discipline of textiles and its various textual language(s), mark a different era (Sharrad, Jones 2000, and Collett, Jones, Sharrad, Wood Conroy 2004). New theoretical approaches allow textiles and sculptural assemblage to be read as text. Indeed, conceptually-based sculpture or painting, since the 1960s, included text or explanatory conceptual notes to accompany an art piece or an installation. Objects, together with the space-in-between the objects are considered 'dialogue' (Wood Conroy 1993: 24 – 27).

Figure 65: Bathurst Island, 'Tiwi Designs' artists and seamstresses, Photo: D Conroy 1974

David Teeney
Marius O'Neill
Paul McCrory
Edward McMaster
Kenneth Stratton
Paul Fryer
John Gerald Davidson
Gerry Melville
David White
William Wright
William Beck
Keith Charles Ritchards
Alan David Ayrton
02:16:00
Simon Evans
James Fowler
Peter S. Grundy
William Wilson
Stanley Hazelton
Sean Martin Cairns

1980

Doreen McGuinness
Simon Bates
Gerald Hardy
Samuel F. Lundy
Alexander Reid

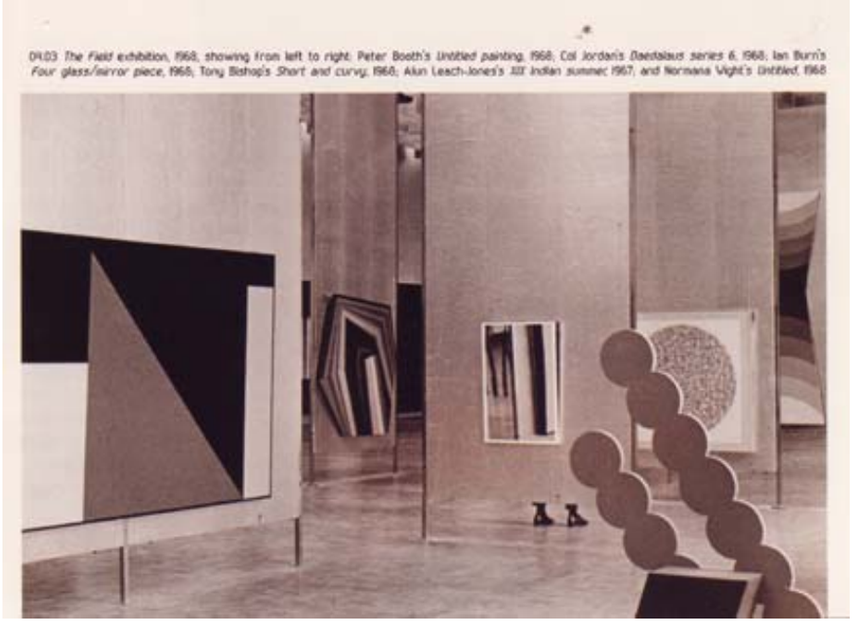


Figure 66: *The Field*, National Gallery of Victoria, 1968
Ann Stephen, 'The Conundrum of A Mirror Piece: On Being able to Look at Ourselves Seeing', *Fieldwork: Australian Art 1968 – 2002* (curators Jason Smith and Charles Green), National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2002.

02:17:36

A seminal Australian exhibition of conceptual New York-style painting, *The Field*, opened at the (then new) National Gallery of Victoria, in August 1968. This show institutionalised this style of artmaking for the next two decades. In the following scenario, published in 2002, theorist Ann Stephen documents Australian conceptual painter-sculptor, Ian Burn, who described how his painting, which explored phenomenological constructs, existed only in a system. Burn had conceived of a descriptive "wall text" alongside his now-infamous 1968 mirror works, *Two glass/mirror piece* and *Four glass/mirror piece* (Stephen 2002:026). In correspondence with the curator, Burn stated:

> Unlike most works, one can look at the mirror pieces for hours without ever gaining any indication of what it is about…The idea is not available visibly in the work it only exists in a system (Burn in conversation with John Stringer 1968 qtd in Stephen 2002:026).

As well, one of the premises of Stephen's contemporary article was to document the 'necessity for language in art' as it emerged after the late-modernist period of the 1960s (ibid.: 026). Significantly, Burn was a painter "deeply suspicious of the visual" (ibid.: 026) and this also relates to one of my subsequent points about tapestry/needlework.

Narelle Jubelin's practice emerged from the central role of painting in the conceptual art movement in Australia. Yet, even in 2002, Jubelin must counteract her identity[3] as a pétit point artist, read: low-brow, tiny, female, needlepoint artist, with her achievements as a large-scale painter, read: male/high art who "mobilises" "rigorous" political issues (see Harper 212-217). Jubelin is based equally across the painting-pétit point divide in her conceptual and formal inquiries. The common link between the two disciplines is in her use of systems or series, like Ian Burn. Jubelin immerses herself in scholarly research, acknowledges site-context and is self-conscious about her role in exhibition schemes. Such interests are emblematic of the intellectual concerns put into practice by many tertiary-educated contemporary artists of all persuasions, myself included.

02:19:12

Jubelin's *Double Sided Wall Painting* (3965 X 9502mm X 3965 X 128mm), 2002, is part of an installation, *Soft Shoulder.* The painting is a reproduced geometric textile design by architect Marion Mahony Griffins[4] in flat acrylic. This piece was presented in Australia as part of the *On Writing. Writing On 1994 – 2002* exhibition of her work, at the John Curtin Gallery in Perth and subsequently delivered in the form of a lecture-video at the University of Wollongong. A photographic 'essay' of the work is published in the post conference proceedings, *Reinventing Textiles: Postcolonialism and Creativity*, Vol. 3 (ed.s Sharrad and Collett, 2004). Jubelin's 'essay' consists of images plus two obtuse footnotes where she refers obliquely to her research. The first footnote is about folds and ambivalences, through a post-structuralist reading of James Joyce by Stephen Heath, 1984. The second is about space and time, read through Elizabeth Grosz's feminist philosophical tract, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space*, MIT Press, 2001. Jubelin thus situated her practice through a video 'aide memoire' of the historic and contemporary

Paul Moan
Robert Carr
Carl McPharland
Bernard Montgomery
William Stephen Magill
Frederick Wilson
William David Livingstone
Victor Morrow
Mary Doherty
George Kerr
Michael Madden
Herbert R. Westmacott
John Harman
Anthony Shields
Roy Hamilton
John Francis Turnly
Richard Latimer
Michael Wright
Miriam Daly
William George Elliott
Terence O'Neill
John Morley
Henry Byrne
Christopher Watson
Michael McCartan
Robert Thompson

role which painting and architecture has played in her oeuvre. Veiled links were created between her interests in conceptual painting, time-based installation practice, a provocative literary reference to Joyce, and the use of a theatrical 'aside' valorising Griffin. Griffin's textile design imagery was enlarged to gargantuan and lengthy proportions, made clear in the large scale of the wall and the number of painters who laboured to create numerous layers, rolled on in a geometric grid with acrylic house-paint. This sequence was recorded in a ten minute video of the event-artefact, subsequently edited by a production crew of three.

Jubelin's work in this genre is similar to my own as I was trained in large-scale sculptural installation work, aligned with architecture. I often consult with architects, as well as journeyman carpenters, professional engineers or project managers in planning and implementing my artwork, which has been primarily sited outdoors. *The Irish Linen Memorial* does not require the kind of technical expertise that has been necessary for other artworks in my practice, yet with each site-contextual installation, I review positioning and place. Often, I make changes to the immediate surroundings or site in preparation for the installation, in order to alter the viewing of the memorial and the kinaesthetic experience for the visitor-viewer. Such devices have included situating *The ILM* atop a long flight of stairs to a foyer where I blacked-out the skylight above the hanging handkerchiefs with a heavy fabric. At the site of another installation the full height of a corridor was used and translucent fabric was positioned over doorways, where light poured through, along the length of the hall. In my final installation, in the Faculty Gallery at the University of Wollongong, I reconstructed the space so that it was inverted upon entering it. This was achieved by frustrating the viewer with placing a blank wall, constructed of panel walls, directly in front of the gallery entrance, which forced a viewer to move along a narrow corridor beyond which then opened to the commemorative space. An additional narrow and dimly-lit corridor was the only way to exit the space. The secretive quality to the reconfigured gallery space added to a quieter, reflective arena in which to honour the dead.

02:20:48

William J. Clarke
James McCarron
Michael Donnelly
Brian M. Brown
James Bell
William Younger
Letitia Younger
Colette Meek
Rodney Patrick McCormick
Frank McGrory
Wallace Allen
Ross Hearst
Ernest Johnston
Robin Shields
James Hewitt
Seamus Quaid
Ronnie Bunting
Noel Lyttle
Owen McQuade
Oliver Walsh
Peter Valente
Thomas Orr
Norman Donaldson
John James Dundas
Colin Quinn
Heather Joan Pollock

Jubelin as Needleworker: 'From Mere to Middle'

Narelle Jubelin exemplifies the current generation of the broadly aware textile artist, whose work is underpinned by a reading of context and text, or scholarly theories. In a series in *Object* magazine in the early 1990s, artist-scholar Diana Wood Conroy, specifically situated conceptual artwork and site-context within discipline of craft[5]. From the mid-1990s onwards, the textiles field has been re-read by post-colonial literary theory incorporating issues of historic trade, ethnic and national identity and the body. This revisioning was a particularly intriguing balancing act in Australia, after celebrating its Bicentenary of British colonisation in 1988. It was a time when issues of national identity questioned margin/centre and where the very founding of the Australian nation met reinvigorated critical dialogue. Artists and theorists from anthropology and archaeology, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, re-interrogated the fabric arts arena, signalling the depth of cross-disciplinary languages between textiles-text. Since the mid-1980s cultural anthropologists have commented on 'the social life of things' (see Appadurai; Tilley) and folklore theorists, informed by feminism, have reiterated how cultural identity is inscribed in the ways people interact with objects (Bronner, 1983, 1986; Jones 1980; Sherzer and Sherzer, 1976; Pershing 1985 & 1997).

02:22:24

It was Jubelin's unusual choice of the minute form of needlework, pétit point, to devalorise monumentality and heroism that captured the attention of the Sydney art world from 1986 to 89. Pétit point is "a technique of tiny, opposed stitches so fine it is almost magical" (Wood Conroy 1993: 23). Pétit point dates from the sixteenth century, and found a fashionable audience in the nineteenth century among upper class women with leisure time (www.needlepoint.com/cs/miniature/index_2.htm qtd. in Harper 217). The miniscule diagonal stitches on canvas, typically of cotton, silk or split wool, are invisible to the eye which, unexpectedly, negates the incredibly laborious and painstaking needlework process. Jubelin then pays further attention to presentation – choosing individual, 'culturally inquisitive' frames for each item. When Jubelin developed and fabricated her radical acts of juxtapositioning, variously entitled *Hi(s)story: A Small*

Hugh McGinn

William Burns

William Stevenson

1981

Lindsay G. McDougall

Ivan Toombs

Maurice Gilvarry

Christopher Shenton

Sir Norman Stronge

James Stronge

Philip Barker

Charles W. Lewis

Alexander Scott

David Samuel Mongomery

Patrick Gerard Trainor

James Burns

Gerry Roland

Patrick Liam McNally

John Smith

Paul Blake

Kenneth J. Acheson

Joanne Mathers

Jack Donnelly

James Gary English

James William Brown

Reminder, The Crossing, 1987, Second Glance (At 'The Coming Man') Australia, 1988-89 – finely crafted pétit points of historic monuments, heroes or momentous events (pioneers, early settlement photographs, or mythic personages), Jubelin was also making clever, critical political commentary about nation. This shrewd artistic strategy gained her invitation to exhibit at the Aperto pavilion at the Venice Biennale 1990.

In the early 1990s the use of needlework in High Art circles constituted a significant subversion and heresy. Practitioner-researchers have been the better informed commentators on this movement in the art world over the past fifteen years. Such persons include literary theorist and amateur embroiderer/knitter, Dorothy Jones; European-trained traditional Gobelin[6] tapestry weavers, Diana Wood Conroy and Kay Lawrence of Australia; Janis Jefferies of Great Britain, other weavers in Poland/Eastern Europe, together with Ruth Scheuing and Barbara Layne in Canada. These artists-theorists combined their technical knowledge of tapestry weaving with theoretical positioning from post-structural feminism and post-colonialism, grounded by their personal journeys of politicization as female artists[7]. At conferences and exhibitions facilitated by the post-1976 increased frequency of air travel and post-1996 high-speed internet communication/email revolution, these scholar-artists began a deeper intellectual dialogue which produced a revised central platform for their voices.

With tapestry weaving as their base, these practitioners were attentively cognizant and alert to the seemingly unusual and vociferous emergence of textiles[8] as 'sign' in contemporary art in the 1990s and the new millennium[9]. The artists were grounded in an awareness of the unprejudiced prestigious cultural role that tapestry once held (unlike the history of textiles, aligned with domesticity and women – see Parker 1984), especially in Europe[10]. Tapestry weaving and display had been a central transmitter of personal or state power, and the same medium held long historical associations with subversive critical comment, including the inhabitation of the grotesque (Wood Conroy 1994:3 and 13). These artists reinvigorated socio-political critique and made new conceptual and

feminist connections through a wide range of the fibre arts[11]. Fabric arts metaphors, particularly knitting and quilting abounded in political literature and weaver-theorists collaborated with colleagues from the discipline of literature (Collett, Jones, Sharrad). The new ideas that circulated under the umbrella of fabrics/textiles, were about:

1980s: the private, including 'semiotic textiles' and 'hairy monsters', and public narrative tapestry (Wood Conroy 1995);

1990s: colonialism, the global trade of objects, migration/displacement, identity/the body, Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations (For example, the 2001-4 Australian projects entitled, *Fabric(ation)s of the Postcolonial* and *Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities*);

Late 1990s: metaphors about interconnectedness in an emerging online (yet depersonalised) world; the rapidity of lifestyle in an age of high technology versus time-consuming processes and more personal labour; and

Current: digital communication systems, including new virtual 'haptic' tactile technologies and developments in intelligent polymer materials.

With such fresh underpinnings, textiles have moved from 'mere' to middle in recent years. Textiles have been shown to have a more recognizable agenda and irreplaceable applicability. During the same period, the false dichotomies of High and Low art were equalised, just as the distinct gender-based connotations of public/private have begun to dissolve, underpinned by feminist scholarship in sociology, philosophy and history (Rowley, Smith, Butler, Scott among others).

Texts from the edge: tapestry and identity in Australia co-curated by Marie Cook, Kay Lawrence and Diana Wood Conroy, 1993, illustrates that movement (or edge) from 'mere' to middle. In this exhibition, artists worked within the high art of Gobelin strict weaving technique and the traditional tapestry content-imagery of symbolic claims to political power. This historic content was juxtaposed with the subversion of histories,

autobiographical journeys and/or intimately observed landscapes. The combination articulates an edge, where the woven symbols of "the private imagination comes to stand for the wider sphere of national identity" (1993:4). Kay Lawrence's weaving illustrates this decade long trajectory in which feminist weavers reinvigorated the ancient public art of tapestry with personal women's issues to assert their claim to the public arena and refuse their erasure as meaningful:

> In a series of memorable works over ten years Kay Lawrence's tapestry has moved through a graphic outwardness in exploring images of national identity, as in her design for the monumental embroidery in Parliament House, Canberra in 1988, to private realms of subjectivity. A woman may identify herself with her house, (tapestry *House, self*) or as in this work, the mother has become the house for the child... (Wood Conroy 1994:13).

In the same period, yet in a very different and quiet way, Narelle Jubelin's work has a similar resonance to Lawrence. Not in Gobelin tapestry, but in an equivalent ancient art and skilled narrative form, pétit point, Jubelin reinscribes contemporary meanings and associations. What Conroy, Jefferies and Lawrence position in more direct narrative form, Jubelin delicately couches in the genre of a Duchampian intellectual guessing game or detective novel (Engberg 11;20;23). Yet, whatever the method of transcription, one of the messages is that women's participation in the public life of the state is still grotesquely fearful and unnameable. As Sidonie Smith states, "The [female] body categorised as abnormal becomes associated with those forces threatening the stability of the body politic." (Smith 1993:130). Jubelin's feminist voice critiques women's absence from the national social body through her choice of imagery, her descriptive titles, her careful consideration of frames, positioning of the assemblages, and the parameters of the installation space.

Jubelin creates a spatial dialogue between the dis-separate, framed minature embroideries garnered from photographs or objects she researches. In Jubelin's 1992 exhibit, *Dead Slow*, her small framed pétit

02:27:12

points were dwarfed by the large open gallery space which she mediated with a built stucco-rendered wall. *Dead Slow* refers to the last category before the command of 'Stop' on the great ocean trading liners. One company, such as the P & O, would pause in Australia's harbour, Sydney, en route to India, Scotland and Japan (Wood Conroy 1993: 26). Jubelin positioned sculptural objects and curiosities, such as an un-attributed Indigenous mask for the tourist market, alongside the pétit points and descriptive texts detailing the linen embroidery processes from *The Volume of Encyclopedia of Needlework* c. 1900. The exhibit included a May Day photograph, c. 1937, two 'fin-de siecle' wood-chip chairs and seven nineteenth century *Gujarat* hand-cut wooden printing blocks. The pétit point renditions were: *The Call of the Homeland*, a collection of English Verse reinterpreted as 'on design no. 1147, c. 1909 for pressed steel sheets in a stonework pattern, aluminium strip frame' and a replica of a map of Australia with the World War II patriotic women's motto "Our Bit" (Stephen 1992:16). In preparation for this exhibition, Jubelin consulted Wood Conroy[12] and created two artworks based on their dialogue.

02:28:48

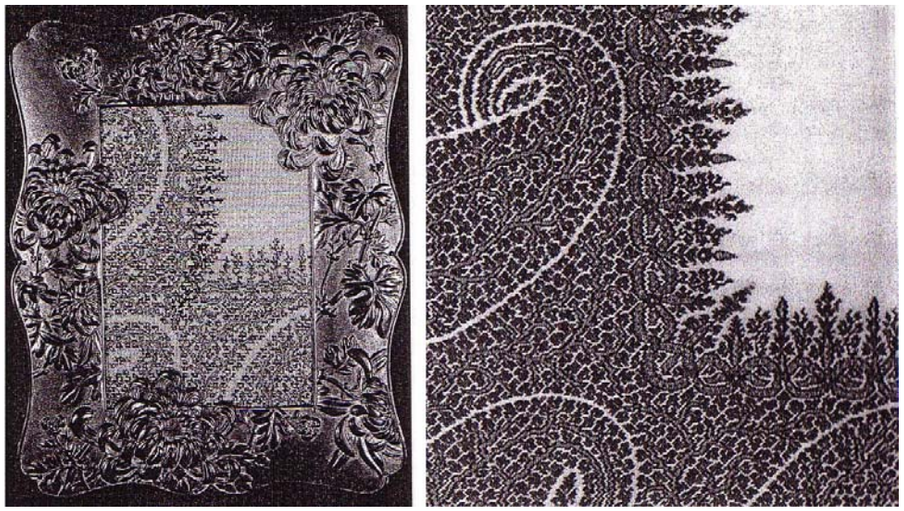


Figure 67: framed *Pétit Point on linen* (above)
Rendition of Woven Cloth: Paisley Shawl, circa. 1870.(below)

The items included the corner *Rendition of Woven Cloth: Paisley Shawl circa 1870s* and the corner *Rendition of a Hand-Hemmed Tiwi Cloth - Irish Linen circa 1974*. Jubelin framed both in rather weighty nineteenth century

Julian Patrick Connolly
Kenneth Howarth
Edward Patrick Brogan
Arthur James Bettice
Trevor Foster
Charles Neville
Cecil Graham
Rev Robert Bradford
Kenneth Campbell
Thomas McNulty
Peadar Fagan
Silas Lyttle
Albert Beacom
James McClintock
John McKeegan
Stephen Murphy
William Coulter
Sean Murphy

1982

Samuel Pollock
Patrick Reynolds
Stephen Carleton
Deborah Ann Rowe
John Torbett
Robert Mitchell

Japanese metal frames. The entire result constituted a careful and systematic management of all the elements, which needed to be read/viewed as a whole to be fully comprehended and appreciated. *Dead Slow* was exhibited on two continents in 1992, at The Centre of Contemporary Art in Glasgow, Scotland and at the Sydney Biennale in Australia. As well as being a serious needleworker of the minutest scale, Narelle Jubelin is a gracefully skilled practitioner of spatial arrangements which assist, and perhaps frustrate, her viewers in making conceptual links about both tragic and positive aspects of colonialist legacies.

Details of Jubelin's installation, the pétit point creations from the *Dead Slow,* were exhibited again in 2004 in a travelling group show, *Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities*, in Australia. This time the context comprised of highly prized actual historic artefacts from the Macleay Museum and The Australian Museum, The South Australian and the National Archives of Canada, among others. The juxtapositions created different and updated postcolonial associations. The proximity of the other objects-artefacts, together with literary commentary, provided a reinvigorated post-millennium framework and discourse. About the art exhibition, *Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities*, political-literary theorist Paul Sharrad stated that Jubelin:

> [H]ighlights the reverberations that the immense journeys of empire had on private lives and intimate objects. The focussed intensity of the embroidery process mirrors her close scrutiny of the systems of trade and its hierarchies (2004:24).

The beading practice used by Myre is a traditional Iroquois nation art form with lengths of stringed wampum (porcupine quill, shell bead or glass bead with sinew). It is a form of political treaty, later made into the form of a belt. Myre's work is in acrylic bead and imitation sinew, and rests within aluminium frames.

Anne Collett desribes Myre's work as referring directly to "remembrance of the contractual agreement between nations" and "the stilled moment of disjuncture and rupture felt 'on contact' [between European settlers in Canada and Indigenous peoples]. It is a sculpted history of Red/White relations, a portrait of divided and damaged national community, and a poignant self-portrait of the suffering of the children of mixed descent" (Collett 2004: 50 – 51).

People have become familiar with Indigenous beading from North America through the tourist trade of beaded and embroidered moccasins.

Figure 68: Information about Nadia Myre and Wampum

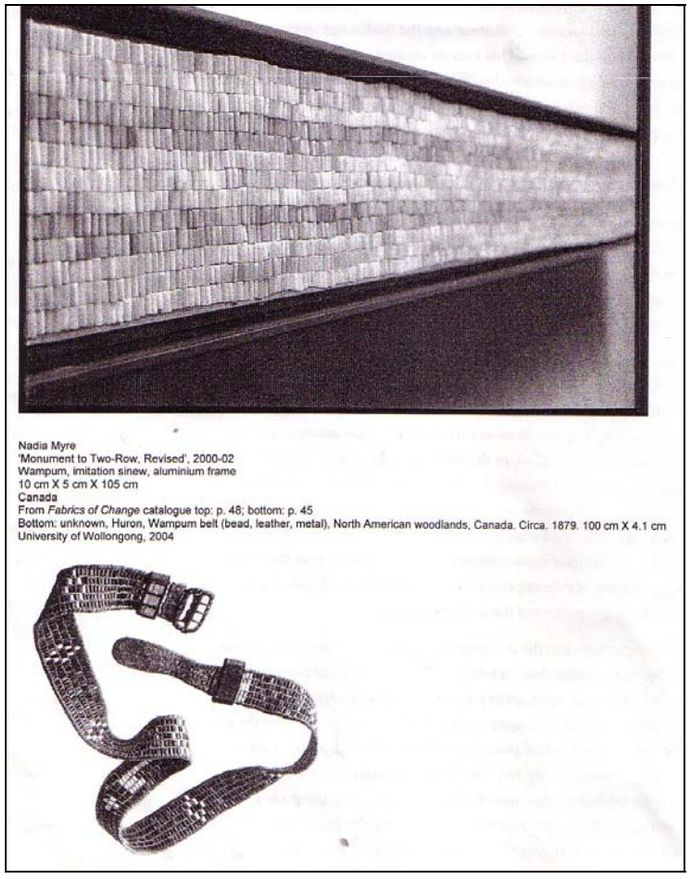


Figure 69: Nadia Myre, *Monument to Two-Row, Revised*, 2000-02. unknown, Huron, Canada, Wampum belt, circa. 1879 (bottom). *Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities* by Wood Conroy et al. p.45 & 48.

Emerging Canadian artist, Nadia Myre, of First Nations, Algonkin and French-Canadian heritage also exhibited two works. Entitled *Monument to Two-Row*, *Revised* and *Indian Act*, Myre's work, like Jubelin's, is based in both large-scale conceptual painting as well as in a diminutive, minute practice of beading, (a needlework artform with traditional origins).

I am interested in the keen attention Jubelin brings to the placement, hanging or installation of her artwork, as well as her small-scale embroidery/needlework practice which garners an empathetic

response from a gallery viewer. The viewer is also implicated in the reading of the work. Such a proposition may entice a reader-viewer into an engagement with loss, guilt or the trauma endured by others in a settler society. In a divisive settler society such as Northern Ireland. It is crucial that an artist be sensitive in presenting politically delicate issues and still achieve an engaged readership/audience. Therefore, Jubelin's work practice has informed my own oeuvre, albeit my artwork is about another place, Northern Ireland, a country also on the periphery.

Jubelin and Touch

How Jubelin engages persons through her work is through its tactility, together with certain phenomenological strategies inherent in conceptual minimalist painting. Many theorists, such as Alison Ferris and Susan Stewart USA, Sue Rowley, Australia, and Janis Jefferies, Britain, report how the sense of intimate touch, connected with the body, is crucial to textiles theorising, such as in the statement, "Memories are material in that the body carries them somatically" (Stewart 17 – 18). Rowley states:

> An object that references or invites physical handling or touch constitutes a particular way of knowing, which…has intrinsic to it an articulation of a deeper, underlying critique of Enlightenment assumptions about knowledge, truth and rationality (Rowley 182 qtd. in Ferris 42).

The needlework process is literally incomprehensible to the visual sense and difficult for the conceptual mind to consider without grasping other kinetic knowledge. This is why an artist may use an exhibition strategy of displaying the 'how-to' dynamics of the hand-crafting[13] process itself. Jubelin applies the intricate technique of pétit point to an image of a reproduced photograph or artefact for her chosen subject matter[14]. The painstakingly slow action of the hand, in order to reproduce the photograph or artefact, therefore, reproduces a reproduction. Although outside the concerns of this exegesis, this curious fact intersects with current research based in performative practice and memory studies theory[15] (see Phelan 2003).

02:33:36

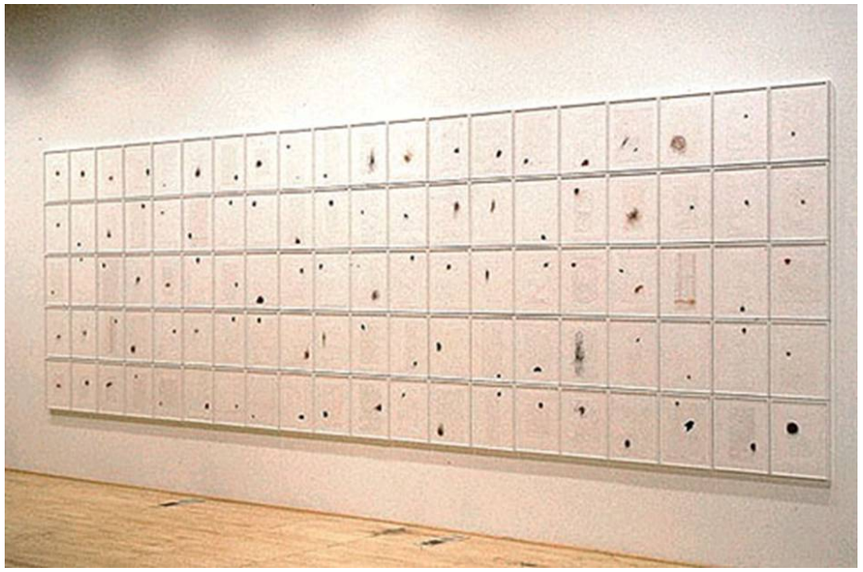


Figure 70: 'Chronicle of Days', Sewn hair on napkins, artist: Anne Wilson.

The delicate materiality of Chicago-based needlework artist, Anne Wilson, mirrors Jubelin's practice in pétit point as Wilson sews with hair:

02:35:12

> In other words, touch, or even the invitation to touch, is iconoclastic because it is the symbolic act that can breach the carefully constructed gap between the object (the physical) and the mind (Ferris ibid.).

Nineteenth century political theorist, Karl Marx, brought attention to the importance of the five senses, the economics of labour, the history of human accomplishment and the senses as storehouses of 'material memories' (Marx 1844 qtd. in Ferris 39). The laborious, time-consuming aspect of needlework, such as pétit point, or sewing with hair, reads an aspect of time, remembrance and repeated references of hand-to-body because of the infinitesimal, repétitive stitches, worked with an almost invisibly fine thread, of the needle-artwork.

It is vital to the reading of a textiles art object that there is an awareness of personal bodily memory or a perceived knowledge (empathetic reading) of the time spent in the crafting process, which makes up the whole. Wood Conroy speaks about Jubelin's work in terms of felt

words such as intense, poignant, intricate, acute, piquant, passionate and 'intimately unsettling' (1993:24-27). Jubelin's strategy of an arresting "eye-wateringly detailed" technical craft, pétit point (Harper 217), when combined with tactical oeuvres which are spatial and strategically systematic – offer deeply reflective comment on the circulation of the everyday in global terms from the colonial period to the post-colonial.

Conclusion

Jubelin's longevity in an international conceptual art world has been her unusual "mobilization" of textiles in socio-political critiques of culture and cultural consumption (Harper 2003:215; 217). However, as Linda Pershing illuminated in her 1999 research on embroidery and public realm, the serious reception of a needlework/politics intersection, remains ambiguous. British critic, Catherine Harper, in documenting Jubelin's personal artistic narrative, exemplifies the strength of Jubelin's lingering anxiety with the binary opposition of the historically-gendered connotations behind petit point, and the male privileged position of a painting practice:

> [U]nnecessarily embroiled in the specifics of well-versed arguments…perhaps she dwells on the dilemma of deeming "skilled stitcher" and "high art practitioner" to be mutually exclusive terms (Harper 2003:213).

Writing in 2000, Sharrad, literary critic, has been at the forefront of re-positioning how textiles, cloth and their crafting are read, including as socio-political documents and signifiers:

> While culture itself can now be taken as a text open to readings, the objects that circulate within and help produce culture, though they carry complex sets of meanings, often seem to embody something different from and resistant to linguistic/written text and textual practices.
>
> This, of course, is in part, an illusion. Given the linguistic origins of "text" in notions of weaving, cloth and fabric arts

> supply a test case for the overlap and separateness of material and textual cultures. From Ancient Greece and India alike, perpetuated into metaphors of modern nationhood (spinning a yarn, the social fabric, etcetera), metaphors of textiles and texts persist to the point of cliché.
>
> [C]loth provides us with a way of looking again at literary texts and seeing through these texts to social, historical and economic conditions. These elements lie behind commonly debated abstract themes such as "postcoloniality" or "national identity" and shape the ways in which we are able to discuss such issues (2).

In 2005, the art world climate has become accustomed to the subversive and heretical methodologies inherent in the use of needlework, textiles metaphors and/or tapestry weaving strategies,[16] as opposed to when Jubelin began exhibiting in the international art arena in 1990. Harper further reflects on Jubelin's work as feminine, having a compelling affective value and in being conveniently portable (2003:212-213 & 217). Jubelin remains within an historically female textiles tradition whereby she engages a seemingly inoffensive artistic process to make highly politicised statements about nationhood or, in her more recent work, feminist statements which are unabashedly seductive. The difference in 2005, as opposed to a needleworker practising a hundred years ago, is that Jubelin's career sits squarely atop the advantage of the achievement of one hundred years of feminist activism and theoretical developments. Therefore, her powerful creative statements are analysed seriously, circulate internationally and are made thoroughly public. Jubelin is a part of her own history-in-the-making. As such, the international acceptance, since the early 1990s, of Jubelin's needlework-based oeuvre marks a shift from crafted textiles as 'fraught territory' (for easily-understood consideration in the greater art-world) to simply another text-based conceptual strategy, albeit with specifically feminine/feminist connotations. Yet, her acute self-consciousness of her newly-acquired position, (Harper 2003:213;216)), is a reminder of the trying times that her

02:38:24

balancing act, between painting and petit, point has required in her twenty-year career, and the still-fragile parallel developments in feminist and hybrid art practices. My *Irish Linen Memorial* relies on the broad readership that Jubelin has garnered for interdisciplinary art, even whilst the fit of 'mere' textiles to painting or sculpture, as 'the centre', remains teasingly ambiguous.

Endnotes

[1] The Aperto section contains international surveys, as opposed to regional particularities (such as The Australian Pavilion).

[2] Examples of developments in her work since 1997 are: a bleached printed fabric curtain in collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, USA, referencing the protagonist 'Penelope' in James Joyce's *Ulysses*; research into the writer-diarist Anäis Nin, the shamed USA novelist, William Issac Thomas, or the contributions to the International Style in Architecture by interior designer, Lilly Reich, or architect Marion Mahony Griffins' *The Magic of America*.

[3] Narelle Jubelin's personal narrative is based on her original training as a formalist painter. "She is sensitive to the cultural impulses that frame the "fussy stuff" – the "little labours of crafty making" – as "lower" than conceptual, cool, considered canvas and its contents" (Harper 2003: 213; 216). In the footnotes to Harper's article, she states that Jubelin went out of her way to indicate, several times, that her work circulates in systems of art (rather than craft) production – public spaces, commercial art galleries.

The stigma of 'second-class' or 'of marginal importance' lingers in associations with the label of 'textile artist' over, for example, 'an installation artist/sculptor/painter' and this has implications for one's mainstream avant-garde or international arts career. International interdisciplinary conferences, such as *The Space Between*, Curtin University of Technology, 2002, are changing this limited perception.

Narelle Jubelin's position, while respectful of the tradition of needlework and women's various contributions to history in her work, is not overtly feminist.

[4] This is specifically a textile design used for a patterned fireplace in the 1913 Blyth House, Iowa, USA. Marion Mahony Griffins was the partner-collaborator of Walter Burley Griffins whose contribution to modernist, utopian architecture in the USA, India and Australia is well-documented. Specifically, Marion Mahony Griffins influenced Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park Illinois studio design through her four volume book, *The Magic of America*.

[5] The following articles constitute Diana Wood Conroy's series in *Object*: 'Tapestry: Signs and History', Spring 1992; 'Outside Looking in: Textiles and Marginality', Autumn 1992, 'Intimacy and Politics' which included a section on Narelle Jubelin, in Autumn 1993 and 'Solvig Baas Becking: a Sense of Infinite Order' March 1994.

[6] Strict Gobelin flat woven technique is woven in discontinuing wefts that build up blocks of the design between the selvedges of the weaving. Lengthy apprenticeships are required to learn tapestry. Before 1976 with the establishment of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, Australian weavers found training in the United Kingdom or Europe. (Wood Conroy 1994:2)

[7] Although not comparable to the higher visibility and financial rewards of male painters or sculptors of the same era, these female artists had become influential published scholars, internationally exhibiting artists and professors/administrative managers at art schools around the globe.

[8] both semiotic (uncrafted) textiles and skilled narrative weaving or needlework (see Wood Conroy

1995).

[9] Long associated with architecture, and once a preserve of male practitioners (such as in Northern England or India). Tapestry is also linked with painting and sculpture and it has been the prerogative of modernist painters to have technicians weave from their cartoons.

[10] see The Bayeux Tapestry telling the story of the Battle of Hastings 1066.

[11] Their feminism was based in the mid-1980s post-structuralist wave of feminism, influenced by French feminists Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva.

[12] Wood Conroy's academic research background, based in material culture, and cross-disciplinary training as an archaeologist/cultural anthropologist influenced Jubelin.

[13] The elaborate crafting process may or may not be grasped by a viewer of the artwork, due to the fact that needlework represents a historically gendered female discipline and, therefore, has been somewhat invisible and erased. An attitude of disrespect and dismissal to gendered activity, such as needlework, is increasingly obvious when it remains primarily in the hands of the women living in the developing world. Persons of both genders who view such artwork seem to more easily grasp an understanding of the 'man-hours' needed, for example, in the similarly laborious, but large-scale and visible, process of constructing a building.

[14] In Narelle Jubelin's exhibition, *Soft Shoulder*, some of the pétit points are text transcriptions from selections of Marion Mahony Griffin's book *The Magic of America*.

[15] Peggy Phelan theorises about memory, amnesia and our current culture of digital discards and endless reproductions. Her feminist work is often based on photographic and/or installation artists; she deals with trauma and the recent events of terrorism, especially in USA politics. Phelan gave a lecture and workshop at the University of Wollongong in 2004.

[16] For example, The Saatchi Collection of British Young Artists' exhibited *Sensation*, at the Royal Academy, 1997; The Serpentine Gallery, London, exhibited *Loose Threads*, 1998. There have also been many theoretical publications and scholarly essays in art magazines about textiles art in the same period.

Figure 71: Narelle Jubelin of a textiles design by Marion Mahony Griffin. acrylic wall paint in *Reinventing Textiles: Postcolonialism and Creativity* Vol. 3, Paul Sharrad and Anne Collett (eds),Telos Art Publishing, Bristol, 2004.

Henry Hogan
Declan Martin
Paul Douglas Oram
Thomas Alexander Loughlin
Herbert Burrows
William McConnell
David Mongomery
Ronald A. Funston
David Ross
Mary Travers
Trevor May
Margaret Whyte
Michael W. Dawson
Ivan Hillen
John George Seamus Patrick Fitzsimmons
Trevor George Elliott
Richard Quigley
Neil Clark
Thomas McGeary
Noel James Johnston
Thomas Henry Agar
Robert Huggins
William Neville Gray

Chapter 6

Richard Serra: site-conscious sculpture place-makes the chiasma of a national public site

Introduction

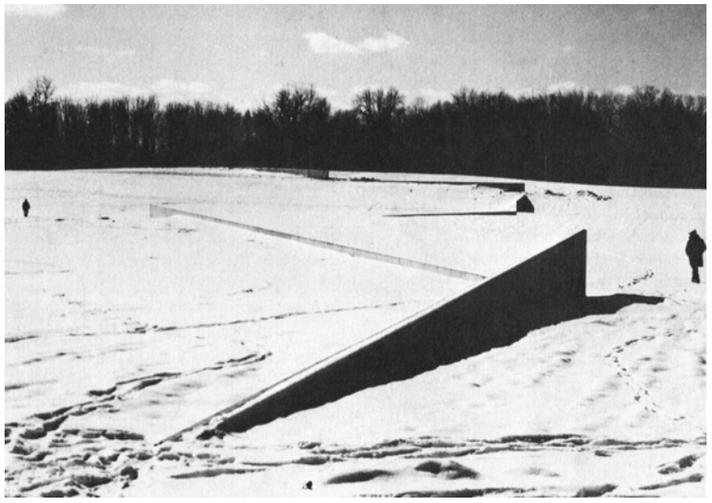


Figure 72: Richard Serra , Shift, 1970-72.
all images from *Richard Serra/Sculpture,* (ed. R. Krauss), The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1986.

In examining the work of Richard Serra, b.1939, I continue to develop issues examined in Jubelin's art. Serra is an internationally renowned sculptor who came to prominence in the conceptual minimalist school of materialist, site-conscious sculpture, from the mid-sixties to the present. His large-scale, outdoor, industrial sculpture stands in marked contrast to Jubelin's interior installations and extremely miniature handiwork. I begin with a descriptive analysis of a particularly notorious site-specific artwork by Richard Serra entitled *Tilted Arc*, located on Federal Plaza, New York City from 1979-89. As in the previous studies, my focus remains on the intersection between intimacy and the socio-political conditions of site, and the metaphoric crossover of the private and the public. Such implications are examined through the materialist concerns of his large-scale public sculpture. Serra's utilitarian material concerns, albeit in steel, an

historically-positioned male sculptural substance (rolled and rectangular, which references the nineteenth century USA assembly line) – may be compared to my utilitarian needlework and plain linen squares of cloth, (bolts of fabric from a Northern Irish twentieth-century industrial loom). The difference between curved sheets of steel and curved bolts of fabric, for the purposes of this exegesis, is that steel is very weighty, requiring large-scale machinery to move a sculpture into position, principally by men, and linen is lightweight using minimal alternative technical parameters to install it by – work most often done by women.

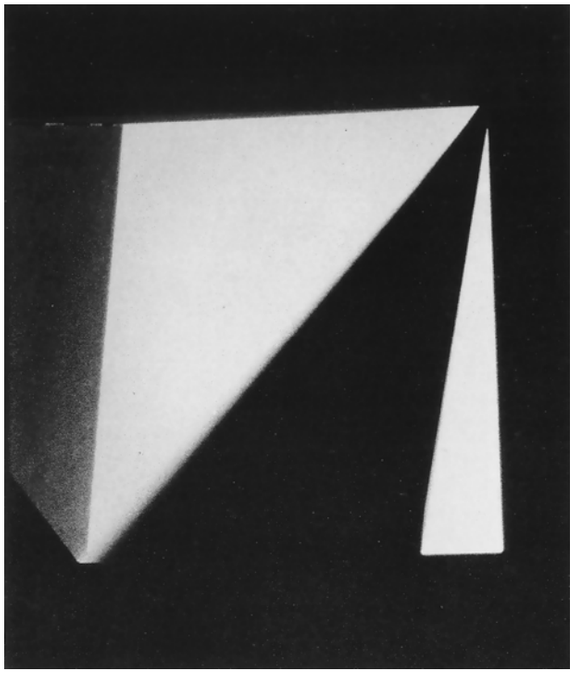


Figure 73: Richard Serra, view from interior of *Slat*, 1980-84.

Serra uses steel as a straightforward substance, without decoration, in order to reference space, spatial parameters and actions through and in space. The weighty steel is a means to fixate the viewer-reader on the absolute quality of perception of space in and around his outdoor installations. Serra plays on the juxtaposition between the erect steel (sometimes Serra used other materials such as vulcanised rubber) and the forces of gravity by removing any obvious, visible use of an aggregate or

02:44:48

Stephen Anderson
Hugh Gallagher
David Chambers
Jimmy Campbell
Paul McCann
Michael William Todd
Tony McAtarsney
William Alfred Price
Heather Kerrigan
Norman McKinley
Brian McNally
Benjamin Redfern
Brendan Watters
Frank Hand
Sean Edward Downes
Malcolm Alexander White
William McDonald
Malcolm Cullen
Robert D. Bennett
Michael Devine
Melvin Simpson
Sir Anthony Berry
Roberta Wakeham
Jeanne Shattock
Eric Taylor
Peter Gallimore

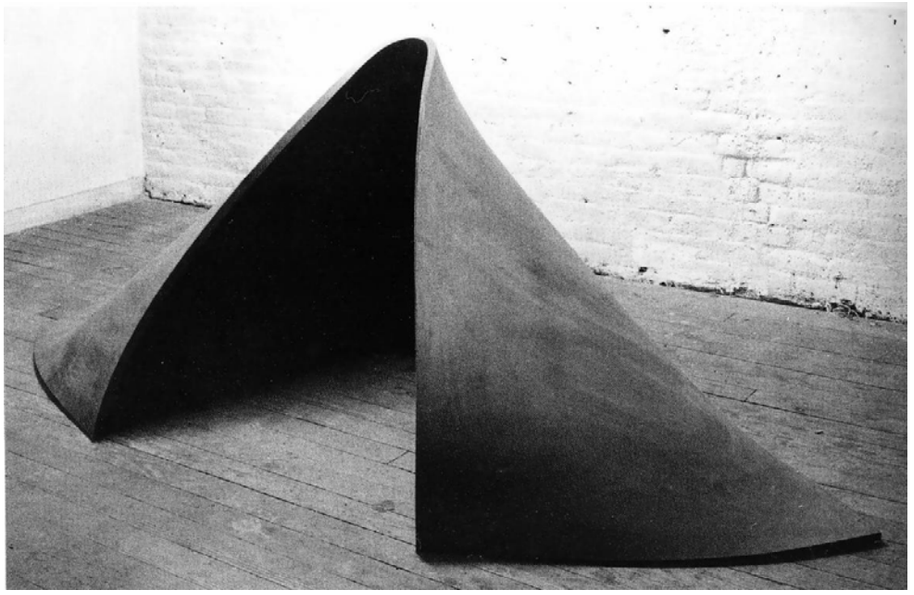


Figure 74: Richard Serra, *To Lift*, 1967.

armature which might hold the artwork into position. His work is less about steel; most importantly, it is about the transition between states of being, as can be seen in his early films. My *ILM*, while first and foremost commemorative, is also very much about that moment of perception when persons of different cultural-ethnic backgrounds, Northern Irish Protestant and Northern Irish Catholic encounter one another. My creative project has been an inquiry into the delicate balance of interaction between deeply grieving persons on *either* side of a static and embedded political divide. Serra's *Tilted Arc*, an extremely heavy, static 'wall/divide' in a large, empty courtyard, is a piece which instilled fear and terror in part, because of the historic connotation of steel with armament and weaponry. Dread and horror also may be unwittingly produced through site-specific circumstances. A controversial memorial, if situated in a public space in Northern Ireland, which dares to consider the possibility of reconciliation, directly inculcates a similarly deep-seated sense of terror and even hatred. Although such an outcome would run counter to my purpose in creating the memorial, it is something I must consider, given the on-going political

02:46:24

Frederick G. Jackson

Timothy Utteridge

Harry Muldoon

Patrick Morrissey

Muriel Maclean

Patrick Brady

William Robert McLoughlin

Antoin Mac Geolla Bhride

Alistair Slater

Kieran Fleming

William Fleming

Daniel Doherty

Sean McIlvenna

1985

Paul Kelly

James Graham

Gerard Logue

Patrick Kerr

Mark Rosborough

Frank Murphy

Kevin Patrick Coyle

Charles Breslin

Michael Devine

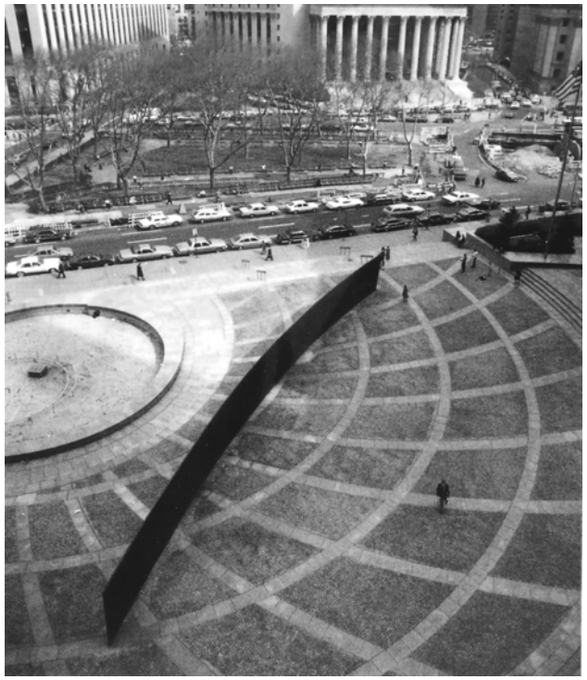


Figure 75: Richard Serra, *Tilted Arc,* 1981.

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situation in Northern Ireland. Serra's *Tilted Arc,* constructed through 'banal' handling of material and a specifically sited architectural positioning, unintentionally sparked incredible controversy in the markedly conservative era of the mid-1980s. Serra's subsequent lengthy court case, (although not recounted in this chapter), is important to analyse, and to learn from, if one is to work artistically in the so-called public (read: privatised, government-sanctioned) realm – especially regarding spatial concerns relating to questions of 'nationalism'. Although my work is created in a very different setting and era, public artists must accommodate various types of positions, specifically those which exist in the 'in-between space' where deeply diverse views, opinions and beliefs are held by particular persons or groups.

Serra's acutely developed sensitivity is perhaps related to his cross-cultural background: his father was Spanish and his mother Jewish. His risk-taking sense of courage is significant as seen in his use of mammoth slabs of steel and his directly authoritative manipulation of curved or torqued utilitarian 'walls' in space. Serra came to prominence in the late

1960s, a time when the radical individuality of the artist, usually male, was held in high esteem and idealised as a genius. In 2005, the heoric view of the artist is no longer relevant; it seems the myth pettered out along with *Tilted Arc*'s removal, 1989. The 1990s and the millennium marked new directions. The artist must tread more carefully if he/she wishes to create works that are shockingly intimate in exposing politically divisive issues publicly. In their conceptual rhetoric, artists are wise to use more subtle tactics and seem more self-effacing than Serra. As the 'artist-as-individual' has been increasingly marginalised in a conservative climate, the artistic voices of female and minority artists have gained ground. Since the early 1990s, the role of the artist has changed; assuming the mantle of a declarative, authoritative voice, as a professional artist, must be gained through the more traditional route of higher education. Yet, artists and their works continue to inspire fear, loathing, mockery and/or derision. For *Tilted Arc* to be removed called into question the legal parameters an artist relinquishes when working in the public sphere. Serra's self-righteousness and articulateness regarding his position was an example of his hitherto male privilege as an artist. The *Tilted Arc* controversy was a uniquely peculiar incident full of interesting hypocrises.

02:49:36

This chapter positions *Tilted Arc* as a type of monument[1] following the work of James E. Young, the influential theorist of the holocaust memory/counter-memory. According to Young, a monument may reflect "both its socio-historical and aesthetic context," and can include "ironic and self-effacing conceptual installations that mark the national ambivalence and uncertainty of late twentieth-century postmodernism" (2002:1). This statement readily applies to Serra's *Tilted Arc* on Federal Plaza, which was commissioned as a sculptural landmark by the General Services Administration (GSA) of the United States government in 1979 under President Jimmy Carter's administration, and in an ironic twist, was removed by the very same agency, 1989, under President Ronald Reagan.

An interrogation of a chiasma "relationship of crossing and exchange" (Krauss 1986:33) has been an on-going area of sculptural investigation in Serra's body of work. This chapter centres on Serra's

Gary Smyth
Roy McAlpine
Willis Agnew
William Robert Gilliland
Charles English
James Michael McCann
Seamus McAvoy
Daniel Mallon
Kieran Murray
Martin Vance
Catherine Mahon
Gerard Mahon
James Burnette
Martin Patten
Damien McCrory
Kevin McPolin
David Hanson
Robert F. Boyd
Kurt Konig
Gordon Hanna
Edward Joseph Taggart
George Gilliland
William James Clements

1986

James McCandless

spatial concerns – his materialist constructs, as exemplified in *Tilted Arc*. A chiasma, from the Greek khasma, cross-piece, means to mark with the shape of an X. In anatomy, chiasma means an intersection of nerves. Contemporary art critic and historian of abstract sculpture, Rosalind E. Krauss (U.S.A), specifically used the word chiasma in her catalogue essay about Richard Serra's body of work for his retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1986. Krauss proposed that chiasma:

> …can be used linguistically to chart the reflexive crossovers between words, or it can be used to describe a spatial transivity, as in the mutual interaction of seer and seen – their activity as they exchange positions through visual space, each to leave a mark on the other. By the 1970s this formal loop, this chiasmatic trajectory, became the subject of much of Serra's work. It is an abstract subject most often given visual form by correspondingly "abstract" elements…it is a subject one can continue to experience abstractly, syntactically, even when the medium through which is it expressed is…a real, functional, functioning object, an industrial object, for example (1986:33).

Krauss' analysis of Serra's work placed his art at the vanguard of the radical conceptual, minimalist site-specific genre, which began in the mid-1960s. Krauss stated that this oeuvre was developed through the arrangement of forms in space, overtly materialist concerns, and is explained through phenomenology and structural linguistics. She was interested particularly in how this type of sculpture inhabited "the realm of the transitive verb," (1977:275) and was located "at the juncture between stillness and motion, time arrested and time passing" (1977:5).

Tilted Arc, with its siting on Federal Plaza, New York City, highlights the chiasmatic interchange of pedestrians through the space of a national plaza. It was a sculpture which 'place-maked' (Crimp 1985:52) the transverse junction inherent in pedestrians movement through a plaza of national importance. *Tilted Arc* created a chiasmatic relationship or interchange between concave and convex spaces which, in turn, interacted with the surrounding architecture, characterized as "anonymous,

overscaled and inhuman" (Crimp 1986:53). Serra's sculptural concerns which interest me and have influenced my body of artwork are those prompted by the ways in which permanently-sited sculpture challenges the viewer and facilitate awareness between subject, object and other, over time. In particular, *Tilted Arc* emphasized the dialectic relationship between a certain kind of public dialogue necessary for citizenship and the private concerns of the individual. My current re-reading of the removal of *Tilted Arc* raises the question: can the sustainability of diverse and divisive communities in western democracies be enhanced by permanent, publicly-sited or monumental artwork which is challenging to the viewer-reader?

Philosopher of contemporary ethics and aesthetics, Marcia M. Eaton, states that human beings need to apprehend and establish relationships to larger-than-life-sized objects in order to augment personal contemplation and to develop group discussion with other citizens (256). She declares that complex structures, such as certain artworks, foster a developed dialogic awareness that characterizes flourishing communities (ibid.).

02:52:48

> Communities are more likely to sustain themselves if they achieve a delicate balance between tolerance for new ideas that allows for revision necessary for continued existence and a chaos that may result from a Babel of competing voices. Great art often repays attention precisely because it embodies not simply multiple perspectives, but even contradictions (257).

Descriptive Analysis of *Tilted Arc*

Tilted Arc was accepted as a concept in 1980 and installed in 1981 near a disused fountain-reflecting pool. It was a 63.5 mm thick steel plate, 3.658 m in height and 36.58 m long, "anchored into the existing steel and concrete substructure of the [hardscape] plaza" (Serra 1989:35). Seen from above, in plan-view, the plaza circular-paved pattern hardscape-pavement was intercepted by a black arc. Its slight radial curve arched its way across the plaza, creating a relation and tension between concave and convex spaces which signal public and private spheres. *Tilted Arc* signifies a typically

stable architectural archway, yet a destabilised one, or an arc situated 'on its side.' *Tilted Arc* disrupted the ordinary 'hurried route' of pedestrians, dramatically inserting itself into 'the public's field of vision,' (Crimp 1986:53). Anna Chave, a USA theorist known for her analysis of the sexual and ideological inscription of minimalist sculpture, stated that *Tilted Arc* was problematic in that a person could not see over the top of it, making some persons feel unsafe (Chave 23). Pedestrians were inconvenienced by the uncompromising nature of the steel form, forced to slow down through their encounter with such an alien structure in their midst. To be in close proximity to a massive steel slab on its edge, set at an off-balance tilt, was a disturbing, somewhat claustrophobic experience to some viewers (ibid.). Yet many people consider Serra's sculptures, including *Tilted Arc,* extraordinarily beautiful (Crimp 2000:67). The work employed a kind of alteration of a viewer's typical spatial-temporal perception - a specific tenet of this kind of materialist sculpture. Others considered the work "awkwardly massive" (Crimp 1986:50).

Serra conceived his artwork to have an overwhelming physical presence that unsettles viewers. He accomplished this through the sheer materiality of *Tilted Arc* – heavy steel plate, apparently magically twisted into shape and fastened down in a permanently imbalanced position. The slightly angled plate-walls in Serra's work hold the possibility of collapse even while being suspended in place (Rosenstock 12). Viewers are obliged to adjust the relation of their own bodies in space in order to comprehend Serra's sculptural oeuvre, including *Tilted Arc*, (both visually and through a phenomenological, corporeal awareness) (Krauss 1977:279; Morris 1993:199; Serra 1989:41). In doing so, Serra was a main proponent of site-specificity in sculpture from the 1970s - 80s; he depicted "the hidden material conditions of art" (Crimp 1986:43). The steel was left untreated, developing a thin rust patina over time. The visibility of this process is suggestive of leaving exposed the material concerns of the art – the material subtleties of an undescriptive surface, refusing to be anything other than the material's own integrity.

02:54:24

Joseph Leroy Webb

Roy Melia

Martin Alfred Blaney

Desmond Dobbin

Kathleen Mullan

Terry Mullan

Billy Dickson

Kenneth Johnston

Derek Patterson

Alan McCormack

Alice Kelly

Peter Paul Bradley

Desmond Caldwell

Thomas McCartan

1987

Ivan Crawford

Thomas Power

John Gerard O'Reilly

Clifford Clemo

George Shaw

Mary McGlinchey

Tony McCluskey

Iris Farley

Nigel Vincent Watton

Michael Kearney

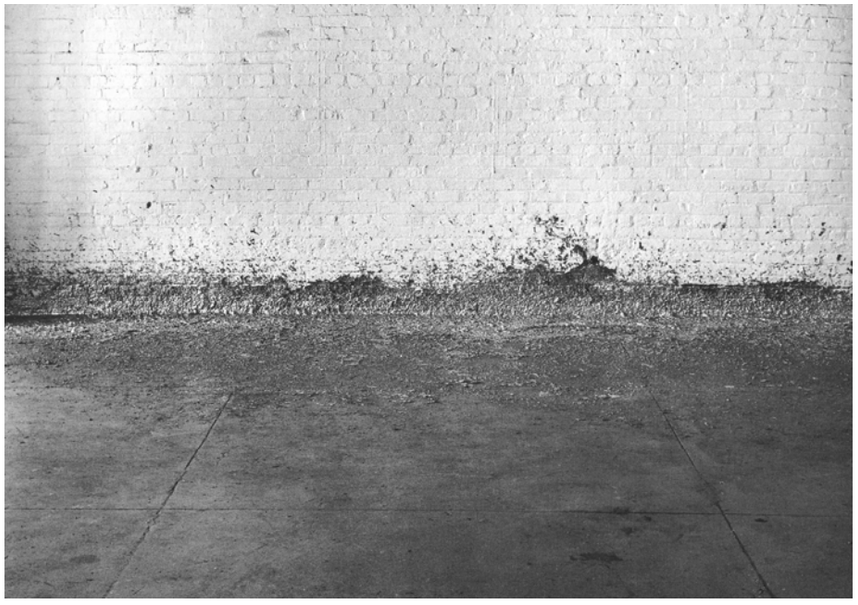

Figure 76: Richard Serra, *Splashing*, 1968.

According to Crimp, *Tilted Arc* was the permanent manifestation of *Splashing* from 1968, a line of molten lead thrown along the corner of a warehouse floor (1986:43). *Splashing* and *Tilted Arc* were sited works, bound by how they altered the conditions of space in which they were situated. Critic Crimp described *Splashing* as a precedent-setting artwork, a work which:

> Obscur[ed] a marker for our orientation in interior space, claiming that space as the ground of a different kind of perceptual experience (Crimp 1986:42).

Both *Splashing* and *Tilted Arc* became well-known examples of a non-commodity art practice. With his 1960s gesture, Serra had radicalised the existing tenets of sculpture. By the mid-1980s, with the infamous lawsuit for the removal of *Tilted Arc* from Federal Plaza[2], non-object-oriented modernist sculpture had met the limits of its idealistic radical aesthetics. Serra's artwork was too literal or crude in its exposure of the underlying hypocrisy in the ideology of a seat or plaza of national power. The dismantling of the monumental *Tilted Arc* became emblematic of the end of the 1970s era, when diverse citizens could congregate easily in

accessible public places to reflect and dialogue – aspects which enrich life in a democracy.

Application to the Northern Ireland Context

Serra's work informs my artistic practice, particularly about the siting of a controversial monument or sculpture situated in a violently divisive public place. Serra's *Tilted Arc* was created on federal, publicly-owned, land. His work may be seen to facilitate art which produces encounters of what philosopher Simon Critchley called "the ethical inequality of myself faced with the Other" (qtd. in Wodiczko 1999:8) , which Hannah Arendt would describe as an "unleashing of passions" (qtd. in Wodiczko 1999:12).

During the same politically conservative (Thatcher-Reagan) mid-1980s period of the 'stasis of the polis', Seamus Heaney, wrote a poem called *Terminus* about disputed boundaries or territories in Northern Ireland. Heaney, one of the foremost poetic-political voices in N.I, attempts to explore notions of undivided Northern Irish identity(ies). Written in the mid-1980s, *Terminus* was an exploration of the god of the borderlands, a chiasma threshold. In a book published in 2002, Heaney outlined the processes of his work, together with selections of his prose and poetry. He described a child who dares to wade into *the current* as someone who is also 'rooted' in *Terminus*, which I read to be a description of a 'chiasmata' experience of place. Heaney describes human beings as possessing a simultaneous:

> Capacity to be attracted at one and the same time to the security of what is intimately known and to the challenges and entrancements of what is beyond us (51-2).

This is the same conceptual territory explored in *Tilted Arc*, and conditioned-informed by the static/conservative politics of the time in which both works were produced. The physically rooted also may be an emotionally fragile space. Heaney was fixated upon such a typically Northern Irish space created in *Terminus*. He describes his influence in

writing the poem, as:

> In the kitchen of the house where I grew up there was a cement floor, and one of my first memories is the feel of its coldness and smoothness under my feet…I'll never forget that contact of the warm skin and cold floor, the immediate sensation of surprise; and then something deeper, more gradual, a sensation of consolidation and familiarity, the whole reassuring foundation of the earth coming up into you through the soles of your feet (55).

This passage could serve as an apt description of *Tilted Arc*, except in Serra's case, the concrete is exposed, utilitarian steel. In discussing his poem *Terminus*, Heaney states that "inheritance of a divided world is a disabling one"... cornering and trapping people into pre-determined positions (60). One could also call such inheritance, destabilising. Each artist: Serra, with a stroke of steel, and Heaney, with the stroke of a pen, draws attention to that moment of free choice when something else or other conditions may be possible (see Serra's film *Hand Catching Lead*, Serra, 1968). When the artist emphasises such an instant, he/she critiques static, authoritarian institutions and acceptable levels of embedded intolerance. Yet this, in turn, can disturb underlying fears and insecurities which occur when more enlivened mechanisms of democracy or deeply aware social practice are at play (see Crimp 2000:75). To use an example in my own work: I witnessed how disturbing my *ILM* was when I installed it in an academic corridor. Although the lightweight linen hung and draped freely down the centre of the hallway, an occupational safety and health hazard report analysis was lodged. One worried colleague became quite irate, criticising the entire exhibition as negative and problematic. Underlying this may have been other, more subtle, concerns about a visual and sensual 'up-close' encounter with a controversial memorial in a space not normally used for installation purposes. The disturbing content of a memorial which names persons 'of difference' and provoks thoughts about the manner in which they were killed, could have destabilised the ordinary routines of persons in an administrative office, university environment.

02:59:12

Thomas Emmanuel Wilson
Dominic Jude O'Connor
John Tracey
James Keelan
Edward Campbell
William Reynolds
Alan McQuiston
Thomas Hewitt
William Richard Megrath
Norman Kennedy
William Cockburn
Michael Power
Ernest Stanley Carson
Michael Philip Malone
Winston Finley
Eamonn Maguire
William Henry
Patrick Hamill
Harry Sloan
Steven Megrath
Jim Meighan
Ian McKeown
James McDaid
Tommy Dickson
Francisco Notarantonio
Paddy Deery

Figure 77: Richard Serra, *Terminal*, 1977

Migrant artists[3], or artists preoccupied with problems of citizenship or kinship displacement in divisive societies, readily position or locate installation work in intersectional, hybrid or chiasmatic conditions. Such a place is a comfortable (moderate), 'in-between' space – safe, on the one hand, yet more provocative on the other (because it is ambiguous and not static). Examples of other chiasmatic sitings include Northern Ireland artists: Willie Doherty with *Re-Run*, a video installation from a film on the bridge between Derry/Londonderry's Catholic and Protestant areas, 2002; and, during the *Horsehead International Public Projects*, 1999, the alphabetical

03:00:48

Eddie McSheffrey

William Mullan

Agnes Mullan

Kitchener Johnston

Jessie Johnston

Wesley Armstrong

Bertha Armstrong

Edward Armstrong

John Megaw

Georgina Quinton

Samuel Gault

Marie Wilson

Adam Lambert

Thomas McAuley

Martin Bryan

George Seawright

Gerald Docherty

John McMichael

1988

Billy Kane

William Stewart

Timothy Armstrong

Anthony McKiernan

Jack Kielty

Colin James Gilmore

reading of the names of the dead in a Belfast urban pedestrian tunnel, by conceptual performance artist Alistair McKinnon.

Conclusion

Richard Serra's *Titled Arc*, 1979-89, "refus[ed] to play the prescribed role of falsely reconciling [catachresis] contradictions" of public space in a 1980's USA environment (Crimp 1986:55). Instead, *Tilted Arc* as a site-specific art work, highlighted the difficulties and chasms between the exposed individual/individual rights and the withdrawal of state support for social service policies and the arts in an era of economic rationalism. The social conditions of contemporary public space work to produce a "melancholy of the public sphere" (Butler 2000: 81), lacking in legitimate community life that contains permission of an attainment of humanness for all (Agamben 1998 qtd. in Butler ibid.). My *ILM*, if sited publicly in a central location in Northern Ireland, would attempt to develop interest in what philosopher Judith Butler calls a more legitimate humanness. I would hope *The ILM* could address the issue of a plurality of difference in a more sustainable public sphere. Yet, is such an idea simply too idealistic or naïve? Serra's work captured and prefigured that condition of the alienation of public space in the post-1980's era of globalisation. *Tilted Arc*, a permanent 'people's monument' in a national plaza, created by one authoritative, articulate artist, is no longer such a viable means by which to encourage 'welcome' public discourse. This is because such a sculpture might just encourage a gathering spot that inspires activities or protests, such as the demand for democratic rights (see Crimp 2000:77; also see image of video footage of a protest at the site). The collective political needlework projects, previously outlined in chapter four, may be seen as workable, mobile methodologies for re-investing public space with significance in 2005.

03:02:24

This case study draws benefit from reasoned feminist reflection and new knowledge about public and private spheres. Serra's body of sculpture, from the 1970s to the present, investigates materialist concerns that preoccupy the (embodied) movement of the viewer in space. Yet when

Serra's work was sited within a centre of USA federal governmental power, his monument became a controversial focus which pre-figured the limits of public space and highlighted the scarcity of engaged dialogue within the public life in the United States of America. The 1980s were a less tolerant time when the radical individuality of an American artist such as Serra, and radical democracy, symbolised in the plaza with *Tilted Arc*, were diminished for the so-called security of the public good. In 2005, individuals have become increasingly atomized, and there is a dearth of vibrant community life. Public projects about socio-political issues such as those described in chapter four, or ephemeral projects such as Christo and Jeanne-Claude's veiling/wrapping projects (see *Wrapped Reichstag*, 1971 – 1995) or Krzysztof Wodiczko's video projections on architecture, (which utilize site-conscious strategies) maintain creative freedom while preserving an interface with the public terrain.

Tilted Arc was essentially a sheet of hot-rolled, industrial steel, torqued and sited by Serra in such a way that necessitated an unspecified, but actively engaged reading by public viewers of all kinds. As such, I have considered it as a version of a contemporary monument. From 1985-1988, during undergraduate art studies, I was a regular visitor to Serra's *Carnegie* sculpture (interior and exterior) in Pittsburgh and his body of site-conscious sculpture has informed my own oeuvre. It speaks to me as an artist who originated from, and deals with, the issues of the ongoing divided and violent country of Northern Ireland, because I recognise the conditions that Serra highlights in his body of work. As exemplified in the *Tilted Arc* analysis, Serra's position demonstrated the impossibility of the idea of neutral space and the increase of the commodification of site sculpture since the late 1980s. A thorough reading of the court tribunal documents, among other things, how the chiasmatic conditions of site activated person's virulent opinions about the artwork. *Tilted Arc* may be seen as a type of mirror of our inner and outer, intimate and public, social conditioning. Maya Lin, in the next generation after Serra, came to national prominence as a young sculptor-architect in the mid-1980s, U.S.A. I focus upon Lin's use of text (over spatial concerns) in her intimate and poetic memorials in the next case study.

03:04:00

Terry McDaid
Stephen McGahan
Damien Devlin
Paul McBride
Derek Hayes
Michael Darcy
William Totten
Robert Seymour
Michael James Winkler
William J. Patterson
Graham P. Lambie
Derek W. Green
Mark Clavey
Ian Metcalfe
Kenneth Stronge
Hugh Terence Delaney
Eamon Gilroy
Elizabeth Hamill
Seamus Woods
John Howard
Robert James Hanna
Maureen Hanna
David Hanna
Brendan Davison
Michael Bryan Matthews
Michael Robbins

Endnotes

[1] According to James E. Young, "Like other cultural and aesthetic forms in Europe and America, the monument has undergone radical transformation over the course of the 29th century. As intersection between public art and political memory, the monument has necessarily reflected the aesthetic and political revolutions, as well as the wider crisis of representation, following all of this century's major upheavals – including both the First and Second World Wars, the Vietnam War, and the rise and fall of communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites. In every case, the monument reflects both its socio-historic and aesthetic context: artists working in eras of cubism, expressionism, socialist realism, earthworks, minimalism, or conceptual art remain answerable to the needs of both art and official history. The result has been a metamorphosis of the monument from the heroic, self-aggrandizing figurative icons of the late 19th century, which celebrated national ideals and triumphs, to the antiheroic, often ironic and self-effacing conceptual installations that mark the national ambivalence and uncertainty of the late 20th century postmodernism" (1 - 7).

[2] The extreme difficulties with the acceptance of Serra's *Tilted Arc* were less about the artwork than about its context: *Tilted Arc* was installed during a decade when the increasing privatisation of public space in New York city was a fundamental problem (Crimp 2000:72; Wodiczko 1999:6 and see Deutsche 1996).

03:05:36

[3] Serra's father, Tony, was from Majorca, Spain and his mother, Gladys, was a Russian Jew.

Chapter 7

Maya Lin's Visual Poetry, 1982 – 1993.

> I built a [VVM] memorial that asked us to accept death as the primary cost of war. Having studied countless other memorials, I found that this is rarely addressed at a national level, though sometimes it is dealt with at a local level.
>
> Maya Lin from *Dialogues in Public Art* 2000:118

Introduction

Maya Lin (b.1959) came to U.S.A national prominence, as a young sculptor/architect, in the mid 80's. I examine her use of text, over spatial concerns, in her intimate and poetic memorials from 1982 to the present, beginning with a brief analysis of three memorials: *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM)* 1982, *The Civil Rights Memorial* (CRM) 1988, and *The Women's Table at Yale* (*WTY*) 1993, the latter commemorating the entrance of females to the university. I centre on what Lin calls a 'hybrid monument' (2000:4:02-03)[1], analyzing her careful consideration of facts: names (*VVM*), events (*CRM*) and numbers (*WTY*), as visual poetry. *The VVM* is of interest as a national, reconciliatory memorial which encourages interactive viewing to overcome the pain of division, bitterness, and to forgive, as well as, to grieve.

03:07:12

Maya Lin's body of work has similarities to, yet is distinctive from, the site-specific conceptualism of Serra[2]. Site-conscious sculpture makes people aware of their surroundings, shifts behavioural and perceptual orientation towards site and aids a chiasmatic, experiential passage which incorporates the notion of time (Serra 1989:41; Krauss 1977: 282; Lin 2000: 2:03). Each artist also responds to the contemporary socio-political, as well as cultural-historical circumstances reflected in the use of a site (Serra ibid.; Lin 2000: 2:03 and 3:05). While Serra's work is more confrontational in his

use of steel as a material, with its terrifying military connotations, Lin's artwork is equally courageous as it is terrifying because her works deal with emotionally traumatic material. Lin's courageous designs entice viewers on an experiential journey of healing through grief, as in the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial.* Lin's two other memorials, of 1988 and 1993, each commemorate bitter-sweet success after struggle. Her architectonic table-artworks mediate trauma for the viewer through the participatory element of a touchable, thin veil of water overflowing stone.

Personal Background of 'Anonymous Entry 1026'[3]

As a self-described educationalist, Lin is a sculptor who works with an ethics of care (2000: 5:04; 12:03). Her mother was a poet and her father a ceramist, both scholarly academics, migrants from China. They taught at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, USA, where Lin grew up (2000: 5:04). Lin describes her background:

> Looking back I realise I had led a very insulated and isolated childhood…I ended up making anything and everything – the entire gamut of crafts, from macramé to silversmithing to lost wax bronze casting…It also kept me separate from much of what was going on, not just in Athens, Ohio, but in the world. Kent State[4], the war in Vietnam, and Civil Rights struggles… (Lin 2000: 5:05).

03:08:48

Lin's experience of both textiles and sculpture as crafts informs her body of mature architectural design work. During the implementation of her award-winning *VVM*, she demonstrated a reflective persona and an ability to remain dispassionate as a practitioner, even at a young age, under the stress of viciously conflicting public opinion, which reflected upon her as a designer (Lin 2001:113).

Counter-monument or intimate, hybrid memorial

Contemporary commemorative sculpture calls for a very different kind of response and presence than the usual heroic monument that typically

commemorates war (Sturken 165). While still a young undergraduate architecture student, Maya Lin won the anonymous competition for the design of *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* in 1981. The subsequent construction of Lin's 'counter-monument,' or intimate, hybrid memorial, was precedent-setting in the genre of memorial architecture. *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* was built at a time when bereavement studies, psychological post-traumatic stress research, and memory studies within cultural history, were emerging fields of interest, along with a heightened awareness of post-World War II peace and conflict-transformation studies (see Sturken 176).

Reconciliatory Monument: *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, 1981

The aftermath of the longest-running war in USA history, the Vietnam War, 1959 – 1975, still bred controversy, ill feelings and denial into the early 1980s. In 1979, the war veteran, Jan C. Scruggs, conceived of a Veterans' memorial for those who served in Vietnam. He was driven by the bitter grief he felt for fallen comrades, killed beside him, in 'the mire' of Vietnam (Swerdlow 558). He founded *The Vietnam Veterans Fund*, with Robert W. Doubek and John Wheeler, to impel the building of a memorial. In 1980, a two-acre site was bequeathed by President Jimmy Carter for *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* on The Mall, near the Constitution Gardens, Washington, DC. Subsequently, Maya Lin aligned her design with the Washington Monument, sixty metres in the left direction with the Lincoln Memorial to the right. The design concept brief called for the unusual gesture of listing the 58,000 names of those killed[5] and that the monument would have a reconciliatory theme. Robert W. Doubek supervised the grueling compilation of names and Scruggs, Doubek and Wheeler remained supportive of the young Maya Lin throughout the lengthy public bureaucratic processes for the implementation of the memorial. These veterans felt that they were "trustees of a portion of the national heart and the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* would help bind the nation's wounds" (Swerdlow 559). Maya Lin wanted her memorial to acknowledge the service and sacrifice of the veterans, giving them and their loved ones a public homecoming and a place to privately reflect on their losses after a

03:10:24

Francis Galbraith
William Thompson
John Griffiths
Stephen McGonigle
Malachy Trainor
Adam Gilbert
James Hamilton
Liam McKee
David Black
Alexander Cameron
Norman Annett
Steve Smith
William James Frazer
John McAnulty
John Devine
Alexander Bell
Seamus Duffy
Loughlin Maginn
Patrick McKenna
Brian Robinson
Margaret Robinson
Heidi Hazell
Kevin Frogett
Mick Ball
John Andrew Cleatheroe
David McMillan

period of ten years of denial (2000: 4:16 & 4:05). Each element of the design went through a lengthy, highly publicized administrative committee process before the design was finalized and allowed to proceed.

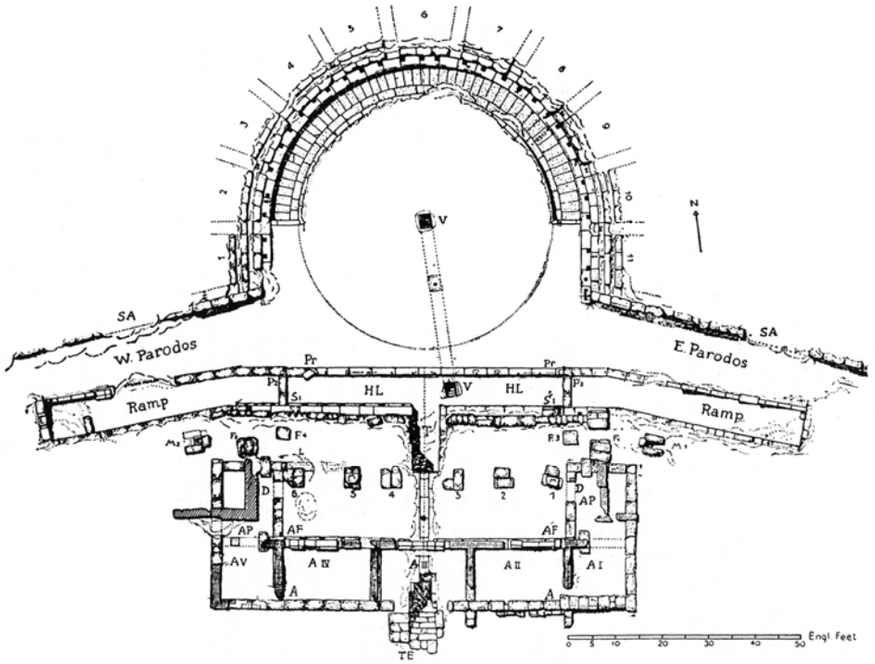

FIG. 64. Plan of Theatre at Eretria

Figure 78: Greek Theatre: Plan of Theatre at Eretria, Fig.64. *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens*. A.W Pickard-Cambridge, Oxford University Press, 1973.

A Greek Theatre

Lin stated that her design linked two strong symbols for the country, "I wanted to create a unity between the nation's past and present" (2000: 4:11). The memorial consists of two seventy-six metre long polished black granite walls, sunk into the earth, which is cut open like a 'geode' in a chevron-shape (Lin 2000: 4:14). The walls are three metres below ground at the corner apex. When her design was revealed, there was public controversy. Claims were made that her semi-underground structure, which alluded to 'tomb,' was unheroic, unpatriotic, and a negative statement in its black stone colour[6]. Lin's design was proving almost too difficult for government officials and the mainstream public to consider

03:12:00

enduring as a permanent landscape feature in the national capital. But, once built, *The VVM* did, indeed, produce an important catharsis for the Vietnam generation in the USA, well beyond the specific grief of the loved ones of those killed[7] (Dening 4).

Lin's *VVM* recalls an ancient Greek Theatre in design; such theatres used the natural slope of the hillside as an outdoor architectural substructure. The theatre was frequented by all citizens during annual Athenian festivals (474 - 534 BC), where the genre of the tragedy was produced (Wiles 93). The theatre-going ritual provided a particularly important public catharsis for the community in order, for example, to air questions about man's existence and universal ideas about justice. In the first period of Greek drama (before the fifth century) the chorus was particularly important, entering and exiting from side wings called the *paraskenia* which led to a central area with an altar (Watt 13-17). Lin's design-construction consists of two central descending passages which lead towards a central area. Her memorial design relies on words; the walls acting almost as backdrops for whispering, calling out, touching, and making rubbings of the names of the dead. Viewers are inserted into the drama's chorus through their participation by entering and exiting the passageway, and with the reflection of their images mirrored back to them, among the names. The focal point is the central apex, where the highest walls meet; an apex in the chevron shape (at an angle of 125 degrees, 12 minutes). Viewers are forced into a direct engagement with Maya Lin's memorial, through this 'acted-out' journey. At the apex are the years 1958, the beginning of the war and 1975, the end (2000: 4:05). Visitor-viewers are, thus, actors in the unfolding narrative of a time-based descent through 'the valley' of death, plummeting the depths of their grief in order to relocate loved ones through the passage of time, and then gathering themselves back together in a full circle, re-emerging into the landscape of the living. *The VVM* continues to be one of the most well-embraced and frequently visited public monuments in the USA (Scruggs and Swerdlow 159).

03:13:36

James Houston

1990

Harry Dickey

Martin Byrne

Olven Kilpatrick

Peter John Thompson

Edward Paul Hale

John Joseph McNeill

Derek Monteith

Charles Love

Sam Marshall

Thomas A. Jameson

Eamon Quinn

Clifford Lyness

Billy McClune

George Starrett

Roger Joseph Bradley

John Bradley

Michael Adams

John Birch

Steven Smart

Eoin David Morley

Martin Corrigan

Brian McKimm

Kenneth Graham

Chronology of Names

Maya Lin stated:

> I always wanted the names to be chronological, to make it so that those who served and returned from the war could find their place in the memorial…the chronological sequence began and ended at the apex so that the time line would circle back to itself and close the sequence. A progression in time is memorialized…To find one name, chances are you will see the others close by, and you will see yourself reflected through them [in the smoky black granite] (italics mine; 2000: 4:11).

Maya Lin argued that this chronological order was central to her design and she had to convince the Vietnam veterans of her rationale. The design required the names to be listed by the day veterans had died. This stroke of brilliance is crucial to Lin's design. The effectiveness of the chronological strategy was followed by the authors of *Lost Lives* in their memorial book for those killed in the Northern Ireland troubles when conceiving of their book in 1992. In *The VVM*, the names begin at the apex, starting with the year 1959, running to the end of the right-hand wall and then back down from the left-hand side, ending at the bottom of the apex, with 1975. It is a circle, closed by the viewer. Maya Lin and others discuss the aspect of her use of text at great length and describe the apex as the spine of 'the book', the strongest point of the memorial as a structure (2000:4:14). At the entrance to the passage towards the apex or spine, a directory book lists all veterans and their years of service. A visitor to the memorial can use this directory to locate a particular name on one of the panels along the passageway-wall.

03:15:12

A Greek Epic

Maya Lin described her design as to be read as an epic Greek poem (Scruggs and Swerdlow 78; 571). The Greek epic genre became a literary tool worldwide on the strength of its Greco-Roman origins, popular in ancient Athens. The epic had mass appeal to "help focus our vision,

Graham A. Stewart
Charles Chapman
Nick Spanos
Stephen Melrose
William Robert Davies
Michael J. Dillon-Lee
Patrick Boyle
James Sefton
Ellen Sefton
Gary Meyer
Harold John Beckett
Martin Hughes
William Sloss
David Sterritt
William James Hanson
Joshua Cyril Willis
Catherine Dunne
Patrick Flood
Ian Gow
John Judge
Andrew David Bogle
Emmanuel Shiels
Louis Robinson
Colin McCullough
William Allister
Karen Reilly

creating categories that facilitate comparison and contrast…against which individual tales can be understood" (Fowler 173). In the Greek epic tradition, "the journey, for both mortal and immortal protagonist is about coming to terms with death, the pain of loss, and mortal limits"; a pattern of wrath, withdrawal, and return (Foley 94) Lin infers the same type of quest in the architectural structure of her *VVM*. A visitor becomes an actor or choral-member-orator in their own epic drama. By having the courage to encounter the tragic state, a person eventually rejoins the community, after an arduous passage, through time, in the underworld (see Foley on "liminal" experience 95-6).

An Interface of a Touchable Name

Figure 79: Lettering inscription detail of names on *Vietnam Veteran's Memorial.* Maya Lin *Boundaries*, Simon & Schuster, 2000. p. 4.22/23,
'A typographer will compose a text line by line for the printed page; when text is incised in stone, the engraving begins to take on more life than a normal or standard typeface'.

03:16:48

Martin Peake
Denis Carville
George Friars
Martin Gerard McCaughey
Desmond Gerard Grew
Samuel Todd
Stephen Craig
Dermot McGuinness
David Maurice Pollock
William Aiken
Frank Hughes
Patsy Gillespie
Stephen Burrows
Stephen Roy Beacham
Vincent J. Scott
David Andrews Sweeney
Paul Desmond Worrell
Cyril John Smith
William Skey
Tommy Casey
Martin Keenan
Albert Cooper
Gary Campbell
Malachy McIvor
William David W. Murphy
ThomasGeorge Taylor

> I always saw the wall as pure surface, an interface between light and dark…The wall dematerializes as a form [the granite veneer is thin at its top edge] and allows the names to *become the object*, a pure and reflective surface that would allow visitors the chance to see themselves with the names…the idea of a dark mirror into and shadowed mirrored image of the space, a space we cannot enter and from which the names separate us, *an interface* between the world of the living and the world of the dead (italics mine; Lin 2000: 4:14).

Maya Lin directs us to consider the names as 'the object' and the passage into the memorial as akin to a "gaping scream" (2000: 4:11). She references *The Lutyens Memorial to The Missing*, although his is an archway, and hers a descending passage. In the book, *To Heal a Nation*, about the processes of the conception and building of *The VVM,* Jan Scruggs and Joel Swerdlow, both Vietnam Veterans, likened the conceptual process of finding a mate's name to the process of finding a body on the battlefield (Swerdlow 571).

03:18:24

The fact that *The VVM* is colloquially referred to as *The Wall* is a misnomer, yet it does emphasise one of the key elements of the memorial. The wall is a veneer, a thin slice of polished black granite with a high content of reflective mica. The architects were eager that the wall seemed more substantial along the top edge, which was also visible, but Lin did not agree. The veterans understood her chronological design when they examined the final compilation of an enormous alphabetical Defense Department listing of Vietnam fatalities. Lin's design carried the sense of profound, unique loss each name carried (Swerdlow 571) and her design concept was carried out, eventually, according to her authoritative, sensitive specifications.

Norman Kendall
Keith Dowey
Alexander Patterson
Thomas Maguire
Raymond Robinson
Hubert Gilmore
David Shiels
Wilfred Wethers
Fergal Caraher

1991

Patrick Sheehy
Gervais Lynch
Cullen Stephenson
Sean Rafferty
David Corner
Peter McTasney
Paul Damien Sutcliffe
John Quinn
Dwayne O'Connell
Malcolm Nugent
Thomas Armstrong
Michael Francis Lenaghan
Roger James Love
Donald Kaberry
Stephen Audley

Citing a Timeline of Events: *The Civil Rights Memorial,* 1988

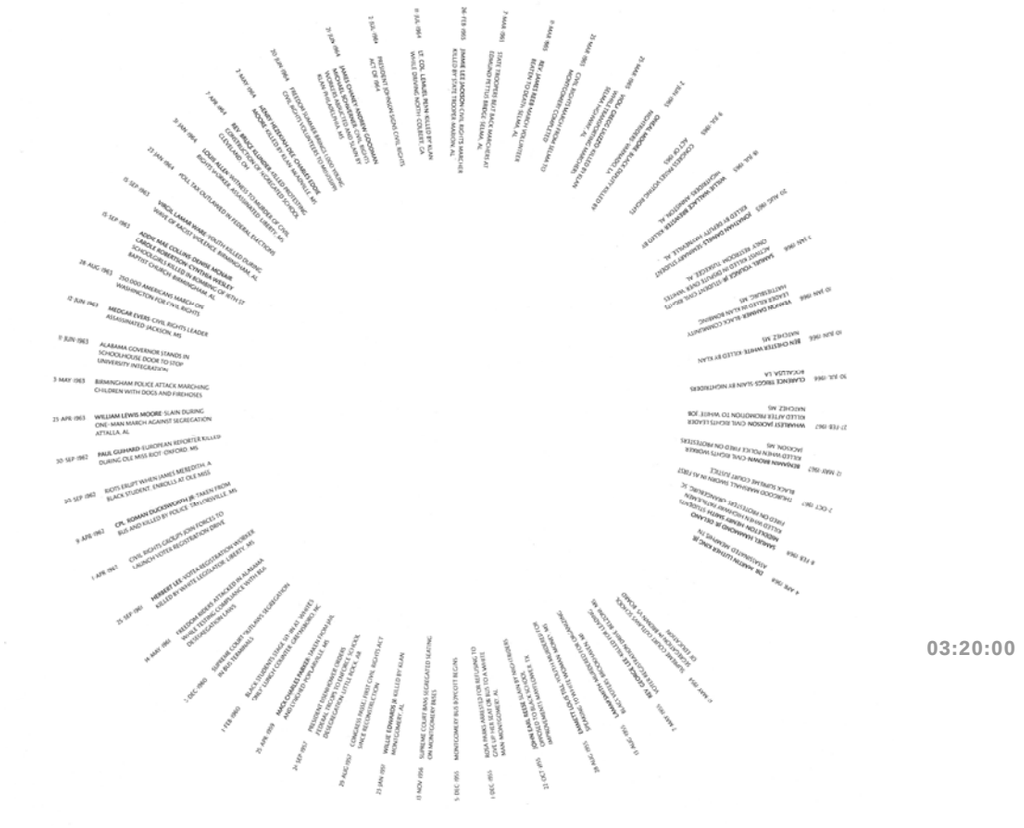

Figure 80: Maya Lin, detail of inscription of historical events on *Civil Rights Memorial.* Maya *Lin Boundaries*. Simon & Schuster, 2000. p. 4.25

Maya Lin created two other memorials in the following decade, 1982 – 1993. One of these was *The Civil Rights Memorial (CRM)*. She stated:

> I was happy with the closure that the civil rights and the Vietnam memorials created for me. They referred to two wars fought by the United States as I was a child growing up: one domestic, one international. By having the two paired, I was able to close a chapter. (Finkelpearl and Lin 2000:114).

This memorial is situated in a white granite plaza, consisting of an upper and lower level, an outdoor entry foyer to The Southern Poverty

Francis Paul Taggart
Eileen Duffy
Katrina Rennie
Brian Frizzell
Samuel Bell
John Spence McGarry
Derek Ferguson
Colum Marks
Ian Sproule
Ernest McCrum
John O'Hara
Stephen Gillespie
Robert Orr
Douglas Carrothers
Wallace McVeigh
Eddie Fullerton
Terence O'Neill
Edward Spence
Robert Crozier
Paul Blakely
Sydney Hamilton
Lawrence McNally
Peter Ryan
Tony Doris
Ruari Finnis
Brian Lawrence

Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, USA. This memorial consists of a black granite water table (11'-6" dia. X 31" h) inscribed with a famous quotation from the Civil Rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. inscribed on a concave black granite water wall (9' h X 39'l X 18" d). Certain events of the civil rights era and their victims are inscribed chronologically around the table-top edge of the circular space. The events span from the 1954 desegregation of the school system to 1968, with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Finkelpearl and Lin 2000: 112).

In 2005, an interior memorial wall, using interactive digital technology for its list of names and donors, called *The Wall for Tolerance*, is due for unveiling inside a newly renovated Civil Rights Memorial Centre; this work complements Maya Lin's outdoor design.

Descriptive Numbers: *The Women's Table*, 1993

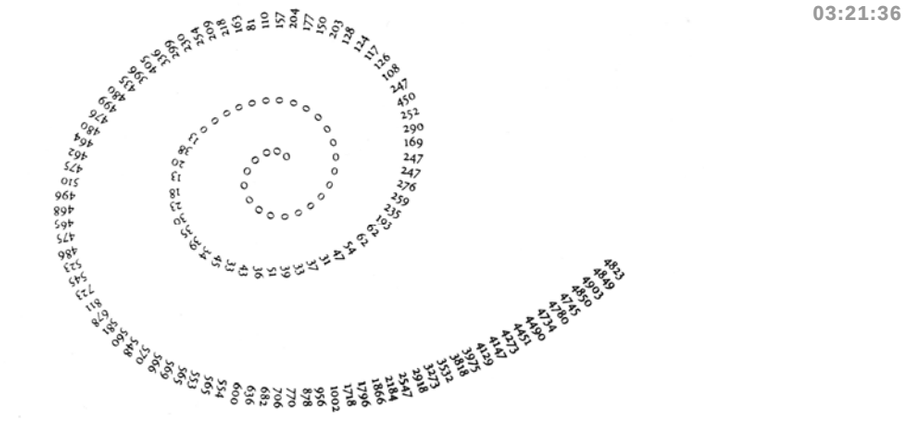

Figure 81: Detail of inscription of years and numbers on *The Women's Table*. p. 4.37, Maya Lin *Boundaries*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

"It is a water table to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Yale admitting women to its undergraduate class. The use of numbers to count the women enrolled was very important."

> I am trying to pose facts and let others interpret them, trusting the viewer what to think. Obviously I've been focusing on certain information, but at the same time I'm just asking you to look at facts. *The Women's Table at Yale* is nothing but numbers. (2000: 116)

This memorial was created to remember a different kind of struggle and "battle" (Lin 2000: 4:39). The battle was over the numbers of women allowed entry into Yale University since 1873, and the twentieth anniversary of women's full admission into the Yale undergraduate college. This sculpture was the first one on campus to be dedicated to the presence of women. All other images and statues on campus were dedicated to former male professors and students.

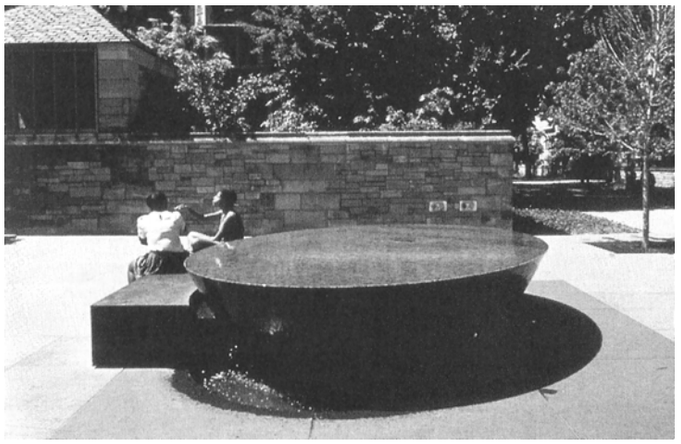

Figure 82: Granite table where people can sit and congregate
Maya Lin, *The Women's Table*, Maya Lin *Boundaries*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

Maya Lin created a granite table where persons could sit and congregate. The table is also a water table, sited in the centre of a busy urban campus. The spiral of numbers was taken from a design of a spiral of chemicals in *Envisioning Information* by Edward Tufte, a professor at Yale, and the type font, Bembo, from the undergraduate coursework catalogue. The spiral of numbers also memorializes, more generally, the emergence of women as contributors into public modern life. The artwork leaves room for more numbers to be inscribed over the coming years, and, as such, it is a work-in-progress – with no end in the time line.

Figure 83: Maya Lin, *The Women's Table*, 1993.
Maya Lin *Boundaries*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

03:24:48

Plurally-Sited Memorials[8]

Lin is planning a final and very different 'plural' or 'plurally-sited' memorial[9]. Indeed, *The Vietnam Veterans' Memorial* is already a plurally-sited artwork – a wooden set-design version is regularly brought to college campuses and other sites around the country (as I witnessed on the outdoor campus of the University of Washington, in Ellensburgh, September, 2001; see Saunders 2002:F7). Also, a public site is available on the internet, called *The Wall of Names* at <www.virtualwall.org>. On the website, a visitor is able to digitally experience the rubbing of a name of a loved one, through interactive technology.

In her 2000 book, *Boundaries: a visual/verbal sketchbook*, Maya Lin concludes by describing her final memorial as a plural monument at various sites, including on the internet, dedicated to the extinction of species (12:03).

Kenneth Newell
Colin Ralph Caldwell
Colm Mahon
Patrick McDonald
Robin Farmer
Thomas Gorman
Barry Watson
William Johnston
Aidan Wallace

1992

Kevin McKearney
Philip Campbell
Michael Martin
Ivor McNabney
David Boyd
David Harkness
William Gary Bleeks
Cecil James Caldwell
Robert Dunseith
John Richard McConnell
Nigel McKee
Robert Irons
Oswald Gilchrist
John McIver
Paul Moran

Conclusion

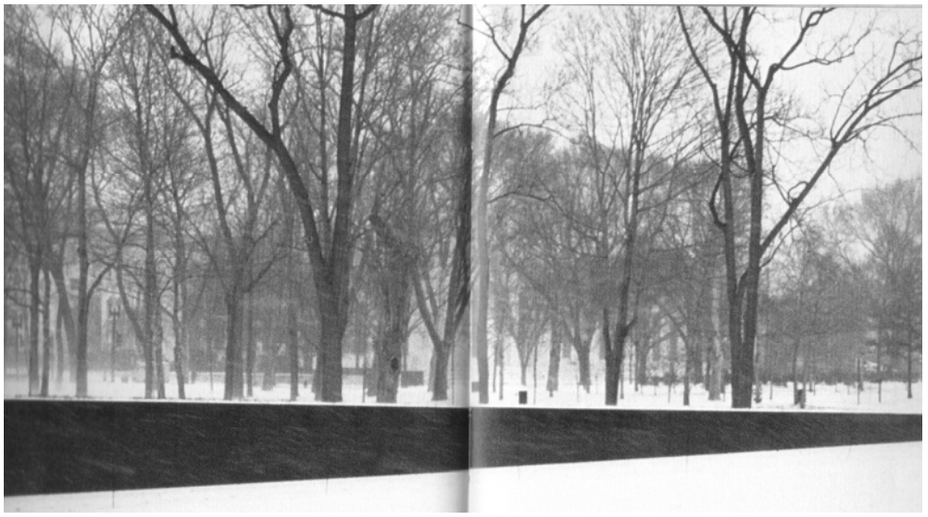

Figure 84: Maya Lin, *The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial.*
Maya Lin *Boundaries*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1982, was a watershed moment for the anti-heroic genre of monumental sculpture/architecture. This piece of national public art successfully reconciled a generation who were 'of bitterly divided thinking and feeling' over the USA participation in Vietnam (Scruggs and Swerdlow 29-30). Maya Lin, a designer of self-described hybrid identity (2000:5:03), treads between the disciplines of artist and architect, large-scale landscape designer and intimate worker with hand-crafted media, in her small-scale, pre-planning model-making or her detailed finish-work of the final construction. Lin has been influenced heavily by the literary genre, working at one point in collaboration with a poet[10]. For *The VVM*, Lin's work followed the scale, drama and structure of a Greek Tragedy in theatre and the Greek Epic -- ancient, universal cathartic public art. Her quiet, yet courageous, body of work has influenced the next generation of designers, including myself. Particularly compelling have been Lin's use of text and her sensitive detailing of the names, events or numbers on her granite memorials. She brought the world of rigorous site-conscious, conceptual public sculpture into the area of an empathic viewing in memorial art. She was not afraid to

03:26:24

Paddy Clarke
Gordon Hamill
Pat McBride
Paddy Loughran
Michael O'Dwyer
Allen Moore
Peter Magee
James Kennedy
Christy Doherty
William McManus
Jack Duffin
Joseph McManus
Kevin Barry O'Donnell
Sean O'Farrell
Peter Clancy
Daniel Patrick Vincent
Andrew Johnson
Anne Marie Smyth
James Gray
Patrick Liam McCartan
Patrick Harmon
Colleen McMurray
Terence Agustus McConville
Peter McClements
Danny Cassidy

produce a structure which combined an engagement with tough, political issues which, at the same time, produced raw emotions. Lin's emphasis on educational or social 'healing' issues, within a conceptual minimalist aesthetic, could be seen as a part of the feminising of that sculptural oeuvre. Such poetic elasticity is part of the gains of feminist art and philosophers of the public and private. Regarding her *VVM*, the Vietnam War had been heavily contested and symbolic of two groups in the American public at odds with each other: principally shamed veterans, on the one hand, and peace protestors, on the other. Lin's design worked to bring about reconciliation, by offering an alternative national narrative to a deeply divisive social issue.

The associated nuances of *The ILM* are similar. Lin has worked with these issues under the rubric of public commemorative art and the hybrid or counter-monument. The counter or anti-monument, according to James Young, is self-effacing and commemorates, not ideals, heroes and triumphs, but issues of national uncertainty (2000:96). This case study demonstrates aspects I consider key to my *Irish Linen Memorial*: passage and intimacy in Lin's work, together with the slowing down of time which is necessary for reflection for an interactive-viewer. Participatory touch, for catharsis, is another key element in an experiential memorial. Maya Lin, in *The Women's table* at Yale, and *The Civil Rights Memorial* encourages the touching of her textual inscriptions through a veil of water. Similarly, for the sonic surround element of *The ILM* my collaborator, Thomas Fitzgerald, added the sounds of water and tears in his composition for the sonic-surround element of *The ILM*. The effects of light through the hanging linen handkerchiefs and the translucency of the material also indicate a veil of tears to touch and handle. There are particular rights of the passage for remembrance when trauma is involved. Therefore, Lin's memorials are described as similar to a book, achieving intimacy akin to the act of reading quietly by oneself. Both her *VVM* and my *ILM* have a book of names indexed, in alphabetical order, which one must look up in order to locate a particular individual on a memorial

03:28:00

panel or handkerchief. Both works demonstrate that a team of researchers must supply the factual information for the well-researched listing of names in order of chronology, within a set of historic events. As in Lin's case study, my focus on facts enables a reader-participant to make their own judgement about the history of the violent conflict itself. While my artistic oeuvre is situated *between* sculpture and textiles/fibres, there is a hybridity between these disciplines. In Lin's case, 'hybrid' refers to a memorial creation that sits between architecture, landscape architecture or earth art and sculpture.

Endnotes

[1] The page numbers in this citation also operate as a timecode which runs through Maya Lin's 2000 book, *Boundaries*. This design detail influenced me for the remembrance 'column of names' layout for my thesis exegesis graphic design template.

Maya Lin states, "I consider the monuments to be true hybrids, existing between art and architecture, they have a specific need or function, yet their function is purely symbolic" (Lin 2000: 4:02-03;4:44-5).

[2] Lin states, "It is important to remember that I don't come from an art background. I didn't know who [Robert] Smithson or [Richard] Serra were when I designed the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. I wasn't even aware how much the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* had in common with the earth artists when I designed it. I can remember walking into the Whitney Museum [of American Art in New York City] and seeing one of Smithson's *Non-sites* in 1982, and I was speechless. I'm much more tied into that aesthetic than a lot of the artists working today that are trying to push other boundaries" (Lin in conversation with Tom Finkelpearl 2000:116).

03:29:36

[3] This was Lin's entry number in the competition (out of 1421 entries) for *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial*.

Almost twenty years later, in 2000, reflecting back upon the controversial process which ensued (and resulted in both personal and artistic attacks) after her design was chosen, she states,"The memorial's starkness, its being below grade, being black, and how much my age, gender, and race played a part in the controversy, we'll never quite know. I think it is actually a miracle that the piece ever got built" (2000: 4:15).

[4] 'Kent State' is a euphemism for a symbolic "great American tragedy which occurred at the height of the Vietnam War era, a period in which the nation found itself deeply divided both politically and culturally. …[It was] a reminder of the day when the Vietnam War came home to America" (Lewis & Hensley 8).

The Kent State University incident, on 4th of May, 1970, was an incident when thirteen people were killed and nine injured. The students protested the USA's invasion of Cambodia (which ran counter to President Nixon's campaign pledge of ending the Vietnam War), April 1970. People gathered on the school commons, a grassy area in the middle of the campus where rallies and demonstrations were often held. That evening, a chaotic confrontation occurred between protestors and the local police. The entire Kent county and community police forces were called to duty, and Leroy Satrom, the Mayor of Kent, declared a state of emergency. The next day Ohio Governor Rhodes called in the Ohio National Guard. On the third day, 1,000 demonstrators clashed with 1,000 National Guardsmen. On the fourth day, over 3,000 civilians were involved and a ROTC building on campus had been burnt. Later, the National Guard opened fire on the demonstrators. (Lewis & Hensley 2-3)

Tess Fox
Michael Sean Macklin
Leonard Joseph Fox
Gerard O'Hara
Harry Black
Michael Anderson
James Douglas
David Heffer
Sheena Campbell
Robert Irvine
Samuel Ward
Michael Gilbride
Donna Elizabeth Wilson
Francis Burns
Peter Orderly
John Lovett
Alan Corbett
Iain R. Warnock
Peter McCormack
Gerard Holmes
Pearce Jordan
John Collett
Malachy Carey
Martin Lavery
Stephen Waller

Maya Lin's parents, who were teaching at another college campus in the same state, would have been very aware of these events. It is significant that Lin mentions this incident, so close to home, in her statement about her vague awareness of the politics of her childhood.

[5] When the competition was held, the number was 57,000. "The official total for USA military personnel killed in Vietnam was 57,939, eight of whom were women." Since then, the Department of Defense had added more names to its official listing and the total reaches over 58,000. Over 2.7 million Americans served and 300,000 were wounded (Scruggs and Swerdlow 16).

The jurors stated the design "was *not* a war memorial", "a retreat to past notions of glory". It was "a memorial to honor service" (authors italics, Scruggs and Swerdlow 65).

"Ordinary veterans" stated, "It's not a memorial's job to judge the rights and wrongs of Vietnam. It is a living memorial, helping to end the disgraceful attitudes towards us. The design is sensitive and simple, people-oriented. The nation must always remember the terrible price we paid for nothing." (Scruggs and Swerdlow 99).

Lin states, "People cannot resolve that war, nor can they separate the issues, the politics, from it" (4:17).

Maya Lin also described the design in an early press conference as "I wanted to describe a journey -- a journey which would make you experience death." Her public statement had to be mediated by the Veterans who needed to clarify that the memorial also honoured 2.7 million who served and survived. (Scruggs and Swerdlow 69)

[6] The color choice of black had to be vigorously defended as positive and sunlit. "It took a prominent four-star general, Brigadier General George Price, who happened to be black, testifying before one of the countless subcommittee hearings and defending the color black, before the design could move forward" (Lin 2000: 4:16).

[7] Australian cross-cultural theorist, Greg Dening, writes an inspired introduction on *The VVM* in his book *Readings/Writings* about the pain, silences, and imaginative possibilities of cross-cultural encounters, 1998. He states, "You'll find picnickers, tourists being tourists and laughter in all of Washington's other monuments. Not here. All the other monuments need ritual, pomp and ceremony to make their signs live. Not here. The only ritual is your visit and your reflected face" (4).

03:31:12

[8] Lin made a strategic career move to not accept further memorial commissions. Her architectural practice includes a sculptural practice, large-scale outdoor public art, private homes and public institutions or other buildings.

[9] This memorial will exist at numerous sites as well as in the "non –physical site" of the Internet which Lin acknowledges as a place where linkages, networks, monitoring and sharing occur (2000:12:03).

[10] *Reading a Garden*, Cleveland Public Library 1996-8 with Tan Lin.

1993

Patrick Shields

Diarmuid Shields

Matthew Boyd

Anthony Gerard Butler

Sharon McKenna

Samuel Rock

Michael Ferguson

Martin McNamee

Julie Statham

Eugine Martin

Michael J. Beswick

Thomas Molloy

Christopher Harte

Mervyn Johnston

Reginald Williamson

Jonathan Reid

Nigel McCollum

Norman Truesdale

Robert Shaw

Lawrence Dickson

Jonathan Ball

Peter Gallagher

James McKenna

James Gerard Kelly

Noel Kane

Chapter 8

Doris Salcedo: the sculptor as secondary witness to the witness of trauma or death

Introduction

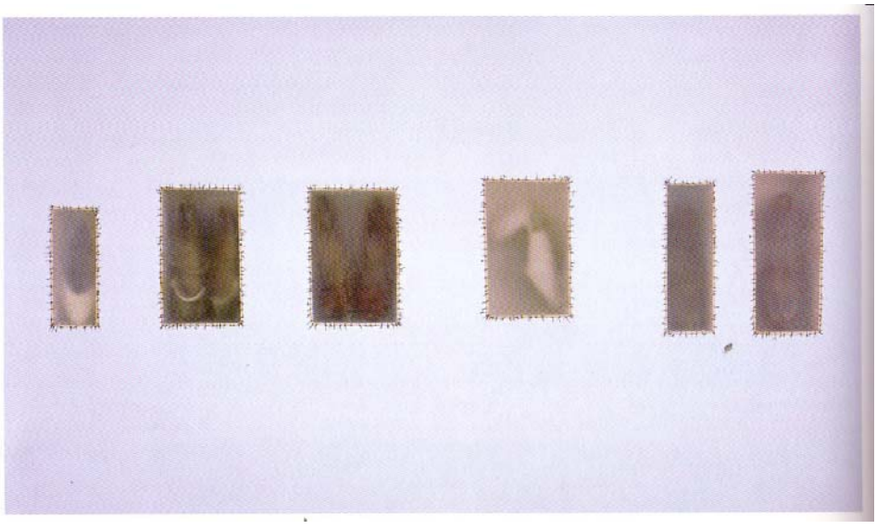

Figure 85: Doris Salcedo, *Atrabiliarios* (detail), 1992. Installation, Wall niches, shoes, animal fibre, surgical thread. Dimensions variable, 'Currents 92: The Absent Body', Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo*. p. 48

Colombian sculptor Doris Salcedo (b. 1958), like Maya Lin, is known for her "art on remembrance and consciousness" (Merewether 1993:44). Doris Salcedo's sculptural installations regarding her particular emphasis on politicised 'cross-over' spaces interest me. This case study considers Salcedo's exquisitely sensitive and well-made sculpture produced in the context of Colombia's intimidatory political culture, and explores the ways it has been paradigmatic for *The Irish Linen Memorial*. Most evocative for me has been her preoccupation with 'the juncture' installation space. I focus on three issues in Salcedo's practice: space, intimate touch, the process of interviewing victims of trauma, and anti-monumentality. Hers is an art practice which attempts to reconcile both victims and perpetrators of violence. In interviews with Charles Merewether and

Carlos Basualdo, Salcedo states that she encourages her viewer-participants to encounter spaces where there is a proximity to 'the face of the neighbour'. Her sculptural installations explore soft, as well as hard materials: hair, skin and bone, and found furniture. Her artistic responses are distinctly anti-monument and, as such, are produced in human scale, encouraging viewers to touch the fabric, sewing or wooden sculpture, and walk among her installations. Her furniture sculptures are mis-fitted and are disabled, she states like herself, through encounters and interviews with witnesses of violent trauma. My research on Salcedo's approach to these aspects, informed by her work in Colombian political theatre, enabled me to create further depth in both *The ILM* and my installations on the theme of "*Make do and Mend*".

Figure 86: Doris Salcedo, *Untitled* 1995.
Wood, fabric, bones 257.5 x 46.5 x 33 cm 'Currents 92: The Absent Body',
Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.
Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo*. p. 68

03:34:24

Joseph Reynolds
Paddy McMahon
Annie Bogle
John Gibson
John Desmond Frizzell
George Williamson
Gillian Williamson
Sharon McBride
Michael Morrison
Evelyn Baird
Michelle Baird
Leanne Murray
Thomas Begley
Wilma McKee
Martin Moran
Sean Fox
James Cameron
Mark Rodgers
Rory Cairns
Gerard Cairns
Karen Thompson
Steven Gerard Mullan
James Moore
Joseph McDermott
Moira Duddy
John Moyne

Salcedo situates herself in installation art, yet her artwork has a direct relationship with the consequences of the ongoing violence in Latin America, specifically in Columbia in the 1980's. Salcedo incorporates both domestic textiles and sculptural spatial concerns in her artwork, often employing non-traditional materials, such as reconfigured and restructured furniture or textiles and clothing. The body and trauma are central themes in her sculptural work. Since 1948, terror and violence is commonplace in Colombia, as the country has been involved in a lengthy civil war. Thousands have been killed each year, and one-and-a-half million Colombians are internally displaced persons (IDPs). 'Médicins Sans Frontier' describes the situation in Colombia as:

> The well-being of most Colombians has been adversely affected by one thing: violence…Conflicting political aspirations are often expressed in deadly ways: Armed groups launch attacks on those they suspect of collaborating with the powers that be, and others use equally brutal methods to defend what they see as the country's established economic and industrial order. The government and the military seek to redress the balance through force of their own. But it is the civilians who suffer.[1]

This situation impels some Colombian artists to be preoccupied with concepts of memory, perhaps in an attempt to reconcile both victims and perpetrators of violence, and to imagine alternative ways of living in peaceful coexistence. The Colombian situation[2] encapsules an experience about trauma and horror that can be valuable paradigm to the rest of the world. Sculptor Doris Salcedo's work provokes viewers to think about "their own relationship to social upheaval" and "the absence of a social contract by which the absolute value of human life" is held as an unassailable principle (Cameron 9).

In Australia, I was privileged to study with three artist-colleagues from Bogotá, Colombia[3]. Our inspirational dialogue and often hilarious adventures have been one of the personal highlights of my doctoral work at the University of Wollongong. Informal discussion can breed fuller engagement, so my investigations into the work of Doris Salcedo have

John Alexander Burns
Brian Woods
Sean Hagan
Alexander Scott
Paul Andrew Garrett
Brian Duffy
Robert John Todd
Robert McClay
Andrew Beacom
Ernest F. Smith
Noel Alexander Cardwell
Bridie Glennon
Daniel Blinco

03:36:00

1994

Desmond Doherty
Cormac McDermott
Arthur McDonnell
Mark Sweeney
Dominic McGlinchey
William Johnston Beacom
Sean McParland
Jack Smyth
John Haggan
Francis Joseph Brown
Gregory Pollock

been assisted by these collegiate friendships which have brought the issues in Salcedo's work more fully to life, helping me reflect upon just how her work has informed my own. Northern Ireland and Colombia share the commonality of violent civil strife, and although the political specificities and trajectories of context are widely disparate, the traumatic legacy for individual survivors of violence and their communities have similar ramifications.

The Artwork

Doris Salcedo unabashedly admits that she is as 'disabled' as her artworks are 'awkward' because of her close proximity to the extremes of abuses of political power and their terribly violent consequences, from living in Colombia. Salcedo's sculpture demonstrates a quiet quality of empathy that people seem eager to embrace. Empathy is inherent in both her work and in the patience that is needed to appreciate and view it. For empathy, touch and human scale are necessary to engage the viewer.

Figure 87: *The Widowed House*. Doris Salcedo, *La Casa Viuda 1V*, (detail) 1994. Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo*, p 111

Like Richard Serra, Salcedo is adamant that space is never neutral or de-politicized. The sensitivity to issues of the power imbalances inherent in spatial concerns is a particular acuity developed by artists who have been politicized by living in a setting of civil war and/or terrorism.

This includes artists who work from a place of acknowledging the intimate terror of domestic violence. Salcedo draws our attention to spatial issues in her installation work, such as *La Casa Viuda /The Widowed House*, 1992-95. She situates this artwork in a de-centered space, a gallery entrance or passageway, an unofficially sanctioned space. Salcedo speaks of conquering unhabitable space in this 2000 interview with Carlos Basualdo, independent curator and critic:

> I don't believe that space can be neutral. The history of wars and perhaps even history in general, is but an endless struggle to conquer space. Space is not simply a setting; it is what makes life possible. It is space that makes encounters possible. It is the site of proximity, where everything crosses over. I feel I am scattered in many different places. As a woman and a sculptor from a country like Colombia (regarded by outsiders as having a pariah status), working with victims of violence and showing my work in different places around the world, I find myself encountering extreme and contradictory positions, both on a large and small scale. That is why I think I am in a privileged position, always at a *juncture* (my italics; Salcedo in conversation with Basualdo 2000:12).

03:39:12

The Orphan's Tunic

Figure 88: *The Orphan's Tunic* Doris Salcedo, *Unland: The Orphan's Tunic (*detail) 1997. Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo* p 112.

Salcedo's *The Orphan's Tunic*, from a series called *Unland* (1995-98) is an example of a work created from an empathic identification with a young survivor of an horrific incident of violence. Salcedo creates the effect of a palpable presence of human grief and anguish of such a life-altering event. She encourages viewers to touch her art and beckons them to consider the possibility of another response to violence – that of human compassion for difference. The frailty of the human condition is represented by the table, approximately the size of a human body, with its re-structured legs and unsupported mid-section. Employing a painstakingly detailed drilling and sewing process, she captures a concentrated meaning through the stretching and slowing down of time. The artwork is made memorable and provocative through the use of the abject material of human hair, identified with the corporeal body, and the compelling quality of a white, translucent silk fabric. The table top is made porous, like the pores of the skin, by a multitude of miniscule 1/64 inch drill holes.

Figure 89: Doris Salcedo, *Unland: Audible in the Mouth*, 1998. Wood, thread, hair. 74.5 x 315 x 80 cm; Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo*. p.139. Collection, Tate Gallery, London

03:40:48

Martin Cahill

Sean McDermott

John O'Hanlon

Frank Kerr

Malachy Martin Clark

Noel Lyness

1995

James Seymour

Mickey Mooney

Anthony Martin Kane

Billy Elliott

Norman Harley

Paul Edward Divine

Francis Collins

Christopher Johnston

Martin McCrory

1996

Ian Lyons

Gino Gallagher

Inan Ul-haq Bashir

John Jeffries

Edward O'Brien

John Fennell

Barbara McAlorum

The joining of two different mis-fitted tables illustrate an effort in 'making do and mending' in the aftermath of a brutally violent forced home-invasion. Such invasions are part of the reign of terror in Colombia in which persons are kidnapped and become a part of 'the disappeared'. Instead of using a 'logical' (masculine) carpentry-joinery method of re-positioning the tables back together, Salcedo sutures them with the feminine technology of sewing, invoking the memory of violence to the body which sears the mind. She has worked the greater length of the tables together with a seam of repetitive miniscule stitches of human hair, perceptible only upon close inspection, which gather more strongly in one particularly dark seam. This seam or joint then appears no more than a shadow at a distance, upon the otherwise pure, white tablecloth/table-skin. Salcedo thus makes a ritual of such obsessive sewing with an almost invisible thread, a 'live' part of the human body, and in the process assuages grief and leaves behind a new memory, together with a newly acquired structural strength. Such carefully constructed details add to the slowing down of time demanded from the viewer to realize the depth of Salcedo's sculpture's implications.

03:42:24

In a 1998 catalogue essay about Salcedo's artwork Charles Merewether suggests:

> The fitting together of the two tables is a disjointedness that both contains and exposes the disruptive element. Overcoming a traumatic experience entails not only recognition of the disjunction between seeing and knowing, but a resistance to trauma's destructive power. (Merewether: 23)

Merewether also states that "the dominant conventions in the representation of extreme violence and remembrance in Colombia over the past fifty years" bear a kind of effect of anesthesia which Salcedo works hard to counter in her creative processes. He postulates that:

> Salcedo puts on public view the traces, relics and stories of remembrance, forms of recollection which represent the repressed archive of a nation which has been silenced and

Thomas L. Sheppard
Dessie McCleery
Jerry McCabe
Frank Shannon
Michael McGoldrick
Thomas Annett
Dermot McShane
Hugh Torney
Sean Devlin
George Scott
Diarmuid O'Neill
Pat McGeown
Darren Murray
James Bradwell
Thomas Stewart

1997

Larry McCartan
Stephen Restorick
John Slane
David Templeton
Robert Hamill
Darren Bradshaw
Sean Brown
Gregory Taylor
John Morris

buried. These are stories of abandonment, the fissures, silences, and oblivion of history, but also the excesses of memory, a past to be reckoned with and a future in which to survive (Merewether: 23).

Salcedo considers her practice as bearing "witness to the witness [of an act of trauma, including a murder], a secondary witness" (Feitlowitz :1). She obtains testimonies from victims of violence, who generally live in rural, interior Colombia, and interviews them personally, so developing an artwork which honors the victim or survivor of trauma, through her immersion in the victim's life. Drawing upon her early training in theatre (Basualdo 8), she places herself within the creative process like a Stanislavski trained Method[5] actor, "in such a way that their [the victim of violence] experience takes precedence over my own"[6] (Feitlowitz :1). Salcedo also uses the analogy of a detective "piecing together the scene of a crime. I became aware of all the details in their lives…there is a process of substitution. Their suffering becomes mine; the centre of that person becomes my centre and I can no longer determine where my centre actually is"[7] (Basualdo 14). This artistic process parallels that of an actor working with the particular motives of their character, in this case the interviewee, and the specific handling of props within a stage set, in this case the found objects such as furniture and textiles[8] used in her installation practice. "From this point of view," Salcedo states, "the piece forms itself" (Basualdo 14).

In a 2000 interview with Carlos Basualdo, Salcedo talks about grappling with the moment of death and trauma as an artist. She describes how both her art and her sense of self are compromised, even while her empathetic plans towards another/an Other (neighbour/kith/kin/community member) are well-intentioned:

> Everything that is beyond me, that I fail to grasp, that I cannot remedy or deal with, is the Other, or in the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas' description, 'the face of the neighbour'… [and] the Other needs me urgently, but I arrive late.[9] I always work on the premise of that delay in arrival, which marks my

Robert Bates
Roland John Graham
David Andrew Johnston
Brian Morton
Bernaderre Martin
James Morgan
`Brian O'Rawe
Glenn Greer
Raymond McCord
James Gerard Devlin
Billy Wright
Seamus Dillon
Edmund Treanor

03:44:00

1998

Terry Enright
Fergal McCusker
Jim Guiney
Larry Brennan
Benedict Hughes
Liam Conway
John McColgan
Brendan Campbell
Robert Dougan
Kevin Conway
Philip Allen

> work with a lack of hope. It is not a question of the impossibility or immensity of the task but of my being incapable of acting effectively. I am disabled. My work is too (27).

By working in this way, Salcedo not only positions herself as Other, but she becomes Other. As she describes it, Salcedo is an artist who is not afraid of categorizing herself as dysfunctional in her art-making, even and all the while being highly articulate about her process and strategies.

Salcedo prefers her sculptures to be touched in "a passing caress", and talks about her work as ever-changing, involving a "process of deterioration," altered by viewer-participants themselves. Her sculptures are live creatures, inevitably subject to decline: "If we were capable of understanding this fragility implicit in life, we would be better human beings" (Basualdo 32).

Doris Salcedo's body of work creates memorials to the dispossessed. Her use of non traditional materials counters familiar public memorial-monuments, illustrating her deep mistrust in monumentality and in the mediated memories that inform official history. According to Salcedo, traditional public monuments are the very failure of memory. By seeking to pin down a fixed, permanent version of events into a static, single meaning, official monuments privilege one way of remembering, while excluding others. Salcedo's sculptures contain a critique of monumentality. She remains anonymous in her interviewee process with victims and places herself in her creative projects, offering testimonies of grief, anger and trauma from the people of her homeland. As Mark Seltzer points out, Salcedo's artwork can be said to expose the hallmarks of a "wound culture" that holds a steadily visible "pathological public sphere" (qtd. by Merewether in Seltzer, 1997: 4-6; 22).

03:45:36

Damien Trainor
David Oliver Keys
Cyril Stewart
Trevor Deeney
Mark McNeill
Adrian Lamph
Ciaran Heffron
Ronan MacLochlainn
William Henry Paul
Richard Quinn
Mark Quinn
Jason Quinn
Andrew Kearney
Breda devine
Fernando Blasco Baselga
Rocio Abad Ramos
James Barker
Oran Doherty
Sean McLaughlin
Frederick White
Bryan White
Esther Gibson
Olive Hawkes
Brenda Logue
Gareth Conway
Jolene Marlow

Conclusion

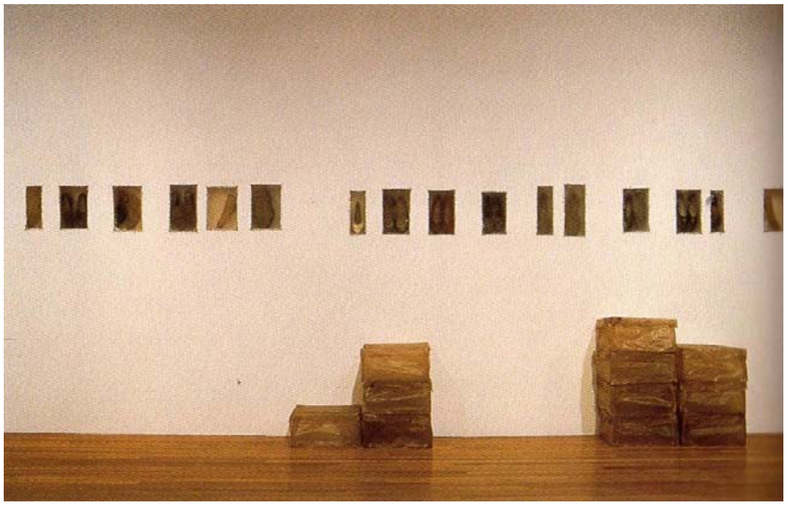

Figure 90: Doris Salcedo, *Atrabiliarios*, 1993. Wall niches, shoes, animal fibre, surgical thread. Dimensions variable. Nancy Princenthal, Carlos Basualdo & Andreas Huyssen, *Doris Salcedo*. p. 53,

03:47:12

Salcedo is an artist who creates objects and arrangements in space by considering certain 'juncture-moments', of extreme encounters with violence. Her sculptural creations are the offspring of a culture where terror and horror have been inherited as the norm. Salcedo's artwork, in the gallery setting, begs reflection but contradictorily necessitates a long period of unsettled viewing where the insidious after-effects of the break-down in normative conjugal and community relations are inherent in the awkward and haunting furniture or clothing represented. Her work, however, suggests not simply trauma and disruption, but the healing and suturing of lives and communities through the painstaking, empathic labour of the intimate and domestic realm.

Alan Radford

Elizabeth Rush

Philomena Skelton

Veda Short

Ann McCombe

Geraldine Breslin

Aidan Galagher

Samantha McFarland

Lorraine Wilson

Julia Hughes

Deborah Anne Cartwright

Brian McCrory

Mary Grimes

Avril Monaghan

Maura Monaghan

Gary White

Sean McGrath

Billy Giles

Frank O'Reilly

Brian Service

1999

Eamon Collins

Rosemary Nelson

Frankie Curry

Brendan Joseph Fegan

Figure 91: Doris Salcedo, *Atrabiliarios*, (detail) 1993.

Charles Merewether, curator at the Getty Research Institute and commentator on Salcedo, cultural memory, monuments and the re-invention of modernism with an emphasis upon Latin America, claims that the notion of Colombia as a culture of violence is a symptom of a greater cultural anaesthesia. He states that violence is not simply a constitutive condition of the country, but that it should be remembered that there is an active cultural and intellectual effort involved in trying to redress the issue (23). Colombia (like Ireland/Northern Ireland) contains a:

> strong substratum of Catholicism and its belief in the notion of sacrificial violence, of forgiveness and redemption as the foundation of emancipation. This produces a culture that reconciles itself to violence as the grounds for suffering and redemption (Merewether 21).

I suspect that Merewether's suggestion would be hotly debated in predominantly Protestant Northern Ireland. Yet, Nell McCafferty does suggest that the book, *Lost Lives*, is "an act of redemption" (frontispiece qtd. in McKittrick et al 1999). In the *ILM* and my own art practice about Ireland/Northern Ireland, by slowly embroidering its reclamation of lives, I am seeking a type of "resurrection" (O'Farrell 1 qtd. in McKittrick et al). Salcedo's work of art-as-a-witness is a reminder of the meaning and human cost of the closeness of trauma and terror in 'ordinary' civilian life, together with the normalisation of embedded fear and violence between neighbours and within society. Those kidnapped, disappeared and dead are, thus, shown to be a part of the living community, through the creative act and engagement with installation art as performative ritual. As such, Salcedo's work is consoling, as I hope my *ILM* to be. For example, Salcedo's work with weaving and sewing the miniscule fibre of hair, not unlike Narelle Jubelin's petit point needlework and my 'freckled spots' of sewn hair, is an artistic strategy to slow down time which, in turn, testifies against violence, helps define inconsolable somatic trauma and acts against the violent amnesia of the international mainstream media spectacularisation of instances of trauma and murder. In the creation of my *ILM,* and its accompanying installations on '*Mending*', I share with Salcedo an interest in commemorating how the domestic environment shatters with political violence in the greater community. In creatively acknowledging and remembering re-configured daily routines, the chance to grieve and heal can begin occur. In Salcedo's oeuvre, the intimate and invisible stake claim to space in an installation practice discourse which services the humanity of the general public interest.

03:50:24

Endnotes

[1] Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an international humanitarian aid organization.

[2] Colombian violence escalated during the 1990s, partly because of the rise in the cocaine trade. The government is unable to fully manage rural areas which become dominated by guerrillas and paramilitary armies.

[3] I am indebted to much dialogue with my feminist colleagues also studying postgraduate work at the University of Wollongong, 2002 - 4: Marta Cabrera, PhD

Cultural Studies, jeweller Luz Hincapé, MA English Literature, and painter Maria Peňa, MCA, (although, unfortunately, I have yet to accomplish conversational Spanish).

[4] see section titled 'The Tactile Unconscious' which references theorist Julia Kristeva in Diana Wood Conroy's unpublished University of Wollongong thesis (1995: 139-147)

[5] Konstantin Stanislavski, director of the Moscow Art Theater, wrote *An Actor Prepares*, published in English, 1936. The Stanislavski Method of acting emphasizes an individualized, psychological approach to acting; called "The Method" it required a performer to draw on his or her own self, on experiences, memories, and emotions to inform a characterization and shape how a character might speak or move. Characters were thus shown to have a complex inner life. The Stanislavski Method was popularised during the post World War II era. (http://www.moderntimes.com/palace/method.htm), accessed March 27 2003.

[6] Salcedo explains that, "Primo Levi teaches us that each extreme experience imposes extreme limits on the individuals who live through it – victims as well as victimizers. Absolute situations are very complex, and it is precisely within that complexity that we find what it is to be human. In bearing witness to inhumanity we learn to recognize humanity" (Salcedo qtd. in Feitlowitz 1)

Because my *Irish Linen Memorial* deals with commemorating both victims and perpetrators of violence (who are themselves victims in death) I am circumspect about and careful with the use of the word 'victim'. 03:52:00

[7] Salcedo states, "It was in the Colombian theatre of that time [approx. late 1970s], with its political overtones, that my interest in art and politics came together" (Salcedo qtd. in Basualdo 8)

[8] Salcedo's installation, *La Casa Viuda II*, (*The Widowed House*), 1992 – 95, works specifically with household furniture altered in various ways, such as with poured concrete in the cupboards, and fabric, metal, such as zippers, lace and bone inserted in disturbingly awkward places.

Conclusion

The Irish Linen Memorial (*The ILM*) is a distinctive artistic production which is primarily explained in terms of material culture in this scholarly exegesis, entitled *An Intimate Monument: (re)narrating the troubles in Northern Ireland*. My research study on *The ILM* demonstrates how this public artwork-installation is contextualised as a counter-monument and an artistic intervention that acts as a 'modest witness', in Donna Haraway's words (45). Two personal art installations explore the subjective experience of distressing loss: *'Excavation of Being at Rest: Make Do and Mend'*, 2004, and '*Mending',* 2005. These accompanying artworks illustrate how the intimate 'art of memory' overlaps with public art of commemoration. This creative work references archaeology, together with funerary ritual, textiles theory, and the overlap of public and personal narratives: research underpinned by Diana Wood Conroy's scholarship. In this doctorate project, creating art in the between the public and private is a part of a concerted feminist effort to address the 'excluded middle' of recently intersecting and dissolving binary divisions, as explained by feminist philosopher Elisabeth Grosz (xvi). *The ILM* is a commemorative anti-violence sculpture; a mobile material counter-monument.

The Irish Linen Memorial has been created and exhibited in countries of the Irish Diaspora – the USA, Canada and Australia. It creates a space in which to (re)imagine the honouring of a plurality of difference in the divided community of contemporary Northern Ireland after 'the troubles'. As such, the creation of this memorial about Irish history contributes to contemporary art, based in identity politics and postcolonial text/textiles.

The complex socio-political circumstances, which have produced the death toll of names, are outlined in chapter two. This chapter gives a background to the troubles through new definitions of community according to Benedict Anderson (15), a feminist (re)imaging of citizenship and ethnic identity politics, such as with sociologist Elisabeth Porter on location and 'plurality'(36); O'Leary and McGarry on 'antagonism' (40) and historian Donald Akenson on 'intolerance'(1988) and 'hatred-maintenance systems' (2004). This contextual chapter on Northern Ireland history is thus developed as the situation in N.I has been so complex and is in a state of flux. The memorial is also controversial by its listing of the names of those killed according to the time they died: Protestants and Catholics, victims and perpetrators appear side-by-side. The memorial achieves the visual recognition of a parity of esteem between persons killed and their grieving loved ones, through a reordering of non-hierarchical relationships. Theorists Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, on women and

ethnicity in places of violent conflict, assist in contextualising ideas of horizontal alliances across division (57). *The ILM* works against a static narration of consociation of the living to include honouring the lineage of one's own neighbourhood dead as well as 'the dead of the other side'. This informative background chapter is an overview to the creative work, putting in context 'soft-power' political dynamics appropriate to a needlework project of white linen.

Figure 92: Seed, shuttle and damask linen. *Flax to Fabric: The Story of Irish Linen*, Brenda Collins. An Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum Publication, 1994. p.35.

Chapter three describes the symbolic, poetic and historic reasons for the choice of linen as an Irish/Northern Irish memorial. Following postcolonial trade and textiles theorists Paul Sharrad, literary theorist, and Diana Wood Conroy, based in archaeology, I describe linen as a part of the material culture and trade history of Northern Ireland. Outlined are the specifics of flax farming and linen manufacture as central to the settlement and colonisation of (all) peoples in the North of Ireland, since the mid to late 1600s. Small rural flax farms, bleaching greens and the accompanying processes of scutching, spinning and weaving linen are central to northern Irish history and, therefore, mythology. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, linen signalled a civilised domestic life for upwardly mobile Protestants and Catholics. I have included a biography of Saidie Patterson, weaver, lace-maker and the first female textile unionist in Belfast whose activism crossed-over into peacemaking in working-class communities marked by sectarian violence in the 1970s and 1980s. Her life's work illustrates the intersection and metaphoric appeal between the making and care of textiles, and the wear and tear on the social fabric, following the work of theorist Dorothy Jones (45). Quality linen domestic goods became part of a positive Irish identity and were integrated into Irish storytelling. A poetic example about linen bed-sheets, by Seamus Heaney in memory of his mother, is included in chapter three. As such, the importance of flax farming and the linen textiles industry was closely associated with women and family life. A 'pieced-together' fabric memorial, speckled with spotted locks of Irish hair, symbolically embodies the memory of the political, social and personal ruptures in N.I. Linen's fine technical properties have been an iconic emblem of pride to both the Protestant and Catholic Irish people around the world, from the success of the Industrial Revolution to the present day.

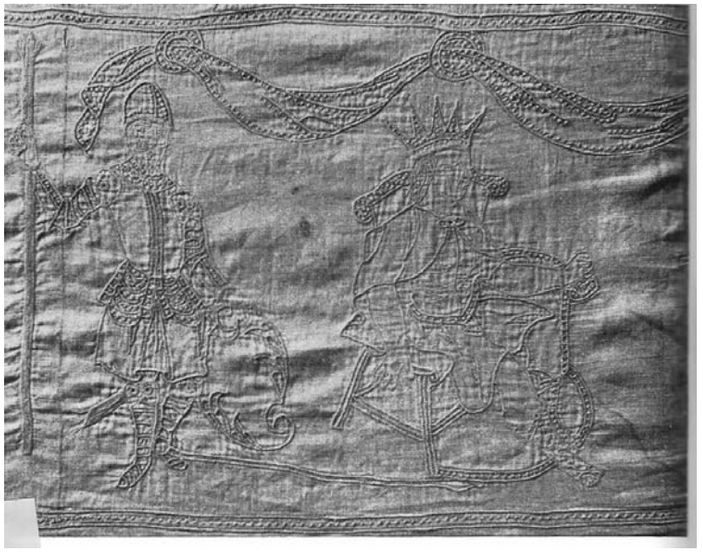

Figure 93: example of Irish traditional Mountmellick embroidered bed cover (detail): the wide border 35cm
Biblical and historic characters. Made in Westport, Co Mayo about 1830; completed during the long voyage to Australia in 1850.
A Collection in Australia, Ref #55.

Continuing this emphasis, Chapter four outlines moveable or performative public art in fabric/textiles through the lens of feminist-artists Judy Chicago, Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, Janis Jefferies, Suzanne Lacy, folklorist Linda Pershing (1993: 327-57 and 1996) and historian Joan Wallach Scott (2002:1-23). Describing tactics of collaboration by women's cooperatives such as '*Women in Black*,' the discussion foregrounds art which uses needlework and narrative as group political protest. Textile techniques offer a significant artistic strategy for highlighting and mobilising women's issues in the greater political arena, through textiles' long association with personal relationships. When the juxtaposition of needlework and architecture occurs, as I discovered in researching Justine Merritt's *The Ribbon Round the Pentagon*, the binary opposition of the male/female symbolism too-readily is judged in conservative gendered terms. Such a reading can make for a dismissal or erasure of the seriousness of a 'female' fabric creation. Yet, I argue, underpinned by theorists Gloria Orenstein and Linda Pershing, that performative community-arts rituals with cloth are important as catalysts for social change, developing a public voice for women's concerns through active, non-confrontational role-modeling. While needleworked projects may seem inherently conservative (referencing Victorian-era, moral colonialist values, as *The Ribbon* project lead by self-identified Christian mother Justine Merritt), the subtext is, at the same time, simultaneously critical of the social order. As Joan W. Scott or Carole Gilligan suggest, certain feminist women's concerns are inter-related with those of (a more just and sustainable) society. This chapter demonstrates how public needlework projects by women promote processes such as care giving, the maintenance of interconnected relationships (including kinship) and activate female leadership, such as in Suzanne Lacy's *The Crystal Quilt*. The discussion in chapter four provides models for *The ILM* creation through other artists' monumental textile-based projects which have involved commemoration and anti-violence, putting in context women and artists working for the possibility of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. Research in chapter four also examines the technique of 'drawnwork' and/or invisible mending with hair as important textiles strategies that, ironically, work against amnesia, silence and erasure in an age of the media spectacularisation of trauma.

Figure 94: Quilts made by civilian internees of Changi Gaol:
one with a message for the Nipponese soldiers 134x165cm (53x65ins) and
another message for the Australian soldiers 130x203cm (51x80ins)
Collection Australian War Memorial, Canberra.
Australian Quilt Heritage Margaret Rolfe, J B Fairfax Press Pty Ltd., 1998. p. 77.

In reviewing these case studies, my exegesis demonstrates that textiles practices (feminised in the nineteenth century, according to Rosita Parker), continue to be denigrated as conceptually lightweight as the the fabric with which the artists work. For example, commemorative group fabric projects can be interpreted as marginal when 'performed' in specific and obvious juxtaposition with an architectural structure: *around* The Pentagon, or *inside* a structure, such as The Crystal Court designed by Philip Johnson. So, Judy Chicago's tactic of waiting twenty-three years for *The Dinner Party* (created in the decorative crafts of embroidery and ceramics, 1979) to be housed within a mainstream institution, The Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York City (2002), and not a women's museum, has proven effective for its serious acceptance as simply 'a monumental work of art'. *The ILM* has been described by critic Meredith Hinchliffe of *The Canberra Times*, February 2004, as "poignant and moving and a forceful, though gentle, reminder of the personal tragedies and futility of war." My hope is that, like *The Dinner Party*, *The ILM* may achieve similar longevity and historical significance.

The detailed examination of Narelle Jubelin in chapter five illustrates particular strategies of politics, identity and intimacy. Jubelin's unusual oeuvre has gained widespread art-world acceptance since Australia's bicentenary in 1988. As an artist, she juxtaposes petit point needlework with literary references, sculptural assemblage and an architectonic installation practice. Her work bears concern for the erasure of women's achievements; she asks her audience to reconsider the body, the erotic or touch in academic theoretical circles; her technical processes reference 'time' and its intersection with photographic reproduction. Jubelin's artwork offers thoughtful comment about the circulation of ideas through material culture or craft, throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods. This case study demonstrates the recent acceptance and general applicability of textiles as a significant medium for intellectual socio-political discourse, especially critiques of cross-cultural trade, production and consumption.

Chapter eight highlights a particular emphasis on 'juncture space' and art that attempts to reconcile both victims and perpetrators of violence. Doris Salcedo's sculptural installations explore soft, as well as hard, materials: hair, skin and bone as well as found furniture. Her artistic responses to a violent political society in Colombia are distinctly anti-monument and, as such, are produced in human scale; viewers may touch the fabric or wooden sculpture, and to interact with her installations. In interviews with Charles Merewether and/or Carlos Basualdo, Salcedo is shown to create quiet, empathetic viewing conditions, on the one hand, while on the other hand, encouraging her viewer-participants to encounter spaces where there is a proximity to 'the face of the neighbour' (Emanuel Levinas); Salcedo's artistic oeuvre is based in politicised 'cross-over' spaces. Her furniture sculptures are deliberately incorrectly reconfigured as a result of the artist's encounters/interviews with witnesses of violent trauma. Salcedo's approach to the traumatic content with her installation furniture, informed by her work in political theatre, influenced me to create further depth in both *The ILM* and my installations on the theme of "*Make do and Mend*".

In the chapters two, five and eight are the case studies Kathy Pendergrast, Narelle Jubelin, and Doris Salcedo, all contemporary artists who work in the soft medium of textiles as well as architectonic installation or sculpture. Each artist is from countries peripheral (Ireland/Northern Ireland, Australia or Colombia) to the central colonising powers of the USA or Britain.

The chapter six case study of USA sculptor Richard Serra is crucial to the concerns of the thesis. His work stands in stark contrast to the lighter weight fabric artworks described in the other chapters. His steel work *Tilted Arc*, was produced as a national USA monument in the oeuvre of materialist, conceptual minimalism. This sculpture exploited the use of site-specific art to expose an underlying social issue of "What constitutes a fully democratised national public space where persons from all walks of life can come together?" Serra's gutsy body of work, – leaning angled or torqued walls of thick steel –, beseeches the viewer-participant to engage in a heightened state of awareness, through an experiential analysis of space and time. My research indicated that the conditions of Serra's public sculpture, *Tilted Arc*, 1979 – 89, such as slowing down time and the requirement of persons to transverse a vast emptiness of plaza hardscape (courageous awareness, reflective time to process, and being alone/encountering others in a state of aloneness) are not dissimilar to aspects a visitor-viewer would encounter/or require when viewing-experiencing a very different counter-monument in another context, such as *The ILM*. Serra's artwork's subsequent removal was a part of this case study, which informs concerns for exhibiting my memorial in a politically divisive context. The chapter six research on Serra gave me an understanding of the violence inherent in conceptually rigorous, materially-based 'publicness' of site sculpture – especially when conservative factions of the state or members of the public, who prefer a facile interaction with art, are at play. This research is a reminder that real public space has diminished since the late 1990s and the relevance of permanent site-specificity has changed. The Serra research underlines how visual imaginings and public constructions are better as mobile forms of art in 2005, rather than fixed and monumental constructions.

A further USA case study explores the different dimensions of the public memorial in chapter seven. I have sought to demonstrate how Maya Lin's most illustrious *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (*The VVM*), 1982, is a post-modern counter-monument, following the research of James Young, Andreas Huyssen and Caroline Wiedmer. *The VVM* was created after a period of national denial and insecurity in the USA about the losses sustained in that war, 1959 - 75. I argue that this memorial draws upon the architecture of the ancient Greek theatre and the role of Greek dramatic tragedy in the community. As such, *The VVM* offers a cathartic role for the general public beyond the specific issues of grief for veterans and their loved ones. A set-design and internet website version of the memorial makes *The VVM* plurally-sited in various locations and in virtual space. Lin has taken on such developments as positive adjuncts, which have influenced her recent commemorative art, such as a monument to the extinction of species. My study emphasises her distinctive visual language, demonstrating how Lin creates the intimacy 'of the reading of a book' for the viewer within architectonic space (a passage) or form (a table), with commemorative inscriptions in reflective granite and a flowing water element. I found that her sensitive approach to site (akin to a landscape architect, or to artist Robert Smithson who she cites as an influence) and her personal background based in the crafts (small metals, ceramics and macramé) have

influenced what she terms the creation of 'hybrid monuments'. Lin's poetic, minimalist aesthetic is foregrounded by her conceptual interests in issues of educational value, significant to social healing. Specific issues in Lin's practice have been reconciliation for disgraced Vietnam War veterans within mainstream society, civil rights achievements, equality for women in education at Yale, and concern for the environment. Lin has worked with these four issues under the rubric of public commemorative art and the hybrid or counter-monument. She continues her private and public commissions with the assistance of her small architectural practice.

Main Artistic Findings in relation to *The ILM* and *Mending*:

1.) An awareness of space and time is influenced by non-object oriented sculpture has informed the making of my *ILM*. Together with this, I have chosen to concern myself with artists who understand that space is never de-politicised. With these sculptors' interest in space, is the issue of *site* and the new millennium state of a pathological or melancholic public sphere, according to Judith Butler, 2000, or Charles Merewether, 1997. Three artists in the thesis, Lin, Serra and Salcedo focus on the aspect of *passage* in their work and the slowing down of time for the effect of *intimate* reflection for the interactive viewer. My case study of Serra focussed on a work of national significance that had the qualities of a postmodern monument in James Young's sense. *Tilted Arc* was a wall/barrier but not-a-wall/barrier and, as such, became a focal point for an encounter of between people of differently perceived political backgrounds, destabilising the 'establishment' implications of its public site. James Young states that conceptual art and ironic self-effacing installations must remain answerable to the needs of art/aesthetics, political memory and official history (7). Qualities of materialism in conceptual minimalism and perceptual aspects of space are also indicated in references to sculptor Robert Irwin and theorist Douglas Crimp in chapter one. In my case studies of two artists with different approaches to the viewer's experience of site, Richard Serra and Maya Lin, I argue that Lin and Serra share sensitivity in outlook, a family background with immigrant parents, and a conceptual rigour in developing public art which is challenging for the viewer. Each artist's lengthy and highly contested public administrative process illustrated the foibles of sculptures placed on national land. As with Serra, my case study on Doris Salcedo demonstrated the compelling concerns of engaging with a chiasmatic juncture of a crossover space within one's artistic oeuvre. My investigations into the above areas of influence have been integrated into my final configuration of *The ILM*, and '*Mending*', 2005.

2.) My artistic practice prioritises the intimacy of 'touch' over the visuality of 'the gaze'. This theme is connected with how linen is connected with the domestic, the everyday and ritual or religious celebrations (across both Catholicism and Protestantism), about the sacredness of life and the body. Therefore, when fabric is used for a memorial to persons killed unexpectedly, for example, from bomb blasts, as in *The ILM*, the profanity

of the violence is more direct. As artist Salcedo would agree, hostility and bloodshed causes a disjuncture in humane social contracts between people about the respect for life and ongoing civil interrelationships as fragile. Her use of textiles as skin emphasises touch, and her use of hair – the corporeal body. According to theorist Sarat Maharaj, when textiles are used in installation art, they are an 'Undecidable', in the use of the term by Jacques Derrida, and mercurial, as demonstrated in my doctoral art practice. Maharaj (chapter four) emphasises that textiles connote the sensual body, the maternal, the home, and a quality of warmth. Therefore, textiles also signal the opposite: the dislocation and displacement of the migrant and the invisible or secret life of those deemed 'untouchable' (by proximity, those we deny 'citizenship in our group' as unlike oneself). Such implications are appropriate for an *Irish Linen Memorial* to the untimely deaths of *all* persons who 'do not belong' (to one another's community) or do not belong because they are a reminder of further intimidation and continued terror/violence. *The NAMES Quilt* to HIV victims, referenced in chapter four, is a memorial to a formerly pariah or marginalised group within society (gay men), the subtext of which implicated everyone in society as 'at risk' and in need of public healing and grief. The associated nuances of *The ILM* are comparable. Participatory touch is a key element in a number of these memorials. I have discussed how Maya Lin, in *The Women's Table* at Yale and *The Civil Rights Memorial*, encourages the touching of her textual inscriptions through a veil of water. Similarly, my collaborator, Thomas Fitzgerald added the sounds of water and tears in his composition. Hanging linen handkerchiefs and the effects of light through the translucency of the material also indicates a veil of tears to touch and handle. Narelle Jubelin reminds us visually, through the minutia of her series of petit point of photographic reproductions or of text, about the slow time-based processes of hand crafting to produce visual images. The importance of touch is in the time it takes for reflection and pausing. This is necessary for the practice of remembrance when trauma is involved, as in *The ILM*.

3.) Diana Wood Conroy theoretically separates the contemporary art historical positionings of *intimate* semiotic textiles (with psychological or subversive political subtexts) from *public* tapestry art (narratives of history). She dwells on the importance of explanatory texts and literary references. Her readings of the work of Narelle Jubelin demonstrate intertextuality as a key element in Jubelin's installation practice: in 1993, the use of texts about needlework techniques from the last century, and in 2004, Jubelin's increased postcolonial feminist literary leanings as shown in her lengthy titles which even include footnotes. *The ILM* is always exhibited with its accompanying text, the *Lost Lives* book of names. My preoccupation with the written word is illustrated in the case studies chosen. Both Serra and Lin are preoccupied with words. In Serra's case, action verbs (as seen in his early work and films) are important to his sculptural 'chiasma' spaces. Lin's memorials are described as similar to a book, even achieving a similar degree of intimacy of the act of reading quietly by oneself. Her work demonstrates the need for a team of researchers for the appropriate information factual information for the

listing of names, numbers, and historic events. As in Lin's case study, my focus on facts enables a reader-participant to make their own judgement about the history of the violent conflict. In the thesis, poet Seamus Heaney demonstrates the vacillation of the Northern Irish mind as divided or bridging between inherited British and Irish cultural peculiarities; these take on a serious, almost paranoid, significance in the context of the normalisation of community/societal violence, especially during conservative times politically, like the mid-1980s. In chapter six, I make the comparison between Serra and Heaney who were both preoccupied with the static quality of public political life during the late 1970s, early 1980s; Serra created a work called *Terminal* and Heaney a poem called *Terminus*. Each title connotes something mortal, extremely lethal and/or at 'the end of the line' yet, each artist in his creation actually set out to investigate the underlying conditions of terminal/terminus. While Salcedo does not work with text, her interviews with victims of violent acts suggest an active research and oral history component. Therefore, Salcedo also examines 'extreme' limitations: violence. 'Absolute' situations, such as those in Northern Ireland or Colombia, are complex for both victims and victimisers yet can be the fraught context for bearing witness and recording what it is to be human/humane.

Main Conceptual or Theoretical Findings in relation to the Creative Project:

Firstly, through research for *An Intimate Monument: The Irish Linen Memorial,* my artwork has benefited from new knowledge, most significantly in the fabric arts. Discoveries informed by postcolonial theory in engagement with debates about nationalism, trade and the migrant condition were cited by the following literary theorists, mainly Ann Collett, Dorothy Jones and Paul Sharrad. The attentiveness of the colonial circulation of material culture was evident in my chapter three analysis of the linen industry in N.I. as impacted by the conflict of the American Civil War. Political dialogue about ethnic and cultural identity in Northern Ireland has long been terminally oppositional and dichotomised between Protestants and Catholics. The intention in my creative work is to subvert embedded positions through a creative project, which remembers those killed, and references the futility of intolerance and murdering one another. Therefore, my memorial was created as flexible and lightweight, reflective of light, attentive to architectonic space and patterns of airflow or acoustics.

Secondly, the binary opposition between needlework in the fabric/textile arts, historically gendered female 'domestic craft', and sculpture-installation art, historically gendered as male and 'high art' has been a central investigation. The oppositional positioning of these concerns was typical in modernism and only new research in the last decade, by such theorists as Anna Chave, has served to dissolve the tiresome hierarchy. Therefore, my practical creations, conceptual direction and underlying gender-politics of my artwork may have been categorised as either 'objective' or autobiographical. This 2005 doctoral presentation and research has engaged a reinterpretation of my artistic oeuvre as situated *within and between* monumental, minimalist

sculpture and the more fragile art of textiles/fibres. The development of my doctorate portfolio of artwork has benefited by the recent flexibility or hybridity between these disciplines. I see this elasticity as part of the gains of feminist postcolonial politics and a newly reflexive self-consciousness of artists, especially in the peripheral countries of Australia and Northern Ireland, to contextualise their practice within the broader arena of the humanities and politics. Although still fraught by the unequal power dynamics of their respectively gendered histories, the fields of public sculpture or tapestry (male) and intimate needlework/semiotic textiles (female), have lost their relation of rigid juxtapositions, enabling fresh interdisciplinary dialogue. This emerging flexibility within and between each discipline has facilitated a new suppleness in my artistic oeuvre, as reflected in the major creative project, *The ILM* and the minor works, '*Mending*', 2005, or '*Being at Rest: Make Do and Mend*', 2004.

Figure 95: *The ILM* entrance corridor: braided rope made by Lan (Loretta) Lu.
Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong
Thesis exhibition, February, 2005.
model: Bodie O'Dell; photo Sean Maguire.

Thirdly, my research has demonstrated the substantive inquiry into a long-term creative project of commemoration. This makes my creative project influenced by new developments in cultural history associated with memory studies and postcolonial debates on anti-monumentation. Important theorists spanning memory and memorials, to whom I have referred, are: James Young, Andreas Huyssen, Caroline Wiedmer; Joy Damousi and Donna Haraway on cultural history; Peggy Phelan and Jill Bennett on memory; and Simon Critchley, Charles Merewether, Judith Butler about shifts in the public sphere. In this research, rather than centre on the broader significance of counter-monuments and their contemporary role, I investigated the practical questions of an installation artist, "How to construct an effective monument which serves as a place to grieve those missing or killed from a traumatic act of violence, yet, at the same time, also is a place which allows for persons of difference to come together, if only for a moment, to honour one another?" My most rewarding findings, in this regard, were taken primarily from case studies on Serra's *Tilted Arc* on space and on Lin's *VVM,* together with The Vietnam Veterans Association, on a memorial narrative created by the chronological listing of the names of those killed. I found that a memorial to death from trauma can be terrifying, and to embark on an experiential mourning journey alone, through an artistic creation, can feel almost annihilating! Therefore, I have found that the following elements as a necessary part of the work: 1) a passage with a feeling of privacy to read individual names; 2) time for reflection to take the journey; 3) the courage of the individual visitor to go into the unknown place of death alone; 4) the necessity for the act of touch (whether on stone or fabric) to mediate a feeling of aloneness. Fourthly, I discovered that the human voice can be a substitute for touch and can mediate the feeling of aloneness, encouraging the taking of the journey into the unknown. Therefore, my work with the composer was a crucial collaboration for *The ILM*: music carries the human voice. Upon collaborative discussions, Fitzgerald inserted sound clips, of the reading of names, in Belfast accents, into his collaged piece, *The Seeming Insanity of Forgiveness*. The calling aloud of the names, in a sense, calls into being the person who has passed on, for a moment in time. In researching *The VVM* by Lin, the addition of the bronze figurative statue at the entrance of the memorial serves the purpose of mediating a feeling of aloneness and acts as a reminder of touch also important to textiles. My collaboration with three Mirramu Dance Company practitioners served a similarly contextual role, symbolically explaining the uses and care of fabric or handkerchiefs. With this theme, the book *Lost Lives* has served as an important reference, for it is also a mobile and intimate monument in itself. Also, the Salcedo and Jubelin case studes illustrated to me the significance and effectiveness of installation work that circulates internationally, *rather than public art*, to offer important critiques of monumentality and nationalisms/national identity.

Finally, the socio-political conceptual approaches and metaphoric associations of *The ILM* revolve around sustaining persons and community(ies) through an understanding of difference(s). For example, the semiotic potential of cloth for a well-functioning society is referenced by literary theorist, Dorothy Jones. My analysis of Merritt's *Ribbon Round the Pentagon* illustrated the weak position of a public needlework project for political

activism and yet, its success comes in terms of its processes of community collaboration and as a performative public ritual. In my creative project, the interdisciplinary overlap between sculpture and textiles is mediated by an inter-related reinvigorated philosophical debate on the public and the private. In the last decade, their historically-gendered positionings have diminished in impact.

My creative project has had extensive printing, embroidery, sewing, tatting, braiding and installation–construction processes (see small accompanying art catalogue booklet for full credits). The full recognition of the achievements of women, feminist or sensitive men and artists as full participants in public life/citizenship is an important part of the sustainability of a rewarding, rich and caring (non-violent) community life. This argument is underpinned by theorists Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, Elizabeth Grosz and Joan Wallach Scott. Peace activist, Betty Reardon and former Irish president, Mary Robinson and Irish poet laureate, Seamus Heaney, are cited for their poetic reflections on the commemoration of the contributions or the leadership potential of women. Within this subject, textiles remain a focus – symbolic of the loving maintenance of interconnections, extended family and sustainable community systems.

Figure 96: *The Irish Linen Memorial*, Thesis exhibition, February, 2005
- hundreds of handkerchiefs, printed with ten names each, approximately 12 inches square
- grid configuration with cotton strips; approximately 2ft H off of the floor in a slight slope
Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong
photo Sean Maguire.

My intimate monument: *The Irish Linen Memorial* had a multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary collaboration, 2002 – 4, with Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, choreographer-dancer, and an original musical composition – a sonic-surround element (including intercultural 'chants for the dead') with Thomas Fitzgerald, composer, both Australian practitioners from the University of Wollongong. In totality, my exegesis translates reinvigorated philosophical debate about public/private and fresh material culture research on sculpture and textiles into restorative feminist (re)imaginings in the aftermath of sectarian violence, to the memory of the troubles and to those individual *Lives Lost* in Northern Ireland. To conclude, my research places *An Intimate Monument: The Irish Linen Memorial* as an artistic (re)imagining which honours a 'parity of esteem' to underpin suggested new models of citizenship within the public sphere in a Northern Ireland emerging from entrenched violent conflict after the troubles.

Postscript: The Influence of my personal journey:

My personal journey, which underpins this doctorate body of artwork, constitutes my art school training with a major in sculpture, and subsequent ten-year career of site-specific installation practice, mainly outdoors. My focus since 1991, was on creating 'art as a living system'. In 2005, I am preoccupied with 'art about death' as a part of lived experience for sustainable, non-violent communities. In the 1990s, my art practice was concerned with the sustainability of the environment through the use of non-aggregate materialism. For example, the compression of natural fibres to build sculptures incorporating walls was my favoured construction technique (such compression and dissolution processes also relate to pathos and memory).

My early private life included an intense period of female socialisation at a Canadian upper-middle class girls' school, (which included three years of training in home economics). Sometime later, I engaged in 'working class' technical training: rough, large-scale carpentry in the commercial building trades with The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; this supplemented my casual labour as an architect's hand in design/build/renovate situations. Since I was young, a third area of interest, which influences my creative practice, was literature as studied primarily through creative drama, poetry and oration. This aspect of my background explains my disposition towards the links between fabric arts and text, narration and (primarily women's) oral history or story-telling. The power of such interconnected threads is represented in the making of *The ILM* and, also stem from my ethnic heritage, an Irish contemporary visual culture inclination towards the written word. The (re)imagining of history through my creative project of a listing of the names, is given another layer with the time code in this exegesis layout which represents the length of time it takes for an oral reading of the roll call of those killed over the years. I think Seamus Heaney, who is quoted throughout the thesis, might approve!

In 2000, after returning to Belfast, for the first time as an adult and Visiting Artist, a personal physical-emotional-financial crisis in my life ensued. This prompted being creatively stimulated by the terrifying subject matter of all those *Lost Lives* cut short by trauma. The strain of my early emigration (and broken kinship or community ties) had been re-ignited by the 1999 Horsehead International project (Seattle-Belfast), together with a type of survivor's guilt of being the recipient of an 'ordinary' childhood in peaceful and multi-cultural, religiously-diverse British Columbia, Canada. So, I am part of the Irish Diaspora to Canada, the east coast of the USA, Australia and Britain (the latter is not included as a personal destination, yet it can be assumed). During the making of this memorial and the '*Mending*' series, I would sometimes feel myself empathetically, emotively grappling with nervousness about the moment of violent death, as such are the associations when one takes on with a project of 'naming' individual lives. Also, at other times, I would feel terribly alone with the pared-down utilitarianism of my project: a simple grid of linen and printed names; the poetics of the mourning processes of embroidering, tatting, sewing and how the linen handkerchiefs could act to collect tears, mask sorrowful breathing and wipe away bodily fluids or help apply soothing oils – these healing aspects would escape or entrap me, not unlike a trauma victim myself. After exhibition or presentation processes, some visitors would recount to me their own stories of trauma, activated by the artwork and adding to an associated oral history. During the larger project, my mind could wander with obsessively re-counting what life would have been like if I had grown up, or still lived, in north Belfast and the overlap between public and domestic violence. It is interesting to remember that my first encounters, in 2001 – 4, with unabashedly Northern Irish/Irish emigrants in Australia felt like I was involved in a homecoming not available to me during my assimilation in Canada or the USA, 1980s.

Anti-Irish discrimination, in a variety of subtly different forms, has existed in countries of the Diaspora for many years. The subtext of the artwork, in its linen materiality, and the more literal visual emphasis on the linen trade label, suggests an engagement with a renewed pride in Northern Irish/Irish identity. As this lengthy project and dissertation has come to an end, I have felt relieved of the more activated aspects of remembrance that occur with every ritual-installation of this *ILM*. With the doctorate process, I have a renewed gratitude for a deeper knowledge and understanding of my place as an artist within Irish studies and between, rather than, at different times, at opposite ends of, the polemic divisions between sculpture and textiles. Since the sewing of names and collating of hankies is still on-going, I have a continuous link with my still-scattered family, newly extended collegiate research community and a humility, rather than shame, in being from a violent country; a place which, at the same time, can boast various peoples, in all walks of life, working on cultural, socio-political, intellectual or grassroots remedies to constitutive patterns of hatred or antagonism.

My public memorial, *The ILM*, was augmented by further artistic developments in the art of memory and trauma, in '*Mending*'. The latter title suggests a textiles reference, yet the construction is in sculptural materials: a steel tray with oil and a lit figurative projection, together with a new media component – a moving image of myself breathing slowly. These artwork-installations, still in process, serves as a reminder of that the normalisation of violence has become part of the identity of Northern Ireland over a period of thirty years and beyond. In the period of proposed reconciliation after the troubles, my exegesis questions how those killed are commemorated: how each of their individual stories/myths/memories are part of a greater fragile community, which constitute newly imagined ways of living with difference or 'parity of esteem' for one another in the present-day communities of Northern Ireland.

Figure 97: *The ILM* entrance/exit corridor: with braided rope.
Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong
Thesis exhibition, February, 2005.
model: Robert Trouton; photo Sean Maguire.

Figure 98: From 'Ireland on Fast-Forward' by Richard Conniff *National Geographic,* September 1994 p. 12.

IRISH GLOSSARY

Dail (1495)
The lower house of the Irish Parliament.

Ecumenical
Ecumenical, meaning of world wide scope or applicability; 'an issue of cosmopolitian import'; general or universal.

Fenian (1496)
The Fenian Brotherhood, founded in 1858, formed part of the history of militant republicanism but the term 'fenian' in the modern context is an abusive description for a Catholic.

Interface
The boundary spaces between Catholic (Nationalist) and Protestant (Unionist) areas; particularly between two highly segregated neighbourhoods, some of which are marked by a Peace Line. (see Heatley 2004)

Loyalist Volunteer Force (1497)
A dissident faction of the UVF formed in the late1990's, it was mainly made up of former mid-Ulster UVF members opposed to the organisation's ceasefire in the late 1990's. It also attracted supporters in the north and west Belfast and carried out a number of sectarian killings following the death of its leader, Billy Wright.

Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (1497)
Established in 1967 and modelled on the American black civil rights movement's tactic's of passive resistance and non violence, the NICRA launched a campaign in northern Ireland which led to mass street demonstrations and precipitated loyalist opposition. Many nationalists and republican politicians were active members. The Civil Rights Association became less of a force following Bloody Sunday. The January 1972 killing of 13 people by British soldiers heightened the division between those in the Catholic community who wished to campaign peacefully and those who were prepared to use force.

Official IRA
A republican paramilitary group, it has remained largely dormant since declaring a cease fire in 1972 following a feud with the larger Provisional Wing.

Orange Order (1497)

The largest of the 'Loyal Orders', it was founded in County Armagh on 1795 and, by the time of the Home Rule controversies in the late nineteenth century, had expanded into an important politico-religious grouping which united all forms of unionism in opposition to Irish nationalism and British government efforts at constitutional change.
Throughout its existence its tradition of marching, sometimes through nationalist districts, has caused controversy. Its extensive program of marches culminates on July 12th in a commemoration of the victory of King William 111 at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

Royal Ulster Constabulary (1489)
The police force for Northern Ireland established in 1921.

Sinn/Fein (1499)
Regarded as the political wing of the IRA, it claims decent from the party established in 1904 by Arthur Griffith. It is an all-Ireland political organization unique in that it has representation in the Dail and the House of Commons as well as in the Northern Ireland Assembly, although its MP's do not take their seats in Westminster.

Sectarianism
Sectarianism is a bigoted adherence to a factional viewpoint.

Stormont (1499)
The building, completed in 1929, which housed the Northern Ireland parliament until it was prorogued in 1972. It became the seat of the Assembly established after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. The term Stormont is also used to refer to the Unionist government of the period 1921-72.

Ulster Defence Association (UDA) (1501)
The largest loyalist paramilitary organization, the UCA was established in Belfast in 1971 and proscribed in 1992.

Brehon Law: 'Under this law a man's identity was defined in terms of tribe and family; outside the tribe he had no legal personality. Only the men of cut and learning passed freely between peoples. Land was the common property of the family and could not be alienated by an individual. Monarchy was elective within an extended family group. Wealth was reckoned in cattle. Slavery was practised. Honour – or 'face' – was assessable in concrete terms of livestock or chattels. Killing might be compounded by a blood-price. Custom and ostracism were the only expressed sanctions, but they were often reinforced predictably by *force majeure'*. (O'Brien 18).

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