



MONASH University

Market Values

Michael Bullock

Master of Arts (Fine Art), Monash University

Post-Graduate Diploma of Visual Art, Victorian College of the Arts and Music

Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) Curtin University

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at

Monash University in 2021

Monash Art Design and Architecture

Abstract

Taking as its site a second-hand market in the outer Western suburbs of Melbourne, but with origins in a Chor Bazaar market in Bangalore India, my doctoral project, **Market Values**, asks how art records an engagement with the world, through encounters with the materials and objects that can be found in a second hand-market. *Market Values* presents this engagement with the world in the materiality of objects I have explored, investigations of the places in which they can be found, and their transformation through sculptural processes that highlights how these objects circulate in the world within various systems of exchange.

Through practice-led research, the project considers the changing values of used objects and the apparatus that displays them. These considerations of value take into account the connections and differences between an object as base material and its symbolic or semiotic value. A focus on the technical processes involved in reproducing objects allows me to mobilise used objects into new assemblages that re-evaluate their past and future potential.

In this process, a series of key questions arise: *What are the chronologies and passages of objects? Can we use them to imagine different spaces and times that extend beyond their immediate location? How does the journey of objects originate, end or continue, and how does the market (and later, the artist) assemble and gather them in a fashion that may allow us to picture this journey? Do these objects also reveal a similar passage and rhythm to the movement of people on a global scale?*

In a globalised epoch where general markets of exchange are increasingly delocalised, the second-hand market presents an alternative, seemingly uncomplicated and simple display of commerce and trade where goods and materials are temporarily gathered and dispersed, exchanged and circulated for cash, as both trash and treasure. People gather, while objects accumulate in a passage between use and dereliction. The marketplace – a site where the arrangement of many things, objects and materials points to elsewhere and some other time – sits at an interface or meeting place, between what is local, and what lies beyond that immediate location.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	<i>i</i>
List of Figures.....	<i>iv</i>
Acknowledgements.....	<i>v</i>
Copyright notice.....	<i>viii</i>
Introduction: Market Values	<i>1</i>
(To) 'Let the World in Again' and 'a Living Place'	1
The Analogue.....	5
Lists, lexicons and making: developing methodologies	10
Chapter outlines	13
Chapter 1: 8AM (Understanding the Market).....	<i>19</i>
8AM	19
Brass	22
The Seven Lives of Garbage	25
Good Circulation	29
Chapter II: Metaphors of Meeting: (What happens when two forms are joined and what new associations result?)	<i>34</i>
Gathering: a family of brass.....	35
Arranging: display forms.....	37
Assembling.....	40
Coda:.....	43
Chapter III: Handling and the Handmade (What is big is small, what is small is big).....	<i>47</i>
Coins in circulation.....	47
Finding: Coins Out of circulation.....	49
Enlarged Coins	50
Enchantment	54
Making Coins, Making Sculpture	56
Digital Ghosts.....	62
Chapter IV: Origins, Arrangements, Returns. (the past catches up).....	<i>68</i>
Return to the Image.....	68

Origins.....	69
The Arrangement of Speech into Language	71
Retrieval and Salvage.....	73
Arrangements.....	78
Simryn Gill and a recognition of profane Illumination.....	81
Return to a market of imagination (the bazaar)	83
Reconstructions/Replications/Remaking.....	86
Rejected Gods.....	88
Remaking	89
Conclusion: Market Values	95
How art records an engagement with the world.....	95
Proximity.....	97
The Market as a site of, and for the imagination.....	99
Flea markets and the bazaar.....	101
Inscription/Spectral qualities of the Market.....	103
The Lives of Objects	104
Palimpsests	106
Bibliography.....	108
Interviews	115

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Zoe Leonard, <i>Analogue</i> , 1998-2009, 4 chromogenic colour prints and 8 gelatin silver prints, Each 11 × 11" (27.9 × 27.9 cm), Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.....	6
Figure 2:	Michael Bullock, author's reference photographs, 2017.....	12
Figure 3:	Michael Bullock, <i>Lines of Flight</i> , author's reference image, 2017.....	18
Figure 4:	Michael Bullock, <i>Shroud</i> , author's reference Image, 2017.	25
Figure 5:	Francis Alÿs, <i>The Seven Lives of Garbage</i> , 1995	28
Figure 6:	Hans Haacke, <i>Circulation</i> , 1969, Vinyl, hose, pump, water, bubbles. Dimensions variable. Installation, Howard Wise Gallery, New York. Collection, General Foundation, Vienna.	31
Figure 7:	Michael Bullock, <i>Meeting Point</i> , author's reference Image, 2017.....	33
Figure 8:	Michael Bullock, <i>Empire</i> , 2017, Copper Rod, Silver Solder and Found Copper coins and Concrete Object. 70 cm x 30cm x 40cm. Photography by Keelan O'Hehir.....	40
Figure 9:	Michael Bullock, <i>The World</i> , 2017, plywood, Masonite, pine and brass found objects. Dimensions Variable. Photography by Keelan O'Hehir.....	44
Figure 10:	Michael Bullock, <i>Coins in Circulation</i> , author's reference image, 2018.....	46
Figure 11:	Michael Bullock, 1964 Penny, author's reference material, 2018.....	51
Figure 12:	Michael Bullock, digital scans of 1964 penny, author's reference image.	62
Figure 13:	Michael Bullock, <i>Rubbings and the Rubbed</i> , 2020. Artist's concept rendering for artworks in plaster of digitally scanned coins.	64
Figure 14:	Michael Bullock, <i>Rubbings and the Rubbed</i> , 2020. Artist's concept rendering for artworks in plaster of digitally scanned coins.	65
Figure 15:	Michael Bullock, <i>Found Alphabet</i> , author's reference image, 2013.....	67
Figure 16:	Michael Bullock, <i>The Trail of Time</i> . 2013, Bronze, 3.75 m by 1.5m by .75m, Fremantle Arts Centre.	76
Figure 17:	Simryn Gill, <i>Nicolas Bouvier, Histoires d'une image (Geneva, Editions Zoé 2001)</i> , 2007, linen, 138.5 cm, 12 strands from the series Pearls (1999-ongoing).....	83
Figure 18:	Edwin Lord Weeks, <i>The Silk Merchants (Indian Bazaar)</i> , 1885, oil on canvas, 92.71 x 66.04 cm. Courtesy of the Colby College Museum of Art	84
Figure 19:	Michael Bullock, <i>Circulation piece</i> , 2018, bronze, 5 x 26 x 14cm. Photography by Aaron Rees.	90
Figure 20:	Michael Bullock, <i>Enclosure 2013</i> , author's reference image, 2013.	92
Figure 21:	Michael Bullock, <i>Enclosure 2019</i> , author's reference image, 2019.	93

Acknowledgements

I have been very fortunate to work with three different primary supervisors during the course of the doctoral project. I would like to thank Dr Tom Nicholson for helping reveal and articulate the questions from its beginnings. Thank you to Dr Quentin Sprague, for helping build the scaffold and structure. Thanks also to Associate Professor Terri Bird, who then helped to bind things together towards completion. The questioning, rigour and generosity of all is much appreciated. My associate supervisor, Marian Crawford has been an unflinching support for the duration. Thank you to Dr Nola Farman who agreed to copy edit and proofread my exegesis. Nola was present in the first day of my artistic education at Curtin University, and was able to also be present at the end, and I am grateful that she could participate in this journey.

I would like to thank the coordinators and tutors within the coursework units of the Doctoral Program, Dr Fiona Macdonald, Dr Jan Bryant, Dr Helen Hughes and Quentin. In addition, thanks to my cohort of graduate students. I would like to thank all of the staff of the Monash Graduate Studies Office, Dr Athena Bangara, MairiRose Macleod, Dr Elena Galimberti and Dave Wolf.

There are many professional staff at MADA who have helped me with their expertise. I would like to especially thank the technical staff who have all assisted me with my many questions, and myriad technical problems, with kindness and patience. Alex Lyne, Dan Truscott, Dale Meehan, Anna Varendorff, Christopher Day, Randall Kohn, Vito Bila, Callum Dougall, Dan Tanner, Lindsay McKittrick and Raisa Kabir. I would also like to thank my work colleagues at MADA and MUMA, who have been able to accommodate my work schedule around my study.

During this candidature I was able to present different versions of my research to different audiences and panels. In 2017 I presented at the Post Graduate Day of the AAANZ 2017 Conference, *Art and its Directions* at the University of Western Australia. I was fortunate to receive funding by means of a Post Graduate Travel Grant to attend this event. In 2019, I presented at the *Asian Art Research Now* RHD workshop at the University of Melbourne. Presenting my research via the 3MT competition allowed the ability to communicate my research to a very new audience. All these events allowed

very welcome interventions from audience members and panels unfamiliar to my work and research. In a similar vein, the *Cementa* zoom group was another opportunity to present my work and get feedback, especially during the Covid-19 lockdown.

I held exhibitions during the course of this research, and my thanks to Aaron Martin at Five Walls Gallery and Irene Sutton from Sutton project spaces.

In 2019 I was also fortunate to be awarded the *Vice Chancellor's International Inter-campus mobility grant*, that enabled me to travel to IITB-Bombay and TATA Centre for Technology and Design. I would not have been able to achieve this without the excellent and far reaching support of Professor Arthur De Bono, Associate Professor Selby Coxon, as well as Monash University's Adrian Gertler, Program Manager of India Operations. At TATA Centre for Technology and Design, I would like to thank Dr Alka Hingorani and Raja Mohanty who provided much needed guidance and support.

The opportunity to travel to Bombay and Bangalore allowed crucial inspiration for my research, to visit both the Chor Bazaar in Bombay and the Gujeri Market in Bangalore. I would like to especially thank Archana Hande and Suresh Jayaram who were able to demystify and guide my progress through these two sites. I would also like to thank Kausik Mukhopadhyay who generously agreed to a studio visit and interview.

Having an RTP stipend for this doctoral project was an incredible privilege. Allowing me to really think deeply about the project that I was undertaking and develop new skills in research and practice.

Thank you especially to Paul Davis, Paul Lane, James Angus, Nguyen Tran Hoang, Karl Wiebke, Gina Moore, Ned Rossiter, Jethro Harcourt, Caleb Shea, Nick Selenitsch and Daniel Palmer, for their insights and friendship during the course of the PhD. To my extended families, Joanne Bullock, Katherine Bullock, Ian Walker, Carleen Lawlor, Jenelle Reynolds, Elyse Alexander and Ans Varga. To my partner, Elke Varga, thank you for all the support and love during the arduous years of work and Covid lockdown.

Dedicated to the memories of Richard Giblett, John Nixon and Marion Alexander.

"This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship."

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature:

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.

Print Name:

..... Michael Bullock

Date:

..... 05/02/21

Copyright notice

© Michael Bullock 2021

I certify that I have made all reasonable efforts to secure copyright permissions for third-party content included in this thesis and have not knowingly added copyright content to my work without the owner's permission.

Introduction: Market Values

(To) 'Let the World in Again' and 'a Living Place'

I have been reminding myself of two simple dictums that have guided this PhD project, *Market Values*, since I first quickly wrote them down in my notebook in 2017. The first is '(to) let the world in again' and the second is that my artwork 'could come from a living place.'

The full version of this first phrase is for 'art' to 'Let the world in again' that was issued as a "plea", by the art historian, Leo Steinberg in 1972.¹ Steinberg's appeal was a reaction to the predominance of formalism in art, championed by critics such as Clement Greenberg from the late 1950s, and the abstraction of the New York School.² Steinberg's focus was on a newer generation of artists, such as Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns who were living in a fast-changing metropolis where they collected the cast-off objects and materials that were laid to waste in city streets, vacant lots and demolished buildings, reclaiming them into artwork. Steinberg's attention was drawn to these artists' renewed interest in photography, about which Margaret Iversen notes: 'apart from a few interesting experiments in abstraction, could not but let the world in'.³

For Steinberg, the artists used photography as part of a methodology of engaging with the world. The photographer was a witness and recorder of events and encounters, along with the happenstance arrangements of materials and things. To channel light, to focus and shutter through the camera's chambers on to photochemical film, is to create a concrete and authentic relationship with the world by virtue of the photographic or indexical trace. The allusion is that the film camera is a technology that lets the world in.

At the initial stage of my research project my ambitions were as simple as this, letting the world in and asking what was the living place from which my artwork could come. I had begun thinking about the Laverton market in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne,

¹ Margaret Iversen. "Analogue" in *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), 33.

² Iversen, 33.

³ Iversen, 33.

it was a place I had been visiting for a number of years, mostly to collect materials and tools for my sculptural practice. For instance, I had purchased an electric hot pot for melting wax, cold chisels for working bronzes, rasps and files for shaping wood and metal. These purchases were extremely useful and at the market such things were cheap and good quality could be found. Occasionally I would find an LP or a CD, buy some work clothes, shop for cheap fruit and vegies, orchids, and eat phở as reminder of one of my favourite breakfasts when I was in Hà Nội. Could the market be my version of this living place?

The Laverton Market is a meeting place. While people gather every Saturday and Sunday, objects also accumulate in their passage between use, dereliction and the stages of their desired lives as commodities. Indeed, the possibility that these lives may have finished already is reflected by the piles of objects that are arranged as base material, confirming the observations made by cultural theorist Will Straw:

The coherent or rich meaningfulness of an object will typically have withered or dispersed long before the object itself. Nevertheless, the object persists, awaiting either its own physical decay, far off in the future, or those moments in which its meaningfulness and desirability will be renewed.⁴

In the commercial setting of the market an informal economy operated where cash was the preferred currency. In this context, the exchange value of goods fluctuated, prices were rarely marked and often negotiated between buyer and seller. From one week to the next, stall holders came and went, often dependent on the weather or allocation of spaces. This uncertainty also applied to what was sold, allowing a weekly renewal of the need to search for particular things. Goods were rarely packaged, and nothing was advertised. It took place in the open air on bitumen, with temporary stalls and cars lined up, unlike the typical Australian bricks and mortar retail trade in suburban High Streets, Shopping Centres or Factory Warehouses. I had begun to

⁴ Will Straw, "Music as Commodity and Material Culture." In *Repercussions*, vol. 7-8 (Spring-Fall, 1999-2000, published 2002), 147-172, 158. Straw's observations draw heavily on the influential text by Michael Thompson. See Michael Thompson. *Rubbish Theory the Creation and Destruction of Value* - New Edition, edited by Joshua O. Reno. (London: London: Pluto Press, 2017).

think of the Laverton market, or *Rubble and Riches* market, as a 'Bunnings where nothing is wrapped in plastic'.⁵

Reflecting on the market and the forms of objects that populate it, led to the first visualisations of artworks generated in the studio. This work, featured in my 2017 exhibition *Market Values*, is discussed in Chapter II, from which this PhD takes its name. During that year, I generated questions to frame and investigate how these forms and materials found in the market, circulate. My version of Steinberg's plea morphed into 'the market being a meeting point'. This is noted in my studio diary and became another condition that would frame my project as a conversation that makes connections with the world.

The precedent of artists using a flea market as part of their creative methodology is well-established and is discussed further in Chapter IV. It is a methodology first utilised by surrealists and continues to the present day.⁶ The artist pulls objects out of circulation in the market, and into the service of artwork, especially through the use of the found object or the readymade, absorbing the psychic resonances that the object holds. As Iversen writes, drawing on the lineage of André Breton as one originator of this method, 'The object found as if by chance is situated at the point of connection between external nature, perception, and the unconscious.'⁷ However, as an artist primarily practising in the crafts and technologies of sculpture, I am as interested in the use of materials as I am in art history. The marketplace provides excellent opportunities for both the cash-strapped backyard bricoleur and artist-as-bricoleur.

The Laverton market foregrounds the values of materials in the most necessary terms. Materials are put together and displayed in efficient ways to highlight their pragmatic potential, showing the invention and innovation of the stallholder. These materials;

⁵ Author's studio sketchbook, 2017. This observation mirrors the range of goods you could find from this national hardware chain. Having grown up in Perth, I remember when Bunnings existed as a few hardware stores only locally operated but now spread throughout Australia, with all things being ubiquitous.

⁶ The number of artists using flea markets to generate artworks is too extensive to list and this lineage is not the subject of this investigation. Nevertheless, Tacita Dean is one such artist who pursues a scrutiny of the analogue with an engagement with materials sourced from the flea market. *Floh*, is one such example. For an analysis of this work see Godfrey, Mark. "Photography Found and Lost: On Tacita Dean's Floh." *October* 114 (2005): 90-119. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1162/016228705774889619>.

⁷ Margaret Iversen. "Readymade, Found Object, Photograph." *Art Journal* 63, no. 2 (2004): 44-57. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00043249.2004.10791125>. P.49. For a discussion of this legacy of the found object in relation to Breton, see also: Hal Foster. *Compulsive Beauty*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993).

scraps of wood, welded metal, and plastic, were counterparts to that of my own materials used in the studio and workshop to make sculpture destined for the white cube of the gallery rather than the open air. In contrast to the stallholders my interests were designed for an artistic function. My spectatorship of the market and its displays stimulated a currency of curiosity, imagination, and activity related to artworks and exhibitions. As artistic commodities exhibited in galleries, the works I present participate in a different but similarly precarious exchange economy. Compared to the vernacular trade of salvage, second-hand or cheap goods constantly exchanging hands at Laverton, my artworks possessed their own fluctuating values. My participation in this artistic economy had similarly encapsulated what Rasheed Araeen terms 'the privilege of its producers', a speculative exchange of ideas that was not dependent on sales for survival.⁸

My familiarity with markets and second-hand markets, in the years leading up to my PhD research, came from working as an artist that included lengthy stays in Vietnam and India. In these places, I also noticed these vernacular economies, displaying a language of materials that circulated within the market and this made a strong and lasting impression on me. However, as was the case with Laverton, I remained an outsider to, rather than a participant in, the necessary economies that these displays facilitated. For example, in 2013 I had worked in Bangalore/Bengaluru, India, where I visited the daily *KR City* market, in Bangalore's old section of Chickpet, and the associated Junkyard or *Guieri* market. These markets in India provided a comparison to Laverton, understood as living places, connected even though geographically and culturally distant. The market is a site where the arrangement of many things, objects and materials signifies and points to elsewhere and some other time – it sits at an interface, a junction, a meeting place. In this assembled panorama of people and stuff from everywhere, an imaginative possibility is also generated to reveal a collage of layered histories and distant landscapes.

My PhD project, *Market Values* researches how these encounters with the materials and objects found in an open-air market, based in the outer western suburbs of Melbourne but with origins in the open-air bazaars of India, can influence and instigate

⁸ Araeen, Rasheed. (1989). Our Bauhaus others' Mudhouse. *Third Text*, 3 (6), 3–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09528828908576208>

an artistic practice based in sculpture. The market is also my living place along with the objects found there. The uneasy rhythms of their circulation in time and space is treated as a journey of lives: the lives of things, and the people who use them. The making of sculpture allows tactile and actual connections – of joining, assembling and arranging – to create a unique bond, to form a relationship with a bigger version of the world, in a sense to let the world in again.

The Analogue

In 2015 in New York, I was lucky to see the photographic work *Analogue* by the American artist, Zoe Leonard. It was shown at MOMA, and was a vast installation of 412 different photographs, both C-print and silver gelatin. Each modestly sized image was grouped into categories that Leonard terms “chapters”, making grids of twenty-five different sets.

Analogue (see figure 4) begins in the 1990s with photographs of shopfronts from Leonard’s neighbourhoods in NYC, a time that roughly corresponds to when I had also gone there as a teenager. The images are staged as the most unassuming documents, front on pictures of pizzerias, hair and beauty salons, TV repairs, barber shops and photo labs, recorded before they closed down for good. Leonard documents the unique, vernacular culture of local commerce for a sad posterity, which as Helen Molesworth notes, is ‘a walking tour of the end of the twentieth century, a poignant testament to a fading way of doing business, a document of a slowly evaporating way of life, evidence of the shift in our daily rituals of exchange.’⁹ *Analogue* stands as reminder and resistance to these forces of change, and as Leonard observes, of ‘a local economy being replaced by a global one, small businesses being replaced by large corporations’.¹⁰ These images remind me of what I loved about the suburbs that I have lived in, and the sadness I feel when these vernaculars

⁹ Helen Molesworth. “Zoe Leonard, *Analogue*, 1998-2007,” in *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*, ed. Nancy Condee, Okwui Enwezor, Terry Smith, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 189.

¹⁰ George Baker, Zoe Leonard, et al., “Artist Questionnaire: 21 Responses.” *October* 100 (2002): 6-97. Accessed 2020/11/23/. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/779093>, 89.

disappeared, when shops went broke, or owners had died or even when markets burnt down, as was the case in Footscray in 2016, with *Little Saigon*.¹¹



Figure 1: Zoe Leonard, *Analogue*, 1998-2009, 4 chromogenic colour prints and 8 gelatin silver prints, Each 11 × 11" (27.9 × 27.9 cm), Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art, Accessed 15 Jan 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/171298>

The title of *Analogue* is most apt, referring to both the subject of the images and the technology employed. *Analogue's* appearance coincided with the explosion of digital technologies that took hold around the turn of the millennium. The slow and steady accumulation of images produced by Leonard and her *Rolleiflex* are formed by the slow rhythm of daily encounters.¹² This contrasts with technological development,

¹¹ "Blaze Destroys Little Saigon Market at Footscray, in Melbourne's West," (Melbourne). Tuesday 13 December 2016, 2016. Accessed 13/11/2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-13/footscray-fire-crews-battling-blaze-at-little-saigon-market/8114602>.

¹² It is important to note Zoe Leonard's choices in using the Rolleiflex camera. The Rolleiflex is a twin lens reflex camera favoured by street photographers of bygone days including Walker Evans, whose own photographic legacy features strongly in *Analogue*. Arguably, the Rolleiflex camera, even in pre-digital days already had a relationship with obsolescence, changing little since its introduction in the 1920s. It presents a number of differences to the Single Lens Reflex (SLR) camera which had assumed dominance in the marketplace through continual technological innovations especially in electronics. The twin lens camera's lenses mimic each other's operation, the lower lens mediates light on to film stock while the other directs light on to a gridded ground glass viewing screen. The viewing screen acts as a 'camera lucida' at your fingertips that shimmers optically and continually through

digital cameras, smart phones, computers and software have revolutionised how images are now made instantaneously. The ever-increasing speed of the internet has facilitated the easy circulation and duplication of images and electronic media to every corner of the globe and then to the devices that we may hold in our hand. It is easy to forget how different image making was before digital photography. I remember the cost and rationing of film stock, the anxiety of processing the negative by hand, or in using certain film labs, along with the magic of a grainy face that starts to appear in a tray of developer.

Now, as a consequence of new technology, there are divisions between the digital and the analogue. In the digital form, data are manifested as binary code and arranged into pixels and files allowing material to be copied and reproduced ad-infinity. For some, the technologies associated with the analogue are regarded as anachronistic and obsolete, to which Leonard responds;

Our way of doing things, or making things, reflect the larger direction our society is taking. New technology is usually pitched to us as an improvement. And attachment to old things is often seen as regressive: nostalgic or sentimental. But progress is always an exchange. We gain

adjustments of the focusing knob. A distinct difference of this is the film stock used. it is a square format rather than a rectangular landscape format while its size at 120mm, or 2 ¼ inch on an imperial scale is big enough to easily analyse the details found in the negative or Cibachrome, especially compared to the 35mm format of the SLR.

One crucial difference from the SLR is how a photograph is “taken”. Unlike an SLR camera which is held up to your eyes, the Rolleiflex balances on a strap around the neck, the camera is generally positioned at waist height and held by two hands. The photographer negotiates a combination of looking down at the image on the gridded viewing screen and at the subject ahead. When the shutter is released in a twin lens camera, the shutters blink open but not on the viewing screen. Having owned a Rolleicord and also a Yashica Mat 124-G, another version of a Twin Lens Reflex, I have always liked this dynamic for taking photographs in an outside setting with people.

In comparison, If using an SLR, either digital or film, the camera is held to the eye and the viewfinder is used to frame the subject through a reflection of the workings of the camera lens by way of a deviating mirror set at 45 degrees. Through this viewfinder, the aperture and focus can be adjusted, and these changes remain visible. When you press the button to release the shutter, the mirror springs upwards and the mechanical veil of the shutter clicks open for the duration of the exposure and light becomes focused onto film or digital image sensor to form an image. It is the moment when the mechanical, and by extension the digital eye masks the view of the photographer and once again sets contingency as a fundamental characteristic of photography through this temporary blind spot. Although Leonard does not print her own photographs, it is also important to note the difference between an “endpoint” for the analogue and digital image. Crucial to the analogue image, especially for the photographic artist is the darkroom process where both film and photographic print undergo photochemical processes that have their own crafts and contingencies. It is in the development of the photographic image in a proof sheet and edition where the alchemic magic of photography plays a strong role as image reveals itself on photographic paper once in the developing bath.

It is a far cry from today, where digital images are revealed instantaneously can be corrected endlessly while the ability to publish and distribute, albeit electronically is similarly expedient.

something, we give something else up. I'm interested in looking at some of what we are losing.¹³

Reflecting on Leonard's work, Iversen defines the analogue as a 'relatively continuous form of inscription involving physical contact'.¹⁴ While Leonard's photographs, documenting her ongoing physical journey moving from one location to another, can be seen as one version of a continuous form of inscription, there are other forms of inscription recorded by the objects that inhabit the frame. Peeling hand-painted signs on store fronts, or those written on cardboard in shop windows and sandwich boards or graffitied onto shutters are all such inscriptions. The effects of the sun are another, registered literally in the fading fashions found in the photographic displays of hairstyles that are stuck on a glass window of a hairdresser, or yesterday's suits arranged on wooden mannequins. Leonard's photographs record inscriptions of human activity in the marks of greasy backed wooden chairs laid out on the footpath, mismatched second-hand shoes arranged on broken footpaths. All these forms of inscription are part of the epic collection of Leonard's definition of the analogue. The analogue image of wear and tear, as Iversen argues, 'doubles the indexicality of the image, making the image a trace of a trace.'¹⁵

The analogue found in Leonard's images is both the fragile economy she documents and the similarly fragile technology of photography that she uses. Leonard's artwork also supports a definition of the analogue in other technologies of art, in painting, drawing, sculpture and even handwriting itself. As I recall, scrawled in black ink, my assertion that my art should 'come from a living place', I am struck by both the physical character and material inscription that the living place and its real-world stories contain.

Market Values in a similar way, also scrutinizes the analogue. While Steinberg suggests that photography is a technology that 'lets the world in again', the practice of sculpture referred to in *Market Values*, works in the same way. Just as the analogue can be found in the journey through the market and the imaginings triggered, there is also the tactile materiality of its location. The analogue can be in the transactions, in

¹³ Baker, George, et al. "Artist Questionnaire: 21 Responses," 89.

¹⁴ Margaret Iversen, *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, 34.

¹⁵ Iversen, 35.

how things are bought and sold, and displayed within – in the processes of differentiation through sorting, sifting and selection by hand.

This connection to real world stories is also evident in a “pivot” that takes place in the organisation and presentation of Leonard’s *Analogue*, where the perspective moves from her own neighbourhood to a global view, that Leonard describes as a ‘fulcrum or hub’.¹⁶

The deeper I look, the more I realize that in looking into these shop windows, I am also looking out at the rest of the world-out to the Dominican Republic and China and Poland. I am seeing evidence of specific people, their handwriting, their hand- the way they arrange their window displays-but also of trade agreements, labor conditions, cultural and economic realities in other places. We are connected through coffee and tuna fish, through sugar and cigarettes.¹⁷

Leonard’s work in *Analogue* shows images of bound polypropylene bales situated in a clearing station in Williamsburg, their bulging forms fill the picture frame. They are filled with donated second-hand clothing, destined for international cargo to a developing world, to be on-sold by brokers in local marketplaces.

This transition to a global view is reflected by the chronology of the project’s production, in 2003, Leonard travelled to Kampala, Uganda, to follow the line of trade, to witness the renewal of this discarded material in terms of its value as commodity. The New York shopfronts at the origins of Leonard’s project have been replaced in these later images by open air street markets in Africa, where another vernacular is registered, made necessary by a different vocabulary of material and scale of economics that is still dictated by commerce/trade/exchange. It is a vernacular made familiar through my own lived experiences in Laverton and India. Leonard’s photographs depict an architecture, consisting of slender tree trunks and roughly hewn wood used as building frames and armatures with corrugated iron sheets as walls, display the arrangements of clothing—shirts, jackets, and pants that had originated in America. In one photograph from *Owino Market*, a mass of shirts is chain-linked

¹⁶ Baker, et al., "Artist Questionnaire: 21 Responses." 93.

¹⁷ Baker, et al., 93.

together by their wire coat-hangers, to create a precarious backdrop in modulating shades of white.

Leonard's photographs taken in other cities, such as Warsaw, Prague and Budapest, show second-hand goods laid out on sheets of plastic or rugs on footpaths or roads. For Leonard, this journey of things in the world, and the fluctuating values that their biographies represent, documents the connections to other places and times. Goods migrate from first world shop windows to the curb side, market stall and the street, sometimes but rarely this passage is reversed.¹⁸ This retrieval and revival of discarded material, revealed in the local markets of different cities, is an alternate trajectory to the disappearances and decline that Leonard began to chart in New York.

In *Market Values* the strategy of 'letting the world in again,' is supported by Leonard's photographs and observations about *Analogue*, and explored through the second-hand market, as a 'living place'. Here the layers of people, languages, things and histories connect and circulate generating a similarly layered imagination and its realisation into artistic form.

Lists, lexicons and making: developing methodologies

The title of this exegesis and this doctoral project, *Market Values* is a play on words, that could refer to price, such as shares in stock markets as they are bought and sold. These transactions characterise the flow of digital capital summarised in the business sections of news bulletins with graphs, charts and indexes. The sites that this project draws from, the Laverton Market in Melbourne and the Indian markets of Bangalore/Bengaluru, run contrary to this abstraction as they are grounded in place, people, and things. As Nicholas Bourriaud reminds us, 'Commerce is above all a form of human relations, indeed, a pretext destined to produce a relationship.'¹⁹ I highlight these relationships formed between people in disparate locations and times.

¹⁸ It is important to note that an epoch of globalism has also ushered in an increased period of mobility for all populations of the world. While Leonard earlier notes that the diversity of the world's population is reflected on the streets of New York, she is also able to travel to Africa to work as an artist, a mobility that has echoes of my own experience working as an artist in India and Vietnam.

¹⁹ Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, ed. Jeanine Herman and Caroline Schneider. (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005), 31.

My investigation into how these markets operate has led to the creation of a lexicon of essential terms, which inhabit this exegesis: *Markets, Value, Exchange, Objects, Commodities, Bazaar Economies* and *Collecting*. These expressions could happily sit with an economist, but they also bear a closer affinity with anthropology. My understanding of the space of the market, the lives of objects and stallholders and how both circulate in that space, and fluctuations of value attached to objects and their social and cultural meanings have been supported by reading the work of anthropologists, particularly Arjun Appadurai, Alfred Gell and Bernard S. Cohn. My ongoing visits to the Laverton market, along with markets in India, are a kind of fieldwork. What were once visits designed for personal reasons, a need for certain tools or a desire for Vietnamese food, have been transformed by means of a greater scrutiny of these places. My visits are now recorded with notebook and camera, alongside minor discretionary spending on materials and objects.

As Appadurai points out;

Commodities, and things in general are of independent interest to several kinds of anthropology. They constitute the first principles and the last resort of archaeologists. They are the stuff of “material culture” which unites archaeologist with several kinds of cultural anthropologists.²⁰

Like archaeologists and anthropologists to which Appadurai refers, I am an artist who is fascinated by material culture. My weekly encounters with the market place in Laverton (and also in India” have helped the formation of another lexicon, not of words, but objects and materials that are sourced from the market. This lexicon includes copper pipe, bronze pennies and coins, brass hardware and figurines, Masonite, plywood and concrete aggregate. Although I don’t always know what I’m going to do with them, the attraction of these materials fluctuates between their symbolic potential and qualities as base material.

The regular visits to the market and my fieldwork observations have helped shape an important artistic strategy for responding to the material culture I have been drawn to. This strategy entails encountering, finding, retrieving, collecting, and arranging, and has been utilised with both images and materials to select, arrange and order them

²⁰ Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 5.

through processes that produce a new sense and meaning. My interest in material culture is also explored through another methodology that is more aligned with traditional artistic processes: these methods are orientated by observational processes used in the preliminary research stage. These processes include drawing and digital design and scanning, processes combined with the more wilful acts of making that take place in the studio and workshop and bring the analogue into a conversation with the digital.



Figure 2: Michael Bullock, author's reference photographs, 2017.

The photographic observational method (see figure 2) is an important part of the collection process of the field research, as it captures the weekly surprise of renewed arrangements of material and objects, on plastic sheets, table-tops and stands. Equally as important is photography's indexical relationship to a "real world" that registers the association of a time and place. The analogue discussed in relation to Leonard's photographs is a template for other processes used in art, with which I am familiar and trained. Painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture all harbour vestiges of the analogue and face their own frailties in a digital age. *Market Values* also deploys the analogue in a manner that Steinberg suggests in relation to photography—as a technology that 'lets the world in again'. This opening takes place via the objects that circulate through my practice. However, the analogue is also registered in a range of sculptural practice, in the way that materials are used in sculpture, modelling by hand in which clay and wax are formed between thumb and finger. The indexical trace left in a plaster cast. The soldering of copper rod to a bronze penny. Glue to wood. The milling of metal in a lathe, or a CNC router inscribing foam. It is also a concrete relationship to the world.

Chapter outlines

The chapters of the PhD exegesis roughly approximate the development of artistic works that populate the exhibition forming the argument and the thesis that is *Market Values*. Chapter 1 “8AM” introduces the Laverton market as a site of investigation and a place with particular temporal and spatial characteristics. The incidental atmospheres of this site, the weather, time of year, are all crucial components of my understanding of this site as a place of circulation. This circulation is evident in the movement of people; of both buyers and stallholders, the gathering of materials and objects along with their subsequent trade and operations in informal economies where value fluctuates. The range of materials and objects at any second-hand market provides an unwitting repository of the unwanted. These markets function as a limbo between an object’s first utility, as souvenir, toy, or technology, to their final designation as material waste. The marketplace gathers objects as material that carries an intimate proximity together with their representations of distant locations and times.

In this chapter I argue that while these second-hand markets are local, they also represent a model for the circulation of objects that suggests connections with other destinations, frameworks and economies. Drawing on the writing of Will Straw I ask questions about ‘the relationship between mobility and stability, materiality and fluidity’ all of which are understood by the materiality of the market, the things that are found there, and the different tempos of its operation.²¹

These different rhythms can also be applied to form a model of circulation, collectively seen as a feature in art, through the practices of two well-known artists, Hans Haacke and Francis Alÿs. Haacke’s *Circulation Piece* from the 1960s, exemplify an understanding of circulation as it is embodied in the material system of the artwork. Alÿs provides a different artistic example in his *Seven Lives of Garbage*, where the creative agency is provided by others. In this artwork the work of gleaners, who operate precariously on the fringes of economic sustainability by sorting through the rubbish pushed out onto the streets of Mexico City, unwittingly provide the labour for this artwork. The artist retrieves objects from the slow but epic journey of material

²¹ Will Straw, "Spectacles of Waste," in *Circulation and the City : Essays on Urban Culture*, ed. Will Straw and Alexandra Boutros (Montreal: Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010),194.

circulation in the megacity of Mexico City. Alÿs' act of retrieval reveals the unique and poetic magic of coincidence, similar to finding a message in a bottle, washed up and reclaimed after bobbing through open seas for any measure of time.

All art making depends on the gathering, assembly and arrangement of materials, and the second-hand market provides a ready-made assembly point for the collection of a wide range of unpredictable objects, and materials, coming together as salvage. Objects that fluctuate between the once useful and now useless, objects sliding/oscillating between being symbolic or base material with their respective evocations.

In Chapter II: "Metaphors of Meeting", I use my exhibition at Five Walls Gallery in 2017, the first public presentation of artwork made during this doctoral project, to argue that these simple terms, of gathering, assembly and arrangement, have their own potential for metaphor, connecting and expanding from the plain literalness of these actions. As is the case when exhibiting an artwork for the first time, there is the comprehension of what the artwork begins to tell us, and this chapter frames these understandings formed by the artwork's presentation.

The objects that can be found at the market are formed into my own collections to make connections between the passage of people, distant times and absent geographies—souvenirs of various worlds and their histories. In combination with this process of retrieval, the simple practice of joining materials together and forming bonds is one fundamental process of making sculpture. These additive processes are dependent on various methods: gluing, welding, soldering, braising, nailing, fastening, screwing are just some examples of these actions for joining wood and metals. These crafts in sculpture bear resemblance to different economies of scale: manufacturing, industry and trades and even the manufacture of souvenirs themselves. They share the same types of tools, applications/techniques, materials and processes, enabling sculpture to be compared to a recognisable but changed world. A world evidenced by the tools that are for re-sale again at the market.

The demographic of shoppers and vendors at the Laverton market is attracted by its strong focus on budget and practical economies. Fruit and vegetables, clothing (especially work clothing), old and new tools, separate this open air-market from other repositories for the strictly second hand, such as bric-a-brac stores or auction houses.

Few stallholders enhance the presentation of their wares, or if they do it is at a much smaller scale, therefore for the buyer, the pursuit of a “lucky find” remains part of the market’s appeal. My version of a lucky find was the day that I was able to buy, by weight, about a kilo of old bronze pennies and half-pennies, for a price that I could easily afford. While these coins feature in the artwork *Empire*, which is discussed in Chapter II, they also are the feature of the research for the next chapter.

These coins weren’t for the discerning numismatist, whose quest in finding a coin is to single out the characteristics of a particular coin from all coins. Nevertheless, through my creative methodology of retrieval and attention to an outdated coin I perform an equivalent act of singularisation, as discussed in Chapter III, “Handling and the Handmade: (What is big is small, what is small is big),”. If the coin is a kind of sculpture, I cannot help but marvel, both with terror and awe, at the technical skill of its execution. This sense of marvel is what the anthropologist, Gell, terms *enchantment*, that allows the individual to take leave of their senses when confronted with art. For Gell, the art object exudes a power because it is an outcome of artistic intentions associated with the skills of making, of technological processes and techniques that are different to any symbolic intentions. Using the example of defunct currencies, this chapter argues that there is a relationship between the handling of objects and materials, and the handmade strategies I use to make sculpture in the studio. Exploring these relationships, I argue sculpture has its own relationship to scale that transcends size.

In the final chapter, I move my enquiry from the Laverton Market to a very distant one, a second-hand market in India. This site shares many resemblances to the Laverton Market and is the location of the image, *Found Alphabet*, that appears fleetingly in Chapter I. The photograph, taken in Bangalore in 2013, presents a street seller’s display of second-hand wares that focus on a half-formed collection of brass letters and numbers. In this chapter I go back to the beginning, evident in the chapter’s title, “Origins, Arrangements, Returns, (The past catches up)”. This title captures the methodology at the heart of my creative practice. Through the accumulation of responses to provocations, such as the photograph *Found Alphabet*, significance and value have accrued through multiple returns. One particularly significant return took place when I travelled back to India in 2019. I revisited the site of the weekly *Gujeri Market* or *Junkyard Market* in Bangalore/Bengaluru, where I had taken the image and also the *Chor Bazaar* of Bombay/Mumbai. My physical return allowed me to revisit the

market as a site of a collective imagination through a reading of the *Chor Bazaar* and the *bazaar*, which has stood as an organising principle for the market since Indian antiquity and through the epochs that have defined its history to the present day.

The role of language and its historical associations evident in *Found Alphabet*, reflects the legacy of the British Empire and colonialism, similar to the coins that feature in my research. I contrast this legacy with the *Gujeri* market, where the English language does not dominate, to investigate the presentation of vernacular visual cultures and economies. I draw on the writing of Walter Benjamin, along with his interpreters such as Michael Taussig, Jennifer Gabrys and Susan Buck-Morss, to understand the temporality and materiality of this different market and the used objects bound together there. This reflection framed through language highlights the political and historical dimension that underpins the circulation of goods around the world, as observed in Leonard's *Analogue*.

This first chapter begins with a motif of an almost empty blue sky on an autumn morning, as I capture the moment with my camera when a plane from somewhere, shares space with a kite that was right there. When I keep reminding myself to 'let the world in again', it is as an allusion to the operations of a camera, but in the trajectory of this project, rendered by the chapters of this exegesis and the artworks I display, I keep repeating this task. As each new image, object and artwork overlay, there are the repeated traces of textures, activity and times beyond the moment that a camera can record. Through this accumulation more complexities and associations layer, that incorporate not only what the material is, but what it tells us. In this material world of the market, 'a living place' where things and lives come together, such revelations can begin to be made.



Figure 3: Michael Bullock, *Lines of Flight*, author's reference image, 2017.

Chapter 1: 8AM (Understanding the Market)

8AM

Standing in a car park in an early autumn morning, adjacent to Laverton market, nearby, cars begin to queue up along Leakes road with an informal regularity, waiting to turn right. I have parked my car, one of the first here, it is not yet 8 am. An ungraded gravel carpark is the size of about two to three football fields. This vast expanse of ground peters off to random mounds of dirt, weeds and detritus. Potholes are abundant, formed by patterns of car movements, and rain and the subsequent dislodgement of dirt and stones. It's dry: as cars arrive, they generate puffy clouds of yellow ochre dust. On the immediate horizon line is a vista of massive corporate warehouses, designed to service global logistics, Lion-Nathan and Linfox. The morning sun reflects off expanses of their corrugated iron to combine with cold shadows, model this unadorned architecture that somehow in the morning light resembles the shapes of temples.

An avenue of Granite rocks as big as bears peppers the entrance to the carpark, smaller bluestone ones accompany, obdurate mass. How did they get there and for how long? Eternity? Have they always been there? Why do rocks get painted? Thistles grow around their edges, as if poking out from under the weights. Cyclone fence wire surrounds the perimeter of the market, trapping and straining the waste of previous weeks. Some parts of this wire have been sutured for repairs, scarring the symmetry of a familiar pattern. Caught or nearby are flattened coffee cups and lids, expectorated cigarette butts, Mentos wrappers, corn cobs, now grey that have been skewered by chop sticks, mango pips sucked dry, a baby's dummy is mixed in with the dumped rubbish. I wait for the market gates to open with a group, mostly men, from all parts of the world.

Now, moving past the entrance that is Gate 3, I look above and up high in the sky. There is a kite. (see figure 3) Air pressure and currents keep it elevated, but it is also tethered to the ground through its connecting cord. It makes a line that attaches the light-coloured sky to ground, segmenting and dividing space. A neat, tight line in space. As I watch, a plane intersects the kite string, crossing from one side of the sky to the other.

The Laverton market, also known as *The Rubble and Riches Market*, is located about 5kms from the suburban centre of Laverton, intersecting Old Geelong Road, and close to the major contemporary arterial of the Westgate Freeway to Geelong. The market takes place every weekend, on Saturdays and Sundays from 8 am to 4pm. *Rubble and Riches*, or *Trash and Treasure*, is an apt name: it evokes the dualism that exists in commercial value that plays out at this location: an alternative, precarious economy in which the Laverton Market is firmly located.

I have been going there for some years, on and off, but regularly on Saturdays since 2017. The repetition and continuity of these visits punctuates the cycles of weeks, months and now years. This informal means to mark time has created for me a kind of calendar: long weekends and school holidays are marked there, so too the fickle seasons of Melbourne and the climate it embodies; the heat of a summer sun, the glaring brightness of cold winter mornings, the wind and rain of all seasons. All this lies in the background of each market, affecting the ability to do business.

As I move further into the market, I encounter another series of car parks, that are inside the perimeter fence and bituminised. This area was once an ornamental lake with misplaced weeping willows and a bridge in disrepair it now frames one corner of the circumference of the market. It comprises a vast array of temporary outdoor stalls: these possess a varied infrastructure consisting of PVC. and canvas tarpaulins, blue or green, blow moulded plastic trestle tables and worn plywood counterparts, 20L plastic containers, vegetable cooking oil and old 10L paint tins filled with quickset cement, brick shards weighing down cardboard in all states, varieties of folding gazebos and many automobiles, high top delivery vans, utes, RVs, station wagons with trailers and sedans mix with structures of increasing permanence, of decommissioned caravans and retro-fitted shipping containers and structures that reference both forms.

A model for understanding the circulation of outmoded objects within, and throughout the city scape, can be found in Straw's essay, "Spectacles of Waste" and has echoes with/throughout my visits to Laverton Market. This essay is part of a collection, *Circulation and the City*, that envelopes the different definitions and forms of circulation in an urban environment. Straw incorporates Henri Lefebvre's term *rhythmanalysis* in order to understand the rhythms and cycles of urban life; of the city's essential

relationship to time and its corollary, space.²² He asks at what tempo or beat do these rhythms operate, to drum out dialectical measures of 'mobility and stability, materiality and fluidity.'²³ Focusing on the journeys of objects throughout cities and over time, Straw questions what residuals of value remain once objects begin to disengage from commerce – moving from novelty to waste. The Laverton market provides a perfect answer to this question. I look around me and see the same rhythm of circulation everywhere, an ebb and flow built into the architecture of this place.

Towards the centre of the market, for instance, there are three permanent structures that house indoor stalls and an office. Two large buildings, almost identical in style and aspect, repeat a doubling mixture of concrete, steel and Colourbond. Formed in the vernacular of the suburban fringe industrial estate, a miserable geometry of pre-fabricated concrete slabs, a portico and faded paint. A tattered Australian flag flickers on a pole, injecting some brighter colour against this field of desaturated hues. Another building completes the arrangement, the remnants of the bistro from when the site operated as a drive-in theatre. Hand painted lettering remains on the window;

Asian Food, Fish and Chips, Muffins and Coffee. Two dollars.

What was called *The Brooklyn*, Village Drive-In closed down in 1983, and re-opened a year later as a market.²⁴ The once mainstream popularity of drive-ins has long-disappeared with the arrival of suburban multiplexes and home entertainment. As I contemplate the stacks of DVD players offered for resale in the stalls, I recognise the irony of these technological displacements. What I am presented with is a timeline of obsolete technologies: VCR, Beta, VHS, DVD, VCD, Blu-Ray.

On this Saturday, I gravitate to an assembly area that is further evidence of Straw's observations. He asks where objects move from and to, as they move to their end as commodities. This movement can be mapped through different models and locations – garage sales, pawn shops, charity shops and flea markets – through which objects either temporarily pass or hold still. It is in the western corner of the Laverton market, at the geographical and commercial margins of the market, that the more extreme

²² Will Straw, "Spectacles of Waste," 194.

²³ Straw, "Spectacles of Waste," 194.

²⁴ David Kilderry, "Australian Drive-Ins, Victoria, Drive-Ins Down Under," accessed June 4, 2017. http://www.drive-insdownunder.com.au/australian/vic_brooklyn.html.

versions of the second hand come into focus. Existing there is a less orderly gathering of relics than the one offered by the Laverton Market's own website for the organisation of space:

Fresh Produce

Hardware

Take Away Food

Plants

Clothing

Hobbies

Technology

*Second hand.*²⁵

These collections of material exist as a temporary congregation, that hold on to the hope for an afterlife as salvage. This is the end of the line that Straw's mapping charts.

Brass

During this candidature my visits to the market have taken on another purpose: the making of sculpture. I have been using the market to observe and sometimes select objects and materials. Purchases accumulate from a selective "curation", that recognises an object's fluctuations in value between semiotic and physical dilapidation, from creation to demise.

On one table at the Laverton Market, there is a brass Family of Man: figurines and mementoes of religions, countries and cultures of the world. Depending on price, I have managed to collect a few.²⁶ In other stalls, there are other relatives in this family of brass, but in comparison these forms are strictly utilitarian, used for hardware and industry. There is a collection of standard profiles in metal, and also die-cast and lathed shapes. Some of these forms stand up, others are scattered on their sides along

²⁵ Laverton Market. All Rights Reserved, "Laverton Market, ," accessed 04/06/2017.
<http://www.market.com.au/>

²⁶ My artwork *The History of the World*, made in 2017 and shown at Sutton Project Space utilises some of these figures.

the table. I ask the stallholder, Matt, who I have come to know, if I can take a photo. Later, when I check the image, the forms look like ruins. I collect brass plumbing attachments, connectors and adaptors for ¼ inch and ½ inch pipe and taps. Some of their technical names associate very differently in my mind; elbow joins, nipples, couplings, tee sections and then barbs.

When I see an old brass gas-burner am compelled to buy it, as it evokes other associations. The form reminds me of Picasso's, *Venus of Gas*, which I had seen at a museum in New York in 2015.²⁷ This sculpture first appeared in 1945, at the time Picasso was living in a Paris, which was still occupied by Germany. *Venus of Gas* is an anomaly in Picasso's long history of making assemblages from found materials, as Ann Temkin and Anne Umland note, it is 'the closet Picasso would come to making a Duchampian readymade'.²⁸ The sculpture consisted of a single found object, similar to my gas burner, but made from cast-iron. Picasso performed two simple interventions. The first was subtle for Picasso, he just flipped the burner vertically. The second was simple the power of giving this form a name, thus enabling a visual metaphor, of upright form, to take on 'a modern incarnation of an ancient fertility goddess'.²⁹

I gradually collect brass numbers and letters in the hope, and homage, of reassembling in material form the ingredients from a photograph, a souvenir from the *Gujeri Market*, sometimes known as the *Chor Bazaar* of Bangalore. This photograph is of a stall holder's collection on a polyethylene cover, of a found alphabet of used brass letters and numbers, incomplete and incoherent in sequence and symbol. Through these weekend purchases develops other collections as material accumulates. I buy copper pipe, and bronze coins. Lead sinkers are chosen for their dull weight and texture, steel ball bearings for their perfect, hard, roundness. This typology of metal begins to emerge alongside long, used balls of string of indeterminate length.

²⁷ This work is interesting in the context of Picasso's sculpture, one of a few of his works that possesses the characteristics of the readymade. Picasso's only artistic involvement seems to be the recognition of the implicit figurative potential of the object, Ann Temkin, et al., *Picasso Sculpture*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2015), 181.

²⁸ Temkin et al., 181.

²⁹ Temkin et al., 181.

The enormous accumulation of objects in the markets stimulates an imagination of creative possibility. A formal arrangement of hand tools for instance, laid flat on the ground on a sheet of blue plastic, forms a spiral of wooden handles, an economic display to accommodate the different shapes and sizes of pickaxes and shovel heads. A jarring of signs and symbols, an uncanny pairing of a chipped and painted plaster statue, of an American Indian Chief, next to a silk, Japanese, Geisha girl, bridging the impossibilities of a physical world of culture, history and geography. A milk crate, crowded with old, electrical power-points, rescued from demolition sites, their own spooky anthropomorphism returns my gaze.

With my visits come an understanding of the workings of the market and the rhythms of their operation. I know the site and its layout, the general varieties of stallholders and the commodities they sell. Nonetheless uncertainty and contingency remain. New stall-holders emerge with new collections, old stall-holders disappear, some for good and others intermittently, perhaps driven by the dictates of the weather and the calendar.

This passing of time makes me aware of changes in the constituency of the stallholders at Laverton Market. There is, for example, the stall where I bought two brass vases, one worn vase of Indian origin that featured in my artwork *The World* (2017) and a CD of the maestro of the sarod, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. What luck! I had the fortune to see him perform in Bangalore. The vendors no longer come.

The caravan labelled *Master Phở* has been empty for months, since the beginning of 2018. My first thought was that the owner went back to Vietnam to celebrate Tết, but if she did, she hasn't returned. I would sometimes eat phở for breakfast on Saturday mornings, a reminder of time from living in Hà Nội. I imagine where she may have gone, has the business gone bust? Is there a sick relative?

Another stall-holder is a man from Eastern Europe, who sells CDs from his homeland. Music would blare from speakers rigged up to a spare car battery. At the end of the week, his goods are covered and tightly bound. I once took a photo of this covered collection and was angrily confronted by him (see figure 4). This shroud now stands still amidst all this activity, weighed down by the evocative textures of cement and bricks.



Figure 4: Michael Bullock, *Shroud*, author's reference Image, 2017.

The Seven Lives of Garbage

Through the visits to the Laverton market, chance encounters with objects and materials has also formed a strategy for studio work. In the market displays, objects and forms appear and reappear, remain stilled for weeks, then disappear completely. It is a process that is echoed in my studio with the curated selections of purchases: forms repeat and double: brass vases of various profiles are purchased, a cartoonish plastic dinosaur, a piece of spin-off merchandise from a children's animated film replicates, different versions of a hard resin figurine, an old Asian man in the style of chinoiserie accumulates. My arrangements in the studio double and multiply depending on what I observe in the different stalls and locations over these repeated visits.

Through the work of other artists, I also consider in what capacity the conditions and constraints that shape these repeated encounters with objects and forms are cast. The Belgian born artist Francis Alÿs, for instance, performs an analysis of a chance

encounter, amidst a context of circulation, in *The Seven Lives of Garbage*.³⁰ Alÿs performs this operation with a series of unwitting collaborators from his adopted home of Mexico City. These agents are the gleaners in the flea markets of Mexico City with their own micro-economic, and micro-ecologies.

The Seven Lives of Garbage is described in different anecdotes as an experiment, but also as a bet, and one that would unfold over an indeterminate measure of time.³¹ These terms that derive from science and gambling suggest the test of pre-supposed, but uncertain, outcomes. Alÿs endeavours to illustrate an underground economic system, where the remaining commercial value of the commodity is extracted from the waste picker's salvage. This also allows the recognition of startling poetry resulting from this encounter. Alÿs's strategy is similar to Will Straw's own line of questioning for the circulation of used objects in the city.

Alÿs describes the experiment of *The Seven Lives of Garbage* as follows:

People say that all garbage in Mexico City goes through seven stages of sifting, from the moment it is thrown on the street until its final destination at the municipal dump on the outskirts of the city.

On the night of 4th February 1994, I put seven identical bronze sculptures painted seven distinct colours in seven plastic bags and I dropped them on garbage piles in seven districts of Mexico City. On the following days, months, years, I have wandered through local flea markets looking for the missing sculptures to resurface. So far, I have found two of the seven.³²

Metal detection is an enduringly successful strategy for economic gain, and in a global culture of recycling, the economy of metal recycling has always maintained value. In Australia, kids collect squashed aluminium cans to sell by weight for pocket money. English farmers find single ancient Roman coins in paddocks that can be sold at auction. In the Alÿs experiment set in Mexico City, gleaners' sort through the waste

³⁰ Francis Alÿs: *A Story of Deception*., edited by Mark Godfrey, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010), 171.

³¹ Francis Alÿs and Cuohémoc Medina, "Entries," in *Francis Alÿs: A Story of Deception*, p. 71 and p. 195. In the entry written by Alÿs and Medina, it is listed as an experiment while in Scott Fox's chapter it is described as a bet.

³² Francis Alÿs and Cuohémoc Medina, "Entries," 71.

found on city streets. This is a kind of prospecting, a detection of durable forms and material amidst the yielding rotting waste found in plastic bags.

The hardness of metal allows value to be maintained at all/over times. This value as material, sold by weight, remains a certainty, even if the kitschy form of Alÿs's bronze snail is no longer wanted. This is because there is a chameleon nature to form in metals that responds to different needs and different times. The infinite forms that metals take, changes from coin to cannon, sword to sculpture, bust to bell. They are changed by the stresses of heat, solid goes to liquid and back again and this has been the way for millennia.

For Alÿs, the flea market becomes another station in the itinerary of this family of bronze snails and the trails they leave behind. The commerce of the flea market merchant demands patience for seller and buyer alike, and it is assumed that these objects as commodity would move as slowly as their representations could, and as their diminishing value would. In Alÿs's experiment he was able to retrieve two out of the seven snails from flea markets after they were first cast out. He ended up, buying only one, letting the other continue its journey. It is an imperfect, but nonetheless successful outcome. Does this mean that the lives of these other objects are somehow also lost? If so, how?

Perhaps they have been bought already, part of a collector's passion for all representations of snails in any medium possible, ceramic, wood or glass, as a collector of turtles or elephant knick-knacks might. Perhaps they have leapfrogged the stall of the flea market and gone straight to the small business of the metal recycler, to be dropped against the sides of a battered 44-gallon drum, announcing this arrival as a sonorous bell, alongside all other things bronze, tools, springs and statues. Perhaps their destination, uninterrupted by commerce is to settle down into the gathering dirt, dust and rubbish to be obscured from view and in readiness for excavation in an unknown future.



Figure 5: Francis Alÿs, *The Seven Lives of Garbage*, 1995, in Russell Ferguson, "Francis Alÿs: Politics of Rehearsal". *Politics of Rehearsal*. Göttingen: Steidl, 2007. Accessed 9th January 2019. http://francisalys.com/ebooks/FrancisAlys_HammerBook/#page=35

Perhaps, amongst all these variables, Alÿs didn't see a bronze snail, but walked past it on any given day. From the two snails that were salvaged, it is unclear what Alÿs has done with his own sole survivor, a role-model of disjointed circulation. If indeed, it has entered the high-end commerce of the art gallery or museum, sitting on a plinth in its own Perspex covered containment, or then in the secondary art market with the added value of artist prestige, as was the case with his other more purposeful collaboration, the sign painting project, *The Liar, the Copy of the Liar*.³³

Like Alÿs's hunt for his bronze snail in the marketplace, the ease of the internet has enabled the search for images of all the artworks of the world, to be at your fingertips. However, the imagery of *The Seven Lives of Garbage* remains as elusive as an actual bronze snail itself. The hard copy for *A Story of Deception*, the catalogue and compendium of Alÿs's 2010 Museum of Modern Art retrospective, gives no ground: an image of two focused street workers raking over filled plastic bags is used as illustration.³⁴ An electronic pdf, sourced from Alÿs's own website is the catalogue for the Los Angeles Hammer Museum exhibition in 2000. It reveals one straightforward photograph of a yellowish bronze snail (is this the paint or the colour of bronze?) (see

³³ For a full appraisal of this project, see; *Francis Alÿs: Sign Painting Project*, ed. Juan García et al., (Göttingen: Steidl, Basil, 2011). Part of a collaboration initiated in 1993 with street sign painters in Mexico City. Alÿs had commissioned these art workers to make reproductions of his own figurative paintings. These copied paintings, repeated by different artists were then inserted and circulated again at inflated prices into the secondary, contemporary art market by Alÿs.

figure 5).³⁵ The detail in low-res photographs makes it difficult to determine any true reading of form. Alongside this photograph is another. It is a photograph of two elderly Mexicans, dressed in the *bricolage* fashions of the poor: a standing man holding a large recycled polyethylene bag, and a seated woman, presumably the stallholder of this provisional street stall, comprised of used objects arranged on a red sheet, a separation and sheath from the hardness of a cracked footpath. In formation on one side there is a row of glass jars, a row of black shoes on the other. A mixture of stuff in between, an old stereo, some pictures and plastic forms are the only ciphers within this tangle. If this is the place where Alÿs found the snail, the catalogue doesn't say. Rather the street is the site where the search for a bronze snail starts, finishes and keeps going.

If the story of *The Seven Lives of Garbage* is also about circulation, then the scarcity of this rare image of this bronze snail should be well preserved. Alÿs's role is to find again and reclaim objects that are lost, with the startling coincidence for the reunion of forms, against calculated odds when so many other objects compete for this view. But it is also a story of the roles of others participating in the precarious mechanics of human survival and the objects that play out in these economies.

Good Circulation

In the essay "Good Circulation", Jorg Heiser frames the traditional chronology of cultural and market economies where artefacts, artworks, consumer goods, and objects are produced and then consumed.³⁶ Although Heiser acknowledges that within a contemporary artistic sphere at least there is a blurring between production and consumption endpoints, between a first beginning and a final end, there is nonetheless an important intermediary phase of circulation where forms move throughout the world.³⁷ It is in this phase of circulation that he notes 'fluctuating relations between

³⁵ Russell Ferguson, *Francis Alÿs: Politics of Rehearsal*, ed. Francis Alÿs, (Los Angeles: Steidl, 2007), 78, accessed 28/05/18, <http://francisalys.com/books/HammerBook.pdf>.

³⁶ Jorg Heiser, "Good Circulation," *Frieze* April, no. 90 (2005).

³⁷ Heiser cites the example of these two influential essays to demonstrate that the contemporary artist can also be a recycler and re-assembler of existing cultural forms to produce artwork. Boris Groys, "The Artist as Consumer," in *Shopping: A Century of Art and Consumer Culture*, ed. Christoph Grunenberg and Max Hollein (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002) and also Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005).

forms' are established'.³⁸ It is in the instability of these fluctuating relations and biographies of objects that the Laverton market also participates.

Heiser summarises the evolution of early definitions of circulation from the observed physical sciences to metaphor in currency, technology and media, to its applications in the economic theory of capitalism that defines our times:

Originally circulation was a term for the metabolic distribution and redistribution of fluids and matter, implying qualitative and quantitative transportation via movement. As a metaphor, it has historically been linked to urbanisation, the flow of populace and traffic within the city. From about 1750 money begins to circulate-the likes of the Baron de Montesquieu and Jean-Jacques Rousseau use the term in connection with currency and labour; after the French revolution newspapers, ideas and gossip circulate; after 1880, so do traffic, air and power. For Karl Marx, circulation is the sphere of supply and demand, where distribution organises the exchange of goods and money; in other words, the market.³⁹

As one illustration of the concept, Heiser introduces Hans Haacke's work, *Circulation*, (see figure 5) a piece that forms a visual concept of circulation as artwork and sculpture.⁴⁰ The documentation of Haacke's work, first shown at the Howard Wise Gallery in New York in 1969 and recreated in various forms and locations, exists as an old black and white photograph. The viewpoint presents the wall and floor with an architectural clarity. A small pump sits by the side of a wall in the middle of the floor, from this centre, two PVC plastic tubes extend into the pump and outwards. These two connections, with the aid of additional propylene connectors branch and network outwards, displaying a visual code that is very familiar, repeated often through nature and adapted to a world of diagrams in how we may perceive the world.

³⁸ Heiser, 79.

³⁹ Heiser, 79.

⁴⁰ Heiser, 79.



Figure 6: Hans Haacke, *Circulation*, 1969, Vinyl, hose, pump, water, bubbles. Dimensions variable. Installation, Howard Wise Gallery, New York. Collection, General Foundation, Vienna.

This too could be the internal workings of the circulatory system of blood within the body, a display of veins and arteries that lead to and from the heart, splayed outwards on a dissection table or in an anatomy book, it could be a water system viewed from a plane, a tributary that originates from frozen glacier to a surging mountain river down to the slowed branching forks of a delta region. Or the branches and roots of a tree, or the motif of dried tumbleweeds that I encounter daily, rolling alongside the rusted steel railway tracks and sidings near where I live.

The artwork's simple materials – a small electrically powered water pump, industrially manufactured, transparent plastic tubes and connectors, and the water and air housed within – are dependent on electrical energy for animation, propelling beads of air and water around the floor space. The fluid mechanics of circulation is also aided by another invisible force, that of gravity, giving the potential of the pump to push water and air on its journey. These actions are envisaged further by trawling around YouTube for additional documentation and re-creations of this kinetic work.⁴¹ The transaction of electrical energy for the powering of the pumps' motors leaks other forms of energy, the vibrations of moving parts the buzzing hum and shakes of industrial sounds. Watered stains form pools from faulty connections in the tubes.

⁴¹ I have been able to locate additional documentation and iterations of this work and it appears that it is undergoing a renaissance in terms of display. The artwork is also in the collection of Museo Nacional Centro De Arte, Reina Sofia in Madrid since 2009. A version was shown at *9 a Bienal do Mercosul Porto Alegre*, Brazil, September 2013 and Paula Cooper Gallery in 2013. Cutrichic "Hans Haacke, *Circulation* 1969" (Online Documentation), 14th Sep, 2013, accessed 17th May, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9NHp-sHFuA>.



Figure 7: Michael Bullock, *Meeting Point*, author's reference Image, 2017.

Chapter II: Metaphors of Meeting: (What happens when two forms are joined and what new associations result?)

*All art is based upon the gathering and arrangement of materials, from those traditional arts forged from the raw materials of nature to salvage crafts to modernist ready-mades and collages. And this gathering, whether for the purposes of art-making or collecting, will proceed under terms of chance or luck.*⁴²

Although the statement above, by the poet and literary critic Susan Stewart, may seem obvious, it cannot be emphasised enough—the simple practice of assembling materials as a basic foundation for making art, is also its most powerful. The second-hand market provides a site for collecting and gathering the most unpredictable objects to choose from. The market presents materials and objects with diverse biographies, from desirable commodities to the no longer fashionable, from being old and to being new: within this there are also the fluctuations between an object being useful and useless, to the slide between an object's symbolic form with its own evocations and as base material of its own making. I use the market as both an idea and a method, as an assembly point for the raw and tangible material required for my sculptural practice, to gather my collections, formed through a mediated finding that employs chance encounters with materials, but also the weekly renewals of them. In turn, I make my selections from the market and perform a similar task in the studio, bringing things together; again, or for the first time.

Joining materials is another form of assembly in sculpture, gluing, welding, soldering, braising, nailing, fastening and screwing are all employed for the literal connection of simple materials such as wood and metal, resulting in new meanings from these bonds. Through the gathering and assembly of used objects and materials such as plywood, Masonite, brass, bronze and copper and by bringing these materials together, my artwork acquires a new potential for metaphor that expands from their plain literalness. This is evident in my exhibition, *Market Values*, held at Five Walls Gallery in Footscray, Melbourne. This exhibition took place in November 2017 and

⁴² Susan Stewart. "To Take a Chance," in *The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 11.

was the first public presentation of studio research during my PhD. candidature. I argue that this exhibition enabled the reconfigured material to make connections with places beyond the immediate touch of things, and to collect and connect distant times and geographies that envisage the world.

An exhibition is an event in time, a junction where artistic intentions meet formal resolution. An opportunity to comprehend the energetic realisation of an artwork and the strategies that were used. To arrest the mutability of form that is availed in the making. The artwork becomes paused against bright lights and white walls. This arrest is welcome, to see *Market Values*, with its two works *Empire* and *The World*. I was still unsure of what these artworks were, this pause allowed another opportunity to listen to what these artworks were beginning to tell me which lead me back to the market with fresh eyes.

Gathering: a family of brass

Before undertaking this doctoral project, my visits to the second-hand market of Laverton were mostly to buy tools for the making of sculpture. I prefer to buy second hand for quality and price, and the trade in new and second-hand tools is a feature of the market. For working on bronzes, I bought cold chisels, nail punches and files. I once bought a deep fryer/crock pot combination from the 1970s or 1980s that I use to melt wax for the lost wax process used in bronze casting. For general metal work I would buy tap and die sets, whereas for working in wood I would buy rasps and files, or callipers, set squares and all sorts of hand tools. To join things together, fixings can be found in wooden boxes that are sold by weight.

While my initial market visits were to buy tools, and sometimes records, plants or to eat great Vietnamese food, since commencing the PhD my attention has turned to a consideration of the trade that this second-hand market represents. The market is a snapshot in the lifespan of an object's circulation. A collection of unwanted materials and objects, that find themselves in a purgatory between a slim potential for regained utility, as commodity, souvenir, toy, or technology, or their subsequent demise into base material.

As I came to understand the Laverton market as a site for the assembly of material, I traverse the collection of stall holders and began assembling a typology of all things

brass. Searching and subsequently sourcing these materials allowed me to observe the use of this metal in a range of applications. One stall in particular caught my eye, mementos of the world were gathered together on a table, arranged in groupings by the materials of their making. There were Hindu Gods, Buddhas, warriors, European knights, cats, pigs, horses, storks, eagles and dolphins all made in brass. And the same forms are replicated in different materials; wood, chrome, silver and ceramic. On another table desk clocks line up in a row next to a collection of world globes. These objects affirm a miniaturisation of time and space in their representations of the world.

In contrast to these arrangements of souvenirs, and the associations they evoke, I began to assemble a vocabulary of more utilitarian shapes that were designed for plumbing and hardware. Although these fixtures are designed to be practical, needed to join pipes or fasten metal, the morning sunlight models their forms with a mechanical precision that highlights the rhythms of their simple geometry. From these encounters, I began to assemble collections in brass, and these acquisitions, although driven by the randomness of weekly displays, were strongly governed on the one hand by rules of taxonomy and scale, and on the other by a capacity for discretionary spending.

From this collection, I have developed and invest in my growing family of brass. One such example is a Greek warrior that stands to attention on a miniature white cement plinth held together by a slight, slim and rusty $\frac{1}{4}$ inch threaded bolt that connects the plinth to the base of the heel. In the studio, I undo the bolt and the figure is immediately unmoored; its proud, necessary verticality is now cast adrift, made vulnerable to float prone on an imaginary horizon for eternity. Displayed within the warrior's foot where the bolt once was is a precise and careful wound comprised of threaded glistening spirals spaced at regular intervals that shape the contours of this cavity. I am reminded of Homer's *Illiad* and the legend of the warrior Achilles. Concerned by the prophecy of an early death for her child, Achilles's mother Thetis doused the infant Achilles in the River Styx whose waters enable immortality. Grasp'd by the ankle, the tight seal caused by a mother's grip limits the complete penetration of the magical waters, later proving to be his fatal flaw as the supreme warrior, his only vulnerability as a target for his enemies. Although in myth, the weakness of Achilles is found in his heel, this brass warrior has the same flaw in its material counterpart, its mortality as form is now compromised because its fixing is gone.

Brass is an alloy, a meeting of the elements of copper and zinc. The proportions of these elements determine its use in plumbing and hardware, or in jewellery, decoration and sculpture. The possibilities for forming it are diverse as it can be beaten, rolled, machined, melted and cast, soldered and brazed. The yellow glistening lustre of newly polished brass has universal appeal in the everyday fixtures of the home and in temples, as a substitute for gold.

Prior to assembling this family/collection of brass forms I had only used brass once before as an artistic material. Whilst in India in 2013, I had attempted to replicate into brass a wound ball of jute string by casting. I wanted to transmute the potential of the string unravelling by transforming it into a permanent material. In a small foundry of local artisans, we attempted this process through a simple form of sand casting. Running out of brass meant salvage was needed that was acquired from a local merchant who sold material by weight. The resulting mass came in a bag and I remember the collection of recycled forms, hardware, taps and plumbing mixed in with an assortment of Hindu votive figures and articles. It was not unlike the collection that I had begun to now assemble and recreate. When placed in the crucible of the foundry furnace, I watched these recognisable forms and figures melt, break down and dissolve to liquid lava. The transformation was fascinating, as eternal and universal likeness dissolved in this glowing, elemental, primary swirl. Eventually, this material would shape shift again, as the creations of other artisans melted away, to be in turn replaced by mine.

Arranging: display forms

The connections that brass makes removes me from the familiar and ongoing scene of proximity of the Laverton market. I have a collection of photographs from the *KR (Krishna Rajendra Market)*, or *City market*, a large market in the centre of Bangalore, Karnataka, India. These collections of images also started in 2013, around the same time I first used brass. At the KR market, stalls flank the main multileveled market building selling an unruly display of fruit and vegetables, while in the basement level the market is a compression of floor space and human activity. Here a bustling flower market assembles bales of flowers to be distributed into the city at large. The energy is frenzied from the movement of bodies heaving cargo. The heat from human labour

is palpable, creating a different barometric pressure, focusing sharply the city's market of exchange.

As you go higher in the KR market, the bulky mass of people diminishes as does the demand for goods, and the energy of movement gradually stills. Once goods are stripped away, an awareness of the functioning apparatus of the market appears, and in turn the discarded and broken furnishings that accumulate in any remaining space. The Laverton market also has similar collections of structures in the fringes of the market. They are pragmatic, makeshift methods of display made from wood and assembled using simple, everyday materials. Their edges are well worn, buffed smooth and rounded from handling and grime. Now discarded and deserted by commerce the wood seems petrified. These undressed forms present a simple rhythm in their functionality. Steps of different pitch and width create an isometric pattern of volume rendered evenly in shadow and light. Useless forms appreciated for what they are now, rather than what they have been.

In the studio, I emulate the display forms from the market and their geometry using wood. As one of the most readily available of construction materials it is cost effective and there is generally a surplus of recycled scrap at hand. A rudimentary knowledge allows for a playful experimentation with simple tools and materials; saw and hammer, glue and nails. This scope expands with more skills and the tools available to the trained worker; table saws, drop saws, band saws, jigsaws, sanders and routers. This represents a shared vocabulary between the making of sculpture, and work. This allows the making of sculpture, through choices of materials and the assembly of forms, to establish a direct correspondence with the built environment of the everyday, of architecture, of hoardings, of formwork, of furniture and the worn furnishings of the market.

For example, the ready availability of plywood made prominent by artists such as Donald Judd in the 1960s during the explosion of do-it-yourself home projects, requires few tools or skilled workmanship. Although it is considered a wood, it can be more accurately classified as a composite material, where nature meets the factory, layers of glue and veneered wood interface to provide strength and structure. Plywood bears no resemblance to the forms and shapes of branches or tree trunks, except for the grain of its origin. Its strength, a result of criss-crossing lamination, allows versatility, such as bending and laminating, while being easily sealed and painted. Its

“flatness” as a sheet material is attractive to industry and artists alike, enabling it to be bundled and packed onto pallets for ease of transport. This flatness is also sympathetic to constructions in both simple and complex geometries. Edge meets edge with precision at right angles through mitred or butt joins, the basic structure of a rectangle multiplying to the 3 dimensions of the cube. Plywood is a material that lends itself to forming, flatness becomes the form that shapes the spaces we inhabit. The potential of plywood to transform echoes my interest in the relation between the spaces and forms that constantly appear and disappear in the market.

Plywood is closely associated with another composite board I often use, Masonite. Developed in the 1920s, it is another versatile sheet material once favoured by the amateur home builder that now seems out of favour. It is formed from wood pulp steamed under pressure, that produces two contrasting surfaces, one rough and one smooth. Pulp strands of wood fibres appear suspended under the shiny smooth surface produced under compression, while on the other side there is a raised texture resembling the weave of hessian with a screen pattern. The two faces of smooth and rough texture have also been exploited by artists who regularly use Masonite as a painting substrate. A roll call of Australian artists, amateur and professional, have used this material as a format, and one can imagine all the unwanted landscapes of sunsets, trees, mountains, rivers and oceans found in op shops, garage sales and markets. However, this list also includes the works of coveted Australian modernists, such as Boyd, Nolan and Tucker, or more contemporary artists from Papunya Tula, Robert Macpherson, Rosalie Gascoigne whose work has featured the use of this material. Masonite is also the favoured material in the second-hand market where this unassuming material is often used for hand painted signs.

This material in the service of the arts has been sourced from a much more pragmatic economy, it is bought at corner hardware stores, recycled from transport pallets and the backs of unwanted cupboards along with other materials bound for demolition. It is material that once represented the ideals of the modern, a material that took away the grain and rough edges of natural wood. Now, through time, this sheet of Masonite is not without its imperfections revealed by handling and the effect of the elements. When hard sheets of Masonite collide with other shapes of different hardness, sharpened edges dull to roundness, compressed material is loosened to fibre and sunlight bleaches the colour from the wood.

Assembling



Figure 8: Michael Bullock, *Empire*, 2017, Copper Rod, Silver Solder and Found Copper coins and Concrete Object. 70 cm x 30cm x 40cm. Photography by Keelan O'Hehir.

Along with the vocabulary of materials of metal and wood, other materials are introduced to my developing lexicon, bronze coins and copper rods.⁴³ In the exhibition at Five Walls Gallery, I display *Empire*, an artwork that resembles a scaffold, a network, a diagram, a tree, perhaps even a weathervane pointing to the four corners of the globe. It is a sculpture, with dimensions of about 70 x 40 x 20cms, whose form has been assembled by silver soldering, a craft shared by plumbers and jewellers alike. The structure is made from copper rods and defunct Australian bronze coins that are retrieved from the market. The structure was wedged to a re-claimed shard of

⁴³ When I first started collecting coins at the market, I was of the mistaken belief that they were made from copper, rather than bronze. At the time, I remember being slightly disappointed when I realised that they were bronze as I also wanted them to be associated with plumbing pipes rather than statues. Copperplate script was another association I was wishing to explore. The comparison of the materiality of the bronze coin to the statue is explored in Chapter III.

everyday debris, a chunk of found concrete aggregate, to ensure it stands upright, still and balanced. Where the bronze coin touches the copper rod there is a record of vibrant energy and extreme heat. The process of soldering involves heating separated metals, rod and penny that are then fused by the melting of the solder. The flow of silver solder is very quick, determined by capillary action and heat, flowing to create a surface alloy with the copper.⁴⁴ The base metal of copper expands with heat, its particular conductivity of heat allows the coin's faces to glow orange with the violent heat from an LPG torch, not unlike the oxy-torch heads that can be found at Laverton.

Facing *Empire* is another work, *The World*, another gathering of shapes of different scale and material. On a tabletop and trestle legs is a collection of stepped forms assembled from Masonite and plywood. In their origins, they reference these unused display structures of the market-places in Bangalore and Laverton. These shapes vary in steepness and scale, creating an ambiguous view, between a perception of the miniature, of a topography and of the actual. Since the first rough prototypes of this work in the studio, to the final display of the work in the gallery, comparisons are made by visitors, not to market stalls but to ancient forms, to temple steps, to an agora of Ancient Greece, to the Red Fort, a medieval fortress in Delhi, stone conceived as the hue and texture of Masonite. Because of this basic geometry, *The World* suggests itself as a model of the world.

Displayed on one stepped form is a brass vase of uncertain origin, purchased from the Laverton market. This marvel is from an unknown craftsman and an unknown age, but its craftsmanship is at odds with a global economy of easily manufactured and distributed goods. The tarnished hollow-ware vase presents an elegantly symmetrical and ideal tapered volume, a smooth profile revolved in almost perfect continuity except for the interruption of one accidentally dimpled dent. Stewart writes that the 'capacity of objects to serve as traces of authentic experience is in fact, exemplified by the souvenir'⁴⁵. She adds, the souvenir 'represents not the lived experience of its maker but the "second hand" experience of its owner'⁴⁶. I speculate on the provenance of the vase, and what different owners there may have been. If it is a souvenir, considering

⁴⁴ Oppi Untracht, *Metal Techniques for Craftsmen: A Basic Manual for Craftsmen on the Methods of Forming and Decorating Metals*, (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1968), 62-64.

⁴⁵ See the chapter, "Objects of Desire" in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). 132-169.

⁴⁶ Susan Stewart, *On Longing*, 135.

its origins of manufacture, what was its subsequent journey to the second-hand market-place, a journey from new to old? Is it a memento retrieved from some participant in a version of a hippie trail, bought somewhere in a market-place between Afghanistan and Indonesia? Is it a reminder of a once, young person's encounter with "authentic" and "exotic" cultures, while at the same time having also dropped out of their own? Or in contrast to this, was its destination supposed to be a market for a diasporic community in Australia, to connect to a distant home and the families that had to be left behind to make a new start? Did it then live on a mantelpiece or in a box, in the garage and how, why and when did this decision to resell it again take place? Where then was it retrieved from, to circulate once again in this meeting place of the market?

In proximity to the vase in *The World* is another object from my family of brass, of much smaller size, a brass bolt. I picked it out, rescued it from a wooden box amongst a collection of old hardware, flotsam and jetsam for sale; rusty hinges, screws, hooks, springs and doorknobs that have already been swirled around by discerning fingers. This object possesses a formal geometry of mechanical precision with spiralling threads milled at regular intervals, it sits easily in the palm and is designed to be used at its simplest with hand and tool to fasten and join. Lying prone on the tabletop of *The World* there is no accompanying nut and its utility as hardware is finished. What now does it connect to? The bolt's presence in the artwork however continues to make connections, optically and psychically, welded to its well-travelled companion, the vase, through a typology of metal rather than any physical join. Like the vase, it is also making connections to its past usage, although bereft, it conjures what is not pictured and what is missing.

The materials used in *The World* and *Empire* have a simple taxonomy, plywood, Masonite, brass, bronze and copper, that can be reduced further to simply wood and metal. Through artistic actions, gathering, arranging and assembling, these materials become synecdoche, producing a comparison through its reference to a world of unsettled timeframes. The organisation of the gathered material is a compressed version of their material journeys. Wooden forms are assembled, recognised as forms referencing a grander scale and purpose: making and joining form connections to the

value of labour and the work of others. Holding these brass objects in your own hand brings a connection to the many unknown hands that may have touched them before.

Coda:

At Five Walls gallery I am asked what the negative spaces, that surround the contours of *The World*, may tell me. Does the presence of this artwork, comprised of the objects that have been assembled and arranged, and the forms constructed for their display, also reveal an absence that is balanced in equal measure?

Although the display used in *The World* resembles a market stall, the heft of moving bodies has been removed as have all the traces of activity that surround the market's dynamic gathering. The multitude of goods are also mostly absent, there is exchange as items appear or disappear, in readiness for assembly or dismantling. Resemblance in *The World* is characterised by contrariness to an actual world. Sitting on a first level art gallery amidst whitened walls and the clean grey floor, and still air, the world outside is brought indoors, the artwork is isolated from the weathering capabilities of the sun, wind and rain. If I imagine a situation contrary to this, if *The World* was to exist in the actual world, the void of the white walls of the gallery would be replaced with the grey grease and dirt of hands and bodies. Unlike the gallery floor, without one speck of dust, there would be trampled sodden cardboard boxes strewn around, bricks and shards of concrete weigh down tarpaulins and anything else that could blow away. Rain would swell the Masonite and de-laminate the Plywood into grey wrinkled layers.



Figure 9: Michael Bullock, *The World*, 2017, plywood, Masonite, pine and brass found objects. Dimensions Variable. Photography by Keelan O'Hehir.



Figure 10: Michael Bullock, *Coins in Circulation*, author's reference image, 2018

Chapter III: Handling and the Handmade (What is big is small, what is small is big)

Coins in circulation

A ticket booth is at the front gate of the market, a remnant from when the Laverton market was once a drive-in cinema. Vehicles bank up to enter the site, while pedestrians gain easier access. Women dressed in fluorescent yellow safety vests act as ticket sellers and money gatherers, distributing ticker tape paper tickets in exchange for one dollar per person, and five dollars per car. The steady flow of visitors, both easy moving pedestrians and banked up cars, demands ready organisation for the distribution of change as they pay to enter.

A weather-beaten table stands adjacent to the ticket sellers, (see figure 8) its surface a mixture of cracking laminate and swollen chipboard. On top, one observes a display that shows two strategies for the organisation of money. The first is a mound of coins of all denominations. They pile up like rubble, a mixture of random planes, angles and glistening reflections to be arranged quickly as volume and mass rather than having any distinct value. Another strategy is visible to the right of this jumble: small repeating towers of stacked ten, twenty and fifty cent coins begin to organise and populate the remaining table space as they are distributed into piles—one dollar in value. These one-dollar “families” stand in readiness, to be quickly advanced as change.

Presented with this table of coins, to be handed over as loose change, I am presented with another view and arrangement. The tableaux provides another clear visualisation of circulation that relates to the operations of the market, and in turn this arrangement mirrors in miniature a simpler version of the layout and appearance to the actual geography of the market place. These piles of coins are of course in constant motion: single coins accumulate as objects, while others perform their function as currency in the economies that await, again and again. Like the flow of blood within the body, money stands as another literal example of circulation, pumping through the business of the market to be exchanged for what lies within.

In Chapter I, “8 AM (Understanding the Market)”, I established a panoramic view of Laverton Market that reflected my movements within its spaces. In Chapter II, I introduced my artwork, *The World*, whose function of gathering and arrangement

operates in a manner similar to this table-top of coins. In this chapter, “Handling and the Handmade; (What is big is small, what is small is big?)” I literally zoom in from the market surrounds, past this table-top displaying a cluster of coins, to focus in on a single coin – a 1964 penny.

A coin is something small designed to fit into the palm of your hand, that is passed on to another hand, *ad infinitum*. With a freshly minted coin, the miniature representations contained on it are miraculously perfect in formation and these forms can be repeated over and over again, evidenced by these piles of coins in my photograph from the Laverton Market. Like most objects, a coin has a lifespan, a story of its conception and its making or minting, circulation and eventual obsolescence as currency. Part of this story is the focus of this chapter in terms of the “handling” of coins and visible record of use that they accumulate on their surface through circulating as money. Through my investigations of the coin, I trace backwards to the beginnings of this coin’s life. It is a strategy of speculation that mirrors my tracing of the history of the brass vase in Chapter II.

As an artist, the story of how something is made is always fascinating, but the making of a coin is a particular mystery to me. To explore an idea of the “handmade”, I compare the making of a coin to sculpture, of which I know something about having been an artist for almost thirty years. While a coin is generally not considered an artwork, and as a mass-produced object even to be sub-artistic, it shares many characteristics with sculpture through the use of skills, technology, visual properties and materials.

The second section of this chapter’s title, “what is big is small, what is small is big” serves as a binding theme for my exploration. Clearly it alludes to an idea of scale. If we are referring to scale in sculpture, a simple assumption would be to think we would refer to an artwork’s physical and dimensional size. If we consider the making of a statue for instance, a typical pathway for its production would be that it is first made on a small scale, that then proceeds to something big. In the instance of a coin, the reverse is the case, such that the final result fits into your pocket. Nonetheless, the reproducibility of the coin is a property that it shares with the production of sculpture, although at vastly different volumes.

This chapter develops an understanding of the material legacy of a coin, through its making and its unmaking, along with the relative scale of these operations. An examination of the uneasy sense of enchantment that the coin presents, along with its record of the indexical trace that is then presented as these ‘two sides of the coin’.

Finding: Coins Out of circulation

The display of money that greets one at the entrance to the Laverton market is for its use as currency and the people who use it. This is in contrast with another display within the market itself, that I introduced in Chapter II to which I return. In one stall sits an old-style school case, resting on a folding plastic table along with other reclaimed, but mostly forgotten, Australiana. In this case there are a large collection of brown coins, tarnished and dull. On some, there is even a suggestion of the chalky green patina that is associated with copper’s oxidisation. Although a coin’s value as a token for commercial exchange means it is not always viewed as sculpture, this Verdigris exterior is very familiar; bronze statues also weather in this way as the alloy’s own strong component of copper reacts with the long exposure to the weathering elements of wind, rain and pollution. Even though these coins are vastly different in scale and size to a public monument, they nonetheless share the same qualities of durability due to this bronze alloy, in coins; 97% copper, 2 ½% zinc and ½% tin.⁴⁷

In the school-case, I am able to sift through the vast clinking volume of bronze coins and determine different denominations: one cent pieces, two cent pieces, pennies, half pennies, a mix of Australian and British coins. A chronology can be determined by the reign of British Monarchs on the obverse side: as far back as Queen Victoria, followed by King Edward, King George and Queen Elizabeth. Each monarch faces in the opposite direction to their predecessor, a tradition on coinage that began with Charles II’s desire to turn his back on Cromwell, who had disrupted the familial royal lineage in the 17th century. There is also *The Golden Hind*, the figure of *Britannia*; a mythological goddess updated to be a contemporary symbol of a once dominant British empire.⁴⁸ On the reverse side of Australian coins is a different family from the royal one – the familiar marsupials, a platypus, a possum, a kangaroo. As money

⁴⁷ John Gartner, *The Standard Australian Coin Catalogue*, (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1973), 6.

⁴⁸ The Golden Hind was the sailing ship of Sir Francis Drake; and depending on your point of view, he was highly skilled as both navigator and pirate.

removed from circulation, these coins now have no currency other than the fetish it might spark for collectors or valued as base metal for recycling.

If the currency stacks at the entrance of the market are in continual motion, this collection in the case have come to a rest, its once-continual journey has now ended. Sterling currency, pounds, shillings and pence ceased being useful on the 13th February 1966. It is a timeframe that approximates my lifetime—I was born in 1969. The new decimal currency's advantages lay in a simplified appeal for modernisation in commerce, industry, trade and education, along with being easily understood by an emerging immigrant population post World War Two. In the aspiration for a new age, the prime minister of the day, Harold Holt observed that the 'the new notes and coins more faithfully reflect the spirit of the nation', yet the representation of Queen and country remain to this day.⁴⁹ Decimal currency of one and two cent pieces had a limited lifespan as they were removed from circulation in 1992, a more recent past moving quickly into a distant memory.⁵⁰

Enlarged Coins

In a time where money has gone almost completely virtual, this feeling of touch, of sorting through these coins by hand is one almost relegated to memory. Remembering the coins that were once in my pocket, I can't see them, but I can feel them in my hand, their hard edges and contours poke against, and into the softness of my fingers and palm. I feel their weight, and the sounds they make. But cash is still king at the Laverton Market, to buy a kilo of this defunct currency at a price that I can afford, I go to the one lonely ATM to get some money for the transaction.

Later in the studio I photograph an Australian penny (see figure 9). The starting anatomy of the coin begins with its perimeter, a smooth, plain edge that separates both sides of the coin, barely perceptible but clear once photographed and enlarged.

⁴⁹ "Pm — No Loss in Currency Switch " *The Canberra Times* Feb 14, 1966, accessed July 12, 2019, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article105886741>.

⁵⁰ In an irony that reflects my personal anecdote of the life of metals in Chapter II, one cent pieces and two cent pieces were melted down to make medals for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, yet the cost of bronze was too high to make the minting of one cent and two cent pieces affordable. Accessed January 10, 2021. <https://www.ramint.gov.au/story/secret-medal>.

The edges have succumbed to use, and the perfect symmetry of this coin's 32mm diameter is perfect no more.



Figure 11: Michael Bullock, 1964 Penny, author's reference material, 2018.

The heads side of the coin, like the English penny from which this coin's modelling is derived, show a young Queen Elizabeth in clear iconic profile, modelled by Mary Gillick. The Queen looks younger than her actual age of 26 years, looking to the right with stern, calm, countenance, wearing a laurel wreath on her head that is tied off with ribbon. The queen's head-dress is a symbol of the triumph of empires, linking back to the representations of Kings and Emperors from ancient Greece and Rome. But it is also aligned with the moment of a new monarch's reign, a new start in 1953 that followed the death of her father George VI, and the rebuilding and renovation that arose from the ashes of World War II. Surrounding this profile, a legend: a precise arrangement of text in raised relief that mirrors the circular contours of the coin. In Times New Roman font there is a series of full capped declarations in Latin, punctuated by separations of raised convex dots that act as full stops and colons:

ELIZABETH II. DEI GRATIA. REGINA, F: D:

A symbol, the cross of Saint George the heraldic emblem of England, sits as a final exclamation mark at the end of this proclamation. Convex semi-spherical denticles flank the perimeter of the raised rim. Their purpose is as a decorative flourish but also reinforcement against the wear that handling has on the edges. If these beads were to be counted, they would number either 116 or 120, a count that indicates to numismatists the origin of its minting, in this example from 1964, either the Perth or Melbourne Mint. Since 1911, when the Australian penny was introduced as currency,

different mints across the British Empire produced the Australian coin: first the Royal Mint in London; later mints in Birmingham, England, Calcutta and Bombay in India, and eventually Perth, Melbourne and for a time, Sydney.

The tails side of the coin is by the British Artist, George Kruger-Gray, who had studied at the Royal College of Art. As well as designing the Australian penny, Kruger-Gray had designed other coins for the Royal Mint destined for the colonies and commonwealth; South Africa, Canada, Southern Rhodesia, New Zealand and Mauritius. The tails side shows a kangaroo, which was first featured on the Australian penny in 1938. The animal is pictured in profile and relief and bounds in the opposite direction to the queen's gaze towards the left of the coin. The artist's initials are embossed in the design, they sit just above the tip of the tail of the kangaroo. This initial is only legible because of my enhanced photograph, while in the actual size of the coin they are little more than an unrecognisable speck. The kangaroo is shown at its most dynamic, nonetheless arrested within the coin's confines. Placed to the left of the animal's extended hind leg is the symbol of the Commonwealth star, its points representing every state in the Australian commonwealth. As with the obverse side, letters are arranged in a circular form spelling AUSTRALIA, crowning the image of the kangaroo while the word PENNY is flanked below. In contrast to this circular lettering is the announcement of the date of minting in line with the kangaroos bounding movement. The coin is both icon and symbol, icon for their likeness to Elizabeth and animal symbols for Queen and Country, as well as money for exchange.

Although the digital camera no longer relies on the analogue processes of photography it still retains its indexical capacity: to produce a correspond that refers clearly to an actual object's surface, and to record and represent these features as concrete facts. Through magnification, photography can connect a viewer to details that appear beyond our ability to see, an exacting proximity of surface detail that is not easily observed by my fading eye-sight.

Writing on indexicality Iversen focuses on a theory of the index that draws on a lineage of semiotics that she traces back to the 19th Century American pragmatist, C. S. Pierce.⁵¹ While Pierce's typology of the sign is a tri-partite entity that incorporates the index with icon and symbol, Iversen's attention is drawn to the index and a subset

⁵¹ Margaret Iversen, "Indexicality" in *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, 19-32.

category of this sign system, the indexical trace.⁵² Iversen details analogue photography, with its ability to channel light onto film, as an exemplar of the indexical trace. However, she also applies the indexical trace to other artistic methods, such as casting and rubbing; methods that pertain to the manufacture and use of a coin. The coin serves as a material reminder accumulating the indexical traces of past activity, presence or contact with another object. It is these tactile qualities of the indexical trace that are found in my 1964 penny, with its signs of wear and tear that allow connections not only to a material world but also to a psychic one.

Iversen connects the indexical trace to the “Wunderblock” or magic slate that Sigmund Freud refers to in his 1925 essay, “A Note upon the ‘Mystic Writing Pad’”.⁵³ The magic slate is a children’s toy made of three layers, a thin acetate sheet on top of waxed paper and wax tablet. The acetate can be drawn on with a pointed stylus and a mark is made when the paper touches the wax tablet underneath. Inscriptions can be made and erased by simply lifting the paper and acetate away from the tablet, however, the wax tablet retains a palimpsest of all inscriptions. Freud uses this toy as an example of how the psyche registers events at a deeper layer of the unconscious memory. While this indexical trace of memory presents for Freud a material reference, for Iversen it is an analogy for the model of the mind. As Iversen writes, ‘the clear plastic sheet and paper represent the faculties of perception and consciousness with their protective psychic shield against stimuli; the retentive wax below represents memory and the unconscious’⁵⁴.

Through the transformation, that a change in scale produces, photography enables hidden surfaces to appear, and details that define the singularity of an object to emerge. When in circulation a coin’s surface is largely ignored, perhaps even invisible, as a coin’s function is pragmatic—currency in a larger economy (for trade, labour and goods) in which we all participate. Now that this coin is out of circulation, this discrete pragmatism has been erased and its usefulness as currency has ceased, slowing enough for it to stand still for the photographer as a ruin. Subjected to the camera’s

⁵² Iversen charts a lineage of the index, beginning with C. S. Pierce but includes a discussion of other contributors. For a definition of the Indexical “Trace”, Iversen acknowledges the contribution of Mary Ann Doane, see, Mary Ann Doane, “Indexicality: Trace and Sign: Introduction.” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007): 1. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2006-020>.

⁵³ Margaret Iversen. “Exposure”, *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, 2.

⁵⁴ Iversen, 2.

scrutiny the coin divulges a material record of scars, scratches, dents and dings that pit a surface. Enlarged and visible, at last these blemishes serve as an indexical trace, However, unlike the index of a photograph's correspondence to a once observed form, place and time, these residual traces of usage are more unclear, they record a history of events that are still to be speculated, imagined and reconstructed.

This speculation raises many questions: where had this coin been, what had it done in its material life? What did it buy or sell? Was it given or stolen? Was it somebody's very last coin or one of many? Did its presence bring happiness and its absence despair? Did it pay off debt or was it loaned? Did it pay for work, or was it withheld? Used as dowry or settlement, gambled or invested or did this coin do all of these things? With the lessons learnt from the "Wunderblock", it is in this inscribed memory of use marking the coin's surface and now made visible, that a web of very complex social relations is imagined.

My photographic version of a penny, enlarged on an LCD screen avails an easy comparison to sculpture, of both its making and unmaking from the traces that signal touch and the rubbing of surfaces. It reminds me of other objects: the vastly bigger surface area of a votive idol, or a temple's carved bas-relief or stele with its engraved inscriptions. These objects are generally made of stone, which is a material that easily absorbs the oils and dirt from human skin, especially marble. It yellows or blackens on raised highlights, or a form slowly abrades, polished with this touch of a devoted hand. On my rubbed coin, there are similarly dirty and greasy histories, accumulated from bouncing and bumping between bus rides, pockets and purses, tills and turnstiles, or from being held in the palm of a hand.

Enchantment

Alongside the close examination of my penny's indexical traces, evidenced by its material legacies, I have been contemplating the idea of a coin being an object of devotion, given what this coin represents and the legacies that are contained within its form. I cannot help but wonder at the magic contained in the shrunken head. In a far reaching and provocative essay, "The Enchantment of Technology and The Technology of Enchantment", the anthropologist Alfred Gell, seeks to try to understand the unique magic, or sense of *enchantment* that the art object can facilitate and

service.⁵⁵ While the hidden richness of the indexical lead to thoughts of past events, a contrary feeling can be induced by coins; that of *enchantment*. It is a feeling described when an individual takes leave of their senses when confronted with the art object. As Gell's aesthetic theory concludes it can be applied to the natural and the cultural world. He writes, 'there are beautiful horses, beautiful people, beautiful sunsets, and so on; but art objects are the only objects around which are *beautifully made*, or *made beautiful*.'⁵⁶

Recounting a visit to Salisbury Cathedral at the age of 11 Gell describes his appreciation of the well-made object. The actual cathedral, an epic example of an early English style of architecture, made little impression on him, while in a side abbey a model of the cathedral, fashioned from used matchsticks, induced in him a feeling of awe that had a much more lasting effect. At the time, making matchstick models was a popular pastime for children of his age, and Gell had his own personal affinity and knowledge for practising this everyday craft.⁵⁷ As a small boy this model cathedral was, Gell writes, 'the ultimate work of art'.⁵⁸ He marvelled at the matchstick versions of spires, columns and archways, the translation of stone formwork into an intricate geometry furnished by matchsticks and glue. The matchstick model was an embodiment of magic; to make by hand a replica of this vast building, translating in to a likeness that can then now sit on a table-top and viewed from above in its own lavish entirety. It's the idea that someone is able to achieve this feat of making that supplies the 11-year old Gell with a sense of *enchantment*.

While a match-stick model is a craft that many people might know, the making of a coin with its task of generating a likeness is a different proposition. The demands of this task highlight my consideration of the sophisticated skills, materials, technologies and experiences needed for making. How does something so small, this portrait of power, contain such potency, and what is this *enchantment*?

⁵⁵ The title of Gell's essay, where this description of enchantment can be found, is also in the shape of a *kōan*, a philosophical puzzle, and I pay a debt for this resemblance to my Chapter title. Alfred Gell, "The Enchantment of Technology and the Technology of Enchantment," in *The Craft Reader*, ed. Glenn Adamson (Oxford, New York: Oxford, New York: Berg Publishers, 2010).

⁵⁶ Gell, *Enchantment*, 477.

⁵⁷ Gell, 470.

⁵⁸ Gell, 470.

My experience of life modelling plays into this consideration and I consider my skills in making a likeness. I know something about working the clay into shape from “meaningless mud” into representation. Balls of clay are rolled between hands, forced and flattened on an armature of wood, metal and wire. I understand the quest to achieve a likeness, to mark out the sitter’s face and head in three dimensions, from ear to ear, cranium to chin; to recognize the change in the angles of the forehead between the frontal and parietal bone and to transfer that to the model. To map the projection and profile of the nose with its connection to the flatter planes of the face and travel the uneven and contradictory volumes of the muscles of the mouth and lips. The round flesh of cheeks contrasting with the tension of skin over chin bone. Saggy wrinkles of the masseter muscle. Spheres of clay are placed into rounded cavities to form eyeballs, flat labral arcs of clay, gently draped over this roundness to make eyelids like lips and What to do about the hair? ⁵⁹

To understand modelling is also to understand the materials and processes of making sculpture, and what different roles they play in determining a likeness. While this bronze coin now shows all the marks of its unmaking, a relic of money shaped by the trace of many hands, this coin made was first made by only one set of hands, the artist Mary Gillick.

Making Coins, Making Sculpture

In 1952, the woman who modelled this representation of Queen Elizabeth on the penny, Mary Gillick, was 71 years old, and recently bereaved following the death of her husband when she decided to enter the competition for the design of a new coin.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ As an undergraduate student at Curtin University from 1988-90, my studio major was in painting and my experience in working in sculpture was minimal. Up until this time, my work was strongly image based. A turning point was a studio residency in Hà Nội, Việt nam in 1999 at Trường Đại học Mỹ thuật Công nghiệp. (Hanoi University of Industrial Design) and subsequent invitations to participate in sculpture symposiums in Huế and Châu Đốc. In Vietnam, I was fascinated to witness the skills of traditional sculpture still being practised and taught, it was in strong contrast to my training as an artist in Australia. Undoubtedly, there was the legacy of *l'école des beaux arts* tradition in the educational system as well as other cultural legacies associated with interactions and legacies of the Soviet Bloc countries. This also coincided with a modernity that was more home grown. The exhibition *Chuyển thể* held at Gertrude Contemporary in 2003 reflects this as well as the exhibition *Enlightenment Figures* at Linden Contemporary Art in 2013.

⁶⁰ Mary Gillick’s husband, the sculptor, Ernest Gillick, A.R.A., was well known for his own large-scale sculpture of monuments, architectural details and cenotaphs scattered mostly through the United Kingdom and colonies.

Gillick produced a design that was chosen over sixteen other entrants by the Royal Mint Advisory Committee, presided by the Duke of Edinburgh. This was her first coin design although she had designed medals previously.

Like any sculpture, the design and making of a new coin is the sum of different processes. For Gillick at first, this was done with easily manipulated materials: paper and chalk were used to cut out silhouettes of the figure within the circle of the coin and to facilitate compositional elements. After the proportions of design were settled, the figure was then modelled, made across a range of materials to form a final design of a plaster blank modelled in a sculptural relief of about 30cms or 12 inches.

The technique of modelling relief requires a fluctuation of attention between two and three dimensions, it resembles both drawing and sculpture with different degrees or levels of projection emanating from a background surface. For a coin, the design and subsequent modelling is born from practical considerations for a coin's eventual circulation. If the relief is too high, the coin will not stack, if it is too low, the design will wear too quickly as it has in some of the coins that I have collected from the market.

Imagining the modelling strategies that Gillick employed, also involves an interrogation of the materials she may have used. In one contemporaneous account of the Gillick coin describes the initial modelling of the figure to have been in wax.⁶¹ Wax often plays an intermediate role as a material in sculpture, its *malleability* is exemplary for forming resemblance and likeness, controlled by the modeller with the potential of exacting and minute deftness. These observations are teased out by the philosopher, Georges Didi-Huberman;

. Wax is solid, but it may easily be liquefied. It is impermeable, but it may easily be dissolved in water (it takes only the slightest modification to do so). It may be sculpted, modelled or cast, and is thus insensitive to the contradictions as well as to the traditional hierarchies in the plastic arts. It may be worked either by hand or by means of all kinds of tools.⁶²

My knowledge and experience of using wax in the workshop expand on these observations, recalling its subtle and diverse manipulations; of aluminium pots of wax

⁶¹ "Mary Gillick: Her Art in Your Pocket," Henry Moore Foundation, accessed 13 July 2019. <https://www.henry-moore.org/whats-on/2017/09/20/mary-gillick-her-art-in-your-pocket>.

⁶² Georges Didi-Huberman, "The Order of Material: Plasticities, Malaises, Survivals " in *Sculpture and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Brandon Taylor, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 199.

sitting on electric hot plates, with wax moving between volatile, crackling hot to a slower, cooler viscous liquid. The aroma of hydrocarbon coming from the warm sticky paste as it is heated and poured or brushed into rubber moulds. It is also minutely responsive, small balls can be formed only by the body temperature and movement of oiled finger and thumb, then rolled into delicate fine strips on stainless steel bench tops and pinched into place with modelling tools. Wax junctions are soldered together with a heated boot knife. Once cool and hard, wax can be carved and scraped with the smallest knife or chisel that leaves spiralled tailings as waste, which are later burnished smooth with a stainless-steel tool, scrunchies and white spirit.

Following the fashion of the wax model Gillick made a circular plaster mould. A contemporary newspaper account of the process serves as a useful pointer to the properties of plaster exploited by Gillick:

A plaster of Paris mould was then made and, in this Mrs. Gillick, cut the lettering in, mirror image. Here, of course, the trouble began-as in all medal or coin design. "You take the cast out of the mould and you find nothing is as good as you thought it was," said Mrs. Gillick. "The head and the hair look rough, the lettering looks worn, and probably there are mistakes as you have done it, Inversely. Nothing is right. So, you work on that cast and then find you want to do something extra. As you can only scratch on the cast, you have to make another mould, then another cast, then another mould and then another Finally, you send it in to the committee."⁶³

Gillick's description makes clear the fluctuations in the process between positive and negative, and the indexical trace between what is there and what is not. The hardened plaster surface yields to lead and chinagraph pencils, allowing a precise transfer of the design in preparation for carving. Cutting letters into the plaster in reverse is righted through the process of casting; incision changes to raised form, mirrored lettering and numerals becomes legible. Mistakes, imperfections and refinements are all remedied through this process of reversal. Negative surfaces are made flat again through the filling of patches of soft clay or wax, scraped into creviced blemishes, and positive

⁶³ "Considerable problems of design have to be overcome in devising Coins of The Realm" *Western Mail (Perth, WA: 1885 - 1954)* 18 December 1952: 8. Web. 12 Jan 2021, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39355181>.

forms rasped away. In all, Gillick made sixty-three plaster casts of moulds and positives during 1952, in a process of refinement leading to the development of the plaster blank.

These observations of Gillick's process recall my knowledge in using this material: when "damp" due to its residual water, plaster can be formed with chisel and woodcut tool. The moisture stabilising the pathway of sharp blades, but when "dry" this ability disappears and plaster shatters. The moisture having leached out, it must be shaped with other tools, knives, rasps, surforms and rifflers. Plaster can be smoothed to resemble the smoothness and softness of ghosted alabaster skin, the residual particles pile like fine sifted flour.

As Gillick's working process illustrates, generating a final plaster blank for reduction involves the replication of form between/through intermediary materials of different hardness; of clay, wax and plaster that is performed because of the index. Once the plaster is finished, the personal scale of the artisanal worker is replaced by industrial crafts and the coin begins the transformation into a mass-produced object.⁶⁴ The plaster blank is electroplated with copper to function as a template, that will be translated by the reducing machine.⁶⁵ The machine is a parallel lathe or pantograph, that traces the contours and shapes of the relief, from the edge to the centre, as the model rotates slowly in the machine.

At the other end of the machine a cutting tool reproduces, on a hub of mild steel, the design of the coin in its intended final size but in positive form. This hub is then hardened through heating and quenching, and subsequently the coin's design is transferred to a die. Again, the translation of positive to negative is achieved by three repeated blows to a similarly shaped master die that has first been annealed and

⁶⁴ In an interpretation of Gell and the idea of enchantment, the curator and writer Glenn Adamson, compares the mass-produced object to the crafted object. '... a crafted object is enchanting because we understand it in relative terms-relative, that is, to what we could achieve with our own hands . . . This explains why handmade objects, in general, are more likely to produce an effect of enchantment more than mass-produced ones. Unless we happen to have professional experience in plastic injection moulding, electronics and software development, for example, we have no means of understanding the creation or internal workings of a mobile phone.' See Glenn Adamson, *The Invention of Craft*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 100. In an age in which much industrial craft is in decline and manufacturing not being part of daily life, the application of an idea of enchantment to these industrial crafts is easily understood. Letterpress is one such example.

⁶⁵ One example of this reducing machine is the Janvier Machine, which is a marvel of mechanical engineering, but now obsolete. The Janvier machine's capabilities have been superseded by digital CNC machining, where mechanical prowess is replaced by digital. Nevertheless, the continual form of inscription that both processes allow is consistent.

hardened to achieve the negative impression. From this master die, a series of working punches and working dies are produced in the same manner as before to include variations such as year dates and mint marks. For the Gillick penny, the master die was produced at the Royal Mint in London, as were some working dies, which were also made in various arms of the Royal Mint throughout the Commonwealth and colonies.⁶⁶

The two working dies corresponding to the obverse and the reverse side are then inserted into a pneumatic press, and volumes of milled metal discs known as blanks or planchets that form the base material of the coin, copper, bronze and nickel, are stamped to form the newly minted coin. The die acts as a negative mould, in concert with stamped pressure, the softer metal of the planchet is forced into form. Making coins also relies on malleability, relative to the materials used and the traces they leave behind, it utilises the machined forces of power and the pressure of machines to generate its form. In the passage to material durability in coin making and sculpture, positive form moves to negative space and then back to positive again, to negative. Materials yield to each other, soft materials are transformed into a harder version and then back to soft and then to hard, and then back again, soft to hard.

*

The penny I photograph is one of 54,590,400 new coins minted for that year, the final year, in either Perth or Melbourne, their shiny lustre and sharp relief gradually diminishing from this point on.⁶⁷

*

In contrast to the penny the vast size and weight of monumental sculpture prevents its easy movement; its material and labour cost also demand a powerful patron. Nonetheless, there remains an aspiration for an indelible history captured in a durable materiality, intended to survive the passing of time and epochs. These aspirations are reflected by the scale of statues, larger than life figures on plinths or mounted on

⁶⁶ Branches of the mint included Melbourne, Perth, Bombay, and Ottawa, see also: J Sharples (2010) "Branch Mints of the Royal Mint" in *Museums Victoria Collections*, accessed 17 January 2021. <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/3768>

⁶⁷ Gartner, *Standard*, 14.

horses. Gell reminds us of the role artists and artisans play in this transaction, that is designed for *enchantment*;

. . . . for instance, the court sculptor by means of his magical power over marble, provides a physical analogue for the less and easily realised power wielded by the king, and thereby enhances the king's authority. What Bernini can do to marble, (and one does not know quite what or how) Louis XIV can do to you (by means which are equally outside your mental grasp). The man who controls such a power as is embodied in the technical mastery of Bernini's bust of Louis XIV is powerful indeed.⁶⁸

Our view of these monuments, as subjects gazing upwards while the movements of the sun shape the familiar and repeated silhouettes of power is to recognise that they mark the reach and reign of empire and capital, across islands and continents, from London, to Melbourne and Calcutta, Ballarat to Lahore.⁶⁹ The enterprise of the very deliberate circulation of these forms is still felt to this day. In this form of uneasy exchange, sculptures still remain, their enduring materiality and heavy, heavy weight have a presence in where these forms encroached.

The coin shares this crafted language in the service of power, through its infinite reproducibility and modulating symbols, for example the interchange of the Golden Hind or the kangaroo, it connects disparate peoples under one sign, one system. It is designed not to sit still in the parks and civic spaces of Empire, but to be in circulation, moving and craving ever-expanding terrains.

⁶⁸ Gell, 473.

⁶⁹ While researching this chapter, I was surprised to learn that the Australian sculptor, Bertram MacKenna had designed two coins for George V that were produced by the Royal Mint. His public commissions include public sculptures of Queen Victoria that are in Blackburn (United Kingdom), Lahore (Pakistan), and Ballarat (Victoria) made between 1898 and 1904. He also prepared royal monuments to Edward VII in 1911 in Carlton and Calcutta. This doubling of form through the monument has strong resonance to the surrealist encounter explored in this paper. See, Mark, Stocker, "The Empire Strikes Back: The Coin, Medal and Stamp Designs of Bertram MacKenna." *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 19 (2008): 3-14. Accessed May 23, 2019. <http://www.numismatics.org.au/naa-journals/2008/>.

Digital Ghosts

In contrast to Gillick my process transformed the coin through digital scans, which I had hoped would record each cut and dent in the coin's surface, in the way that a silicon rubber mould registers perfectly the indexical trace of a thumb print in clay or wax. I had expected the same fidelity from the scans, that my initial photographs of the pennies had achieved, allowing me to zoom into the spaces and trenches of each blemish, at any scale, to re-create the incidental traces of wear and tear as if they were real. Although I tried many times and despite the promise of contemporary technology, like Gillick, I found 'nothing is as good as you thought it was'.



Figure 12: Michael Bullock, digital scans of 1964 penny, author's reference image.

However, these scanned images had their own virtual qualities. On my screen were fragments of profiles of kings and queens in garish primary hues, assembled as replicas of their original form. The digital scans were composed of multiple layers, each layer having sections of information that the other layers had missed, yet nothing was complete. The scans registered light as form while what was in shadow was nothing, only blackness. Once overlaid, the details in these profiles fuzzed. In this way the digital scans also resembled photography, without focus and definition. The poor registration in these scans was a failure of technology but it was an opportunity for me as the artist to once again understand the idea of touch and proximity for a digital reality that could not be repaired. When I later worked on these digital models in Rhino, the colours faded to grey and moved to the tonal range of plaster, the default material setting of that computer program but also a reminder of the coins' initial materiality when they came into being.

A set of mostly dead monarchs began to appear as ghosts on the computer screen. These images reminded me of the territories gained and claimed, but also of lives that

rallied behind these symbols contained within the coins, and the scale needed to perform these tasks of empire. Isn't that what a ghost is? The trace of a body, of what was once, left without the ability to touch, but only to reckon with their impact. The scans not only record the object, the coin, they also envisage a map, an index of their circulation through the world and the traumas left behind in their wake.

I had wanted the scans of these coins to picture their end. In Chapter IV, I return to an origin of this project, an image I have named *Found Alphabet*, a collection of brass letters, that are found in a different terrain, the *Gujeri* market in India. Like the coin which is an object, I negotiate the legacies that are held within this image and examine the effects of those legacies today.



Figure 13: Michael Bullock, *Rubbings and the Rubbed*, 2020. Artist's concept rendering for artworks in plaster of digitally scanned coins.



Figure 14: Michael Bullock, *Rubbings and the Rubbed*, 2020. Artist's concept rendering for artworks in plaster of digitally scanned coins.

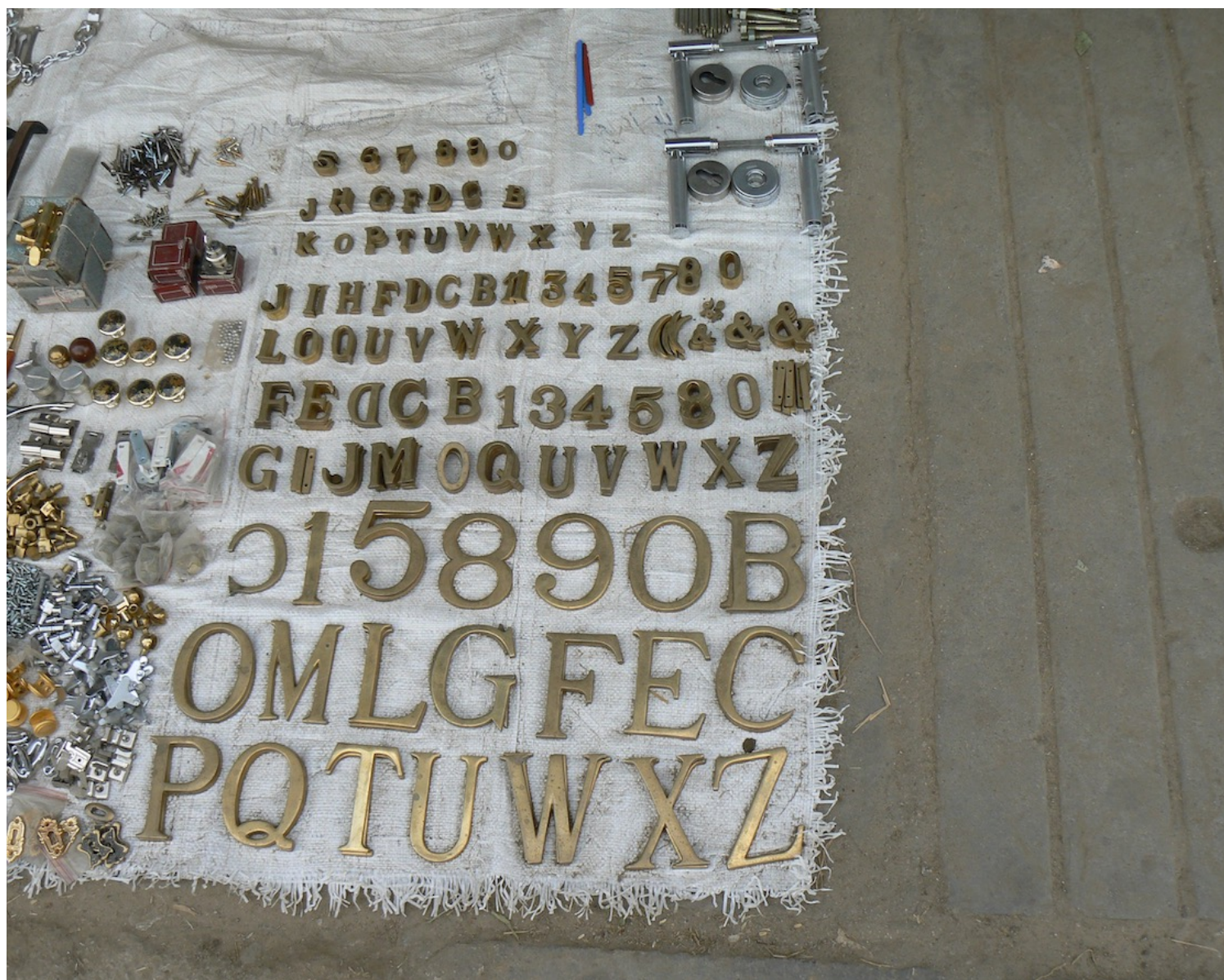


Figure 15: Michael Bullock, *Found Alphabet*, author's reference image, 2013.

Chapter IV: Origins, Arrangements, Returns. (the past catches up)

*Living in India means living simultaneously in several cultures and times. One often walks into 'medieval' situations and runs into 'primitive' people. The past exists as a living entity alongside the present, each illuminating and sustaining the other- Gulammohammed Sheikh.*⁷⁰

Return to the Image

I start this chapter by making a return to the photograph I took in late 2013 in India, it is an image I first introduced in Chapter I, 8AM, (Understanding the Market). I have been compelled to keep looking at this image since the very beginning of this project and in this final chapter it returns to frame the completion of *Market Values*. I have kept returning to this image, firstly by giving a name, *Found Alphabet*, generating my version of these letters into artworks and in 2019 prompting a return to the actual site of my first chance encounter with this arrangement.

The title of this chapter, Origins, Arrangements and Returns; (The Past Catches Up) shares the same prosaic way I used in naming *Found Alphabet*. It serves both as a scaffold for the form of this chapter and it identifies an artistic methodology. It is the aim of this chapter to frame a series of *Returns*, of retrieval, recycling, recognition and reconstruction through the discussion of a number of artworks, of mine and others. These returns have been generated by this image *Found Alphabet* that continues to recur.

The photograph shows a seller's wares arranged on a worn polyethylene sheet, separating them from the dirt of a battered, concrete footpath. The photo was taken at a second-hand market that takes place every Sunday in the older area of Chickpet, in Bangalore/Bengaluru, India.

On the left-hand side of the image are mounds of different hardware grouped in categories of metal, brass, and nickel-plated steel. Some of these objects in these

⁷⁰ This is a famous quotation by the Indian artist, Gulammohammed Sheikh that is often repeated and circulated. The quotation made a strong impression on me when I was first introduced to it in a lecture by the art historian Karin Zitzewitz, that took place in December 2013 at 1Shanthiroad. See also Gulammohammed. Sheikh, "Among Several Cultures and Times", *Journal of Arts & Ideas*. (New Delhi: Tulika Print Communication, Circa 1995), accessed January 15, 2021, <https://aaa.org.hk/en/collections/search/archive/gulammohammed-sheikh-archive-articles-and-essays/object/among-several-cultures-and-times>

groupings are recognisable, small clusters and piles of different kinds of screws in brass and steel, some cupboard handles and knobs, keys, door locks and bolts, as well as brass bookshelf supports. Although all the objects are second-hand, some are still in their original boxes and protective plastic coverings, the old, scuffed plastic diffuses the visibility of what is inside.

In the middle of this image, the focus of my attention as a photographer becomes most clear, an intention also surely held by the stallholder as arranger of this display to entice customers. It is a presentation of old brass letters in English and also numbers. The stallholder has positioned the largest letters at the front for my best position as both photographer and potential buyer. The arrangements and spacings of the letters mirror the way fonts are organised as a family in a source book or an optometrist's eye chart. However, this arrangement makes it obvious that there are also missing letters and numbers.

The image, along with my photographs of other marketplaces in India, helped the first shape of this project *Market Values* as an encounter with the materials and forms found in a second-hand market, instigating a sculptural practice. My collections of images from India facilitated a link to the Laverton Market. Both sites operated in their own informal and vernacular economy, more importantly these photographs drew attention to the materials and objects found there as well as the modes of display for their presentation, creating important resemblances between distant and proximate locations, one based in Melbourne and literally down the road (or Freeway), and one in India, thousands of kilometres and two jet flights away.

*

Origins

Origin [Ursprung]. Although a thoroughly historical category, nonetheless has nothing to do with beginnings [. . .]. The term origin does not mean the process of becoming of that which has emerged, but much more, that which emerges out of the process of becoming and disappearing. The origin stands in the flow of becoming as a whirlpool [. . .]; its rhythm is

apparent only to a double insight.⁷¹

The encounter at the market, recorded in the image *Found Alphabet*, marks an *Origin*, in terms of a specific time and place, it also marks a distance, in terms of my physical proximity to its location and the fading memory it captures. While predating the project *Market Values*, the image's presence is a provocation in that it resembles a cipher, the letters form as a secret message or writing that is also not fully understood by me. My task has been to assemble and arrange these separate fragments circulating around and through the encounter captured in the photograph.

Walter Benjamin defines an *origin* that swirls like a whirlpool, the idea of *returns* is joined to this beginning shaping a turbulent temporality. The figure of Benjamin as a writer also swirls by in the churn of this chapter, as do many of his interpreters and interlocutors, such as Michael Taussig, Susan Buck-Morss, Will Straw and Jennifer Gabrys.

Benjamin negotiated his own lived experience of modernity, as Europe transitioned from the 19th to the 20th century, through his encounters with the recent relics of the material culture of his own epoch. An equivalent confrontation can be located in my recent negotiations of the epic material culture of India triggered by my encounter with the brass letters of *Found Alphabet*.

It is important to note that the period of European modernity experienced by Benjamin is situated differently from an Indian experience of modernity.⁷² Depending on where you are, how you are positioned and oriented by the relations of power, such as the East and the West, the First World and the Third, even a buyer and seller in the market place, the timeframes that shape an understanding of the past can be captured by many names; Imperialism, Modernism, colonialism, and Post-colonialism. Today these various designations exist in a global moment of contemporaneity. As Terry Smith remarks, 'Multiple temporalities are the rule these days, and their conceptions

⁷¹ Susan Buck-Morss, & Walter Benjamin, *The Dialectics of Seeing Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 226.

⁷² The important contribution Geeta Kapur makes to the discussion of the complexities of "modernity" within India, with its twin agents of modernisation and modernism is important. A modernity that in itself has responded to and been derived from the forces of colonialism, independence, nationalism, fundamentalism and globalism. See Geeta Kapur. "Detours from the Contemporary." *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*, (New Delhi: Tulika, 2000), 276.

of historical development move in multifarious directions'.⁷³ The marketplace where *Found Alphabet* was found is just such a site of multifarious arrangements where the multiple histories of India, their timeframes and power relations can be discovered.

The brass letters of *Found Alphabet* are located, alongside the abundant examples of the "recently outmoded" objects that can be found there, to fascinate Benjamin and his legacy. Where these objects are located is not the arcade of Benjamin's enquiry but in the open air of the marketplace or bazaar, and both objects and site reveal their own histories, economies and imaginations.

These imaginings are partly mine, the currency of the artist in a creative marketplace, but they are also the collective imaginations of the market and what is found there. This is what Benjamin terms, the 'natural history' of objects, the left-over qualities of commodities at the end of their lifecycles, with their own origins and journeys and their magical resurrections into artworks.⁷⁴

The Arrangement of Speech into Language

Imagine where the sounds of speech first begin, of air being breathed in and pushed up from the lungs and out through the larynx, mouth and nose. A dizzying range of sounds and pitch that make language that is in turn distinguished by the different obstructions of this breathed air, the trained movement of lips and tongue against teeth and palate and all perfectly modelled with unconscious dexterity.

Then, what is spoken and heard in this marketplace where *Found Alphabet* was first documented and then imagined. There is English, but the market is not the domain of the Anglophone speaker nor the intended market. There is Kannada, the state language of Karnataka where India is a country of many different languages, Telugu,

⁷³ Smith, Terry. "Introduction: The Contemporaneity Question," in *Antinomies of Art and Culture, Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, ed, Nancy Condee et al., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) 5.

⁷⁴ Other commentators on art share similar observations, locating the equivalence of Benjamin's articulation of modernity to the Indian experience of modernisation and the comparisons and differentiations between them, especially with the economic liberalisation India experienced in the early 1990s. Karin Zitzewitz. "The Moral Economy of the Street: The Bombay Paintings of Gieve Patel and Sudhir Patwardhan." *Third Text* 23, no. 2 (2009): 151-63.

Tamil and Hindi, all circulating as spoken, reflecting the movement of people in contemporary India.⁷⁵

Then imagine all the different languages that are spoken and then how they are rendered in form and recorded in writing and all the crafts and technologies that are used for this. The shapes of each unique letter of every alphabet: of words inscribed into stone, pressed into clay, engraved on copper plate, brushed onto papyrus, vellum or paper and now sitting still in museums. Foundries of lead type and printing presses making books and newspapers that stack or scatter. Typewriters are superseded by plastic computer keyboards and monitors, and mobile phones. After all this technological progress, what is left behind can be found in the second-hand market places of the world.

In the technology of these well-worn sand cast brass letters of *Found Alphabet* is a system of the signs used for writing. Letters are symbols, images that represent the sounds of speech, and the language of English is an imported and imposed language that points both to the past, of colonial histories of India, but also global futures where mastery of English is seen as essential for prosperity and success.

In the photograph from Chickpet some of these brass letters stack up as multiples, consonants repeat like a stutter, while vowels are scarce by comparison or missing altogether. Vowel sounds in speech usually bridge consonants to form the syllables that make words and give names that are shaped into sentences. These sentences are formed into stories that carry the sense and meaning of a place and its people. The photograph arrests this display in time as a collection, even though this

⁷⁵ P. Dheram, (2005). "English Language Teaching in India: Colonial Past Vis-à-Vis Curricular Reform", *Teaching English to the World: History, Curriculum, and Practice*, edited by George Braine, (Mahwah: Routledge, 2005), 146-167. There are 18 official languages that are connected to state boundaries and 350 other languages that are recognised as major languages. While Hindi is the official language of the Indian Union, the function of English as an associate language has meant that its reach has arguably been greater, especially in consideration of non-Hindi speaking southern states of which Karnataka is one. In an era of globalism which defines our contemporary age, the use of English has become the main language of national and international business and as is the case with many countries and the multi-nationals that populate the commercial landscapes across countries, the role of English in India also participates in this way. Similarly, the status of English as an associate official language has meant that it easily bridges the language divisions created by state borders of India and as a language needed for higher education, public service and the law across all states. As every language evolves and changes through time, the use of English in India has created its own particular hybrids and formed lexicons as well as being put to the service of history, poetry, literature or science.

arrangement was designed only ever to be temporary. It captures the broken sequences; the letters gather to form an incomplete alphabet with the elision of certain letters and a set of data with missing numbers. The arrangement renders a language that is close to incoherent.

It is a collection that sits between being assembled and disassembled and the alphabet that is depicted as both a scaffold for, and the ruin of language, the brass letters, a material for telling and the telling of material.

Retrieval and Salvage

Nonetheless the brass letters of *Found Alphabet* have been salvaged registering the value they retain in their incompleteness.

Chaitanya Sambrani writes that in India, the 'semi-official economies of recycling are physically vital to our continued existence-is indicative of our historical condition.' Economies of recycling are also adjacent, alongside all other official economic activity as an equal force to the change and processes of modernisation.⁷⁶ Processes that have been accelerated by India's changed economic conditions facilitated by the New Economic Policy of 1991.⁷⁷

At its most simple, recycling is associated with the precarity of human survival in India and the innovation and energy needed in extracting the last value from commodities at what seems their point of final exhaustion in their lifecycles.

The depiction of poverty in India, as it is formed by media, documentaries and movies, shows labourers sifting through epic volumes of waste in rubbish dumps, generated not only by India's vast population but also the waste imported from first world countries. The aim of the workers is survival in a ruthless economy. Their means of survival rests in their capacity to transform, to retrieve materials from piles of rubbish

⁷⁶ For a discussion of how modernity, and the companion terms of modernism and modernisation is framed through the lens of developing countries, see, Geeta Kapur, "Detours from the Contemporary," 276.

⁷⁷ For a brief account of India opening up to the Free Market see Chaitanya Sambrani in *Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*, ed. by Ashish Rajadhyaksha et al., (New York: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005).

and gain some value for what they salvage by restoring it to a marketplace where it can circulate as a commodity again.

E-waste imported from developed countries to India, reflects the lines of trade in an interconnected global economy. Defunct 21st century electrical gadgets are gathered to be cracked open and “hollowed out”, in the hope of extracting the precious metals that direct electricity and information in the digital age.⁷⁸

This form of recycling is an elaborate form of un-making. It sits in odd relation to the form of making in which my biography and training as an artist are located. Although the artists shares many of the same tools and processes, the recycling that takes place in India deconstructs, rather than constructs objects in order to restore value as a tradable commodity. Breaking down the whole into parts required an immense involvement of human labour, manually and with rudimentary technology that involves both immediate and long-term risk to the worker.

From where then were the brass letters of *Found Alphabet* salvaged? I assume they were retrieved from an older building that has now been demolished, as part of an ever-renewing of the cityscape amidst a constantly developing metropolis – older architectural vernaculars formed by different generations are increasingly replaced by the new and international and high-rise buildings.⁷⁹

Perhaps the bigger letters of *Found Alphabet* may have marked the name on an entrance wall of a now extinct government building and the smaller letters fixed to the side of a door.

In India, when a building is demolished, little is left to waste, as a team of second-hand wallahs are sent into sort through the different forms and materials that pile up. Retrieving wooden door frames, windows and furniture. Wrenching from clumps of concrete, tangles of embedded metal reo-bar to be on sold. All this plays out on street level in full view along with the energy and activities of everything and everybody.

⁷⁸ The *Bhendi Bazaar* of Bombay/Mumbai illustrates this particular kind of economy. Motorbikes, cars, furniture, computer and electrical parts are all broken down into useable parts to be on sold. For a discussion of the waste that electronics generates, see Jennifer Gabrys, *The natural history of electronics* (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2007).

⁷⁹ The Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment is a demonstration of this kind of renewal. "Is India's Biggest Ever Urban Redevelopment Too Good to Be True?" *The Guardian*, 2018, accessed 26 Feb 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/nov/21/is-indias-biggest-ever-urban-redevelopment-too-good-to-be-true-bhendi-bazaar>.

Benjamin recognised the streets as a site for artistic inspiration through his interest in the French poet, Charles Baudelaire, who himself was able to first define the nascent modernity of mid 19th Century Paris.⁸⁰ In Baudelaire, Benjamin recognises the comparison of the artistic method to salvage through the character of *le chiffonier* or rag-picker, to sort the neglected, quotidian and fragmentary experience of life and reassemble it into poetry and prose. Citing Baudelaire, Benjamin writes;

Here we have a man whose job it is to gather the day's refuse in the capital. Everything that the big city has thrown away, everything it has lost, everything it has scorned, everything it has crushed underfoot he catalogues and collects. He collates the annals of intemperance, the capharnaum of waste. He sorts things out and selects judiciously; he collects, like a miser guarding a treasure, refuse which will assume the shape of useful or: gratifying objects between the jaws of the goddess of Industry."⁸¹

I had performed a similar role to *le chiffonier* when I reclaimed (exhumed/harvested /mined) some old objects, not from a crowded city street of Baudelaire's description, but a lonely paddock dump in wheatbelt Western Australia. It was my first blatant act of salvage as artistic strategy: they were a mixture of discarded domestic and agricultural objects that had been left to rust and laid as an unwitting collection on the ground for an unknown period of time and had once most likely belonged to the generations of my father's family who had farmed there.⁸² The objects were carried away in 20 litre plastic buckets and a version of them was incorporated in an earlier work, *The Trail of Time: The Sandalwood Project*, completed just prior to my trip to India in 2013.

⁸⁰ As Baudelaire famously wrote in 1863. 'By "modernity" I mean the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art, whose other half is the eternal and the immutable.' See Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, (London: Phaidon, 1964), 13.

⁸¹ Walter Benjamin & Michael William Jennings. "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire", *The Writer of Modern Life, Essays on Charles Baudelaire*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 48.

⁸² The farm from where these objects were retrieved in the wheatbelt of Western Australia was where my father grew up, and the broader subject of my enquiry was the colonial trade routes of Sandalwood from Western Australia to Asia in the 19th and 20th Century.



Figure 16: Michael Bullock, *The Trail of Time*. 2013, Bronze, 3.75 m by 1.5m by .75m, Fremantle Arts Centre.

Through a laborious process of replication, in itself another form of return, these mostly old metal forms were cast into wax and then into bronze via the lost wax process (*cire perdue*). These final objects in bronze resembled ancient relics, the silicon rubber of the mould and subsequent wax models both replicated and arrested the entropy of decay that has occurred through the years since they were first dumped (laid to rest) and left to the four winds. The bronze replicas although newly formed were both “found”, and on the other hand “made” through this reproduction into bronze. The final artwork incorporated the substitution of steel, a metal of modern utility, to another of a more ancient provenance, bronze. The objects showed the traces of their past use, their present uselessness and incorporation into a different language of value, as sculpture.

This earlier work also made a connection to India, through my surprising discovery of the colonial trade of Sandalwood, a material indigenous to the wheatbelt and Swan River settlements of Western Australia and exported to Asian ports and markets in the

19th and 20th century. It was through this connection that I first travelled to Bangalore to investigate Sandalwood as it was also a material indigenous to South India.⁸³

Gleaning from the lonely ground of a wheatbelt paddock is very different from finding, selecting and buying things in a busy marketplace in Bangalore.⁸⁴ At first a broker is involved and much of the hard work has already been done by someone else by bringing all these things together as they have been done in the winding streets of Chickpet. In 2013, when I took the image *Found Alphabet*, I didn't end up buying much from these markets in Bangalore, and what I did buy was cheap and easy to carry on a plane back to Australia.⁸⁵ I have tactile instincts and collected some old plastic, (perhaps Bakelite) framed reading glasses, their style was in a fashion from long ago. I imagined their owners were long deceased but in this imagination a series of half formed faces that inhabited and looked through the brushed worn glass; a broken watch, a mess of mechanical parts that could never be repaired to attempt to tell the time; a tailor's measuring tape, I thought the design of the numbers looked beautiful as they folded and twisted and fractured; some brass ghee lamps, I responded to the symmetry of their echoed forms in metal that looked like the symbol for infinity; and two dark, worn ball-bearings made from hardened steel of about an inch in diameter, the hardness made the material dense and heavy, even so they were still scratched (they were probably retrieved from some disassembled machine parts) but a sphere, another perfect form made from metal reminded me of the violence of cannon balls and the terrible past legacy of violence and conquest.⁸⁶

⁸³ I was undertaking an artistic residency at 1Shanthiroad as part of the *Spaced/Reciprocal residency* Program.

⁸⁴ In India, at my residency at 1Shanthiroad, I was continuing my research into the uses of sandalwood, a material that is also indigenous to India.

⁸⁵ The exception to this was the purchase of an older Godrej brand typewriter which features the Kannada language as its keys. This purchase presented a logistical and expensive feat to ship back to Australia. It has been at the centre of two unrealized artworks, thought bubbles almost. The first, building a replica of a typewriter, an artist's version of a machine and the second was to collect all the typewriters of India, with examples of each different language's font. The logistics of moving objects and sculptures is an endless curiosity.

⁸⁶ In a display of synchronicity that exemplifies the nature of the "chance" find from a second-hand market I had written this paragraph on a Friday. The following Saturday at the Laverton market I bought a big round steel ball which I think is actually a cannon ball. I have never seen a cannon ball at the Laverton market before.

Arrangements

Obsolescence is where the future meets the past in the dying body of the commodity. Because history requires a medium for its reckoning, a temporal landscape of substance and things in which the meaning of events no less than the passage of time is recorded, in modern times it is the commodity that embodies such a ready reckoning of the pathos of novelty.⁸⁷

The above quotation by Taussig serves as a useful companion to the epigraph by the Indian artist, Gulammohammed Sheikh that introduces this chapter. Sheikh's aphorism addresses an experience of living in India and the common and often contradictory experience and sense of time for both visitor and resident. Taussig's focus is on objects as commodities to represent these temporal overlays, and it is in the marketplace where the living soul and the dying commodity meet and mix.

In my version of Benjamin's whirlpool, I returned to what is known as the *Gujeri Market* in 2019. The *Gujeri* market begins on the wider main avenue of Arcot Srinivasachar Street, which backs on to the bigger KR or City Market, spreading to the surrounding winding laneways and alleys of old Chickpet that are best accessed by foot rather than vehicle, where and street life and stalls dominate selling both new and used things.

The range of things sold floods the mind.⁸⁸ Some of this stuff that lines the street is brand new, modern and contemporary, brought *en masse* from the factories of China: luggage and bags, shiny plastic containers and trinkets, the latest cookware and shoes.

Alongside, the physical remnants of a more recent past, and the cultural fashions whose novelty, meaning and desire as commodity has disappeared but whose

⁸⁷ Michael T. Taussig. *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. (New York: Routledge, 1993), 233.

⁸⁸ Margaret Iversen in the chapter "Indexicality" describes this idea of the 'flooding of the mind' in her discussion of Leo Steinberg's 'flatbed' and its application to the work of Robert Rauschenberg. Her use of the term, *Reizüberflutung*, has its origins in Sigmund Freud to signify the overload of stimuli leading to trauma and connects to Walter Benjamin's notion of shock (*Schockerlebnis*). See Iversen, *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, 26.

physical form remains, yesterday's unwanted books stack, consisting of romantic potboilers, spy thrillers and detective stories, scuffed DVDs and compact discs.⁸⁹ Used electronic goods pile: mobile phones from Korea, digital and analogue watches, "hollowed out" computer parts and speakers, TV remote controls, piles of power boards and starters for fluorescent lights and as Jennifer Gabrys would observe in her analysis of electronic waste, the 'leftover commodities that appear as fossils generated from the "second nature" of industrial (and arguably, now post-industrial technologies)'⁹⁰.

Going further back in time to a more distant past, one that is evidenced by a selection of more durable materiality that is shared by the brass letters of *Found Alphabet*. There are locally produced radios that are now obsolete. Blenders known as "mixies", and the bodies of cast-iron electrical motors are arranged and displayed before me. Taxonomies of different metal are organised along the winding streets, stainless steel in piles of cutlery and plates, iron, crowbars, sledgehammer heads and dumbbells, copper pots, flasks and coins and brass.

In Taussig's book, *Mimesis and Alterity*, on the mimetic faculty and the need for people to replicate and copy forms, he suggests that a perception of obsolescence is also contingent on the point of view. The demonstration of this indicates how commodities are positioned in what Taussig refers to as a Third World, seen within a global perspective and viewed by the audience of the First World.⁹¹ While the designation of a relationship between First and Third World has been rightly critiqued for its privileging of a Western European perspective, Taussig's observations of the relative

⁸⁹ For a discussion of the material life of cultural commodities see Straw, Will. "Music as Commodity and Material Culture," 147-172.

⁹⁰ In a similar vein, Jennifer Gabrys appropriates Walter Benjamin's term of the 'natural history' of electronic goods and their material lives once these objects no longer have status as a commodity. See Jennifer Gabrys, *The Natural History of Electronics*, 22.

⁹¹ It is important to note that the distinctions between the First World and Third World that Taussig made in 1993 do not take into account contemporary critique of the legacies of colonialism. In the cosmopolitan megacities of the world, where the circulation of global capital and information connect one economy to another regardless of geographic location, disadvantaged and excluded communities exist and issues of social and economic inequalities persist regardless of the affluence of the country. This is a theme explored by Arjun Appadurai in his analysis of the social decline of Bombay/Mumbai that he labels 'decosmopolitanization'. This decline is for vast proportions of the population marked by cash economies, unstable work, insecure housing and religious discrimination., Arjun Appadurai "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai." *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (2000): 627-51. For a discussion of the visibility of these vernacular economies see Jain, Kajri. "India's Modern Vernacular-on the Edge" in *Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*, ed. Ashish Rajadhyaksha et al., (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005).

positions in relation to what is regarded as obsolescent remains relevant. For Taussig, exemplary demonstrations of the “outmoded object” include the RCA Victor Phonograph, pre-war Singer sewing machines and mechanical typewriters. He describes these as, ‘a thousand and one relics of modernity preserved in the time-warp of permanent underdevelopment and poverty, not to mention the dumpings of First World waste, toxins, cigarette ads, and technologies found to be harmful, like DDT crop-spraying’.⁹²

These “outmoded objects” are all circulating around this market in Bangalore, and although the market place is primarily for economic transaction, value haggled as a negotiation between buyer and seller and mediated by the objects displayed on plastic sheets, there are also cultural and ethical transactions to be negotiated as I walk through and view the repositories of a foreign cities material culture.

Taussig’s exploration of obsolescence is traced back to two sources, the Surrealist artist and Benjamin. He identifies the Surrealist artist as one whose strategy was to peruse the flea markets of Paris and encounter ‘objects found by chance, especially those objects whose time of glory had recently passed—objects not antiquities but “modern,” yet no longer in vogue.’⁹³ This Surrealist method and encounter with obsolescence was in turn theorised by Benjamin and Taussig cites Benjamin’s essay from 1929, “Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia” to identify the,

Surrealist discovery of the “revolutionary energies of the ‘outmoded,’ in the first iron constructions, the first factory buildings, the earliest photos, the objects that have begun to be extinct, grand pianos, the dresses of five years ago, fashionable restaurants when the vogue has begun to ebb from them.”⁹⁴

For Benjamin, the lifecycle of objects is situated within a curious collage of words, “natural history” (*Naturegeschichte*).⁹⁵ Modernity was characterised by large scale

⁹² Michael T Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 232.

⁹³ Taussig, 231.

⁹⁴ Taussig, 231.

⁹⁵ Benjamin’s theorisation of obsolescence is situated within his more general critique of “progress”, produced in an epoch of modernity, an epoch defined by a relentless quest for futurity and novelty.

industrialisation and production and the commodities and forms that spewed out were the material evidence of this conjunction. In *The Dialectics of Seeing*, an imagining of the *Arcades Project*, Susan Buck-Morss describes Benjamin's two epochs of nature; 'The first evolved over millions of years; the second, our own, began with the industrial revolution and changes its face daily.'⁹⁶ This abundance of material form created a sense that time was accelerated so that the traces of the transitory recent material past could be in fact compared to ancient times. The "outmoded object" is an unwanted commodity, and in this material telling of natural history is rendered as fossil, and as Taussig describes, a 'petrified historical event where nature passed into culture, where raw material combined with human labour and technology to satisfy cultured design.'⁹⁷

In Taussig's telling of Benjamin, the outmoded object has a concealed "atmosphere". The Surrealist's 'based their (would-be revolutionary) art on bringing this "atmosphere" to the point of explosion, creating a "profane Illumination," to which Benjamin referred as a "materialistic, anthropological inspiration."⁹⁸ The term 'profane Illumination' also forms a strange and puzzling conjunction of words and the sensation that it seeks to describe is one that Benjamin himself compares to the ecstasies that religious experience and drug taking can offer.⁹⁹

Simryn Gill and a recognition of profane Illumination

Taussig returns to Benjamin's term of profane illumination and the outmoded object in an essay dedicated to the artwork of the Malaysian/Australian artist Simryn Gill.¹⁰⁰

Gill's artworks also involve retrieval of the discarded object and materials; examples include the flotsam and jetsam washed up from the historic trade routes of the Straits of Malacca, or the repositories of the unwanted, found in Australian op-shops. The

This was a critique that could be found in numerous sources, not only in his essay on Surrealism but also the unfinished *Arcades Project* and the "Theses on the Philosophy of History."

⁹⁶ Susan Buck-Morss. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, 70.

⁹⁷ Taussig, 233.

⁹⁸ Taussig, 232.

⁹⁹ Walter Benjamin in "Surrealism: The last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia." *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 177-192.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Taussig, "Pearls," in *Simryn Gill*, ed. Russell Storer, (Sydney, Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008), 101-112.

range of material forms that Gill retrieves also includes books, recognising that the construction of knowledge and the circulation of language has also played out in the representation and control of the colonial subject. Gill unravels the sedimentary layers of history attached to these forms, linking colonial epochs to a contemporary age that result in hybrid temporalities and identities.

Taussig's essay, *Pearls*, takes its name from Gill's artwork of the same name, a series of necklaces formed from the pages of second-hand books such as atlases, history books and philosophical texts. Cutting the text from pages, Gill bounds the paper into tightly wound beads to make garlands constructed from the book's contents, the "pearls of wisdom" within. Taussig's text responds to a version of *Pearls* sourced from Benjamin's own writings, that include Benjamin's own thesis on book collecting, "Unpacking my Library", that illuminates the contrary agencies of chance and order when forming a collection and the sense of mystique that is then issued from it. Gill's constructions materially deconstruct Benjamin's thoughts and the printed words can be read in only the most elliptical and fragmentary fashion. Gill transforms the materials of paper and ink into artworks to be seen, worn, touched and imagined. Her work is presented as a gift to Taussig, the form of the necklaces resembles the currency of barter exchange that had existed in non-monetary economies before money was introduced by colonisers and changed everything. Taussig's essay fulfils this exchange through this text, giving form to his imagination and the slow unwrapping and unpacking that the gift of Gill's artworks demand.¹⁰¹

Taussig, inspired by the fragments of Benjamin's text in Gill's artwork also makes a return to what they mean, of images that tell of history and time and become composites of the past and present, even a whirlpool. Taussig returns to Benjamin's 'profane illumination' and the contradiction it employs, a composition of the 'ordinary and natural, on the one hand, and supernatural on the other', and it is in this magical enchantment that *Found Alphabet* also inspires.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Taussig, 103. In the essay, Taussig discusses the example of barter, as a form of economic exchange, that was used by colonising forces in the "New World" of South America and the Caribbean. Taussig describes how the Spanish colonisers traded relatively worthless glass beads with indigenous populations in order to gain concessions necessary for settlement. This is just one example of the many unbalanced exchanges between colonisers and indigenous populations that Taussig notes.

¹⁰² Taussig, 112.



Figure 17: Simryn Gill, *Nicolas Bouvier, Histoires d'une image* (Geneva, Editions Zoé 2001), 2007, linen, 138.5 cm, 12 strands from the series Pearls (1999-ongoing) in In Lee Weng Choy "Present and Unread: Simryn Gill's Where to Draw the Line." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, no. 33 (2013): 78-87. Accessed February 4, 2021. doi:10.1086/672022.

Return to a market of imagination (the bazaar)

In the term *bazaar*, the layered histories, economies, social relations and imagination that define the *Gujri Market* are revealed. The use of the word *bazaar* and its replication has mirrored the way that trade networks have developed and been maintained throughout the designation of India's different time frames, from antiquity, colonialism and to contemporaneity. Persian in origin, the term *bazaar* has been absorbed into India's own diverse languages as early as the 13th century and corresponded with the spread of Mughal rule in India.

As an indigenous and vernacular model for trade, the *bazaar* interfaced with the trade of the East India Company and in mutually beneficial ways, the subsequent colonial trade, becoming a site where the important commodities that Europe cravenly desired including fabrics, spices and salt could be sourced and exploited for European profits.

Hence, the word entered into the lexicon of a particular hybrid vocabulary formed by the absorption of local languages into English during British rule.¹⁰³

Anand Yang in his own study of the bazaar in India during colonial times states that the problem for the historian reading the bazaar 'requires journeying through the "Oriental market," that exoticized Other place of Western imagination the market-place.'¹⁰⁴ The bazaar was subsequently exported into the cultural imagination and production of the colonial project itself and as the setting for first encounters between the Western traveller to Orient territories that extended from Turkey to the Far East.



Figure 18: Edwin Lord Weeks, *The Silk Merchants (Indian Bazaar)*, 1885, oil on canvas, 92.71 x 66.04 cm. Courtesy of the Colby College Museum of Art, accessed 15 January 2020. <http://browse.americanartcollaborative.org/object/ccma/6413.html>

This market does also go by other names. Before my actual return to Bangalore in 2019, I had often returned to the site of this market by typing into Google the market's different names; *Sunday Market Bangalore*, *Gujeri Market, Bangalore* and *Chor Bazaar* and then sorting through the various images and YouTube videos that

¹⁰³ Yule, Henry, Sir, & A. C. Burnell. *Hobson-Jobson A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive*. Project Gutenberg. This dictionary published in 1903, presents as an interesting document about how language, local and imported interface.

¹⁰⁴ Anand. A Yang, *Bazaar India: Markets, Society, and the Colonial State in Bihar*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, c1998). <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft4779n9tq/ 2>

resulted. Even one of the vernacular names for this place, the *Chor Bazaar* reveals its own connection as to how language circulates through layers of time to transcend a particular location and then embed in a cultural imagination. Translated, from Marathi and Hindi, a *Chor Bazaar* has the moniker of a *Robber's Market* which finds its own origin in Bombay/Mumbai and the historical period of Colonialism.¹⁰⁵ Situated close to the city's ports. The *Chor Bazaar's* historical association is with informal and illicit economies of smuggling and stolen goods and this is sustained in myth to the present day.

¹⁰⁵ To name the marketplace where Found Alphabet was placed in Bangalore a *Chor Bazaar* is not entirely correct, but as is the way names and images freely circulate, not only in the "open air" of the market but on the internet and in culture at large, makes the appropriation of its moniker of *Chor Bazaar* as moniker to the *Gujeri Market*, a simple misunderstanding. Names stick. While similar internet searches reveal the *Chor Bazaar* being applied to other descriptions of market-places throughout Indian cities including Hyderabad, Delhi and Baroda, it is in the history of colonial Bombay and the megacity Mumbai of which it has been re-named and becomes where *Chor Bazaar* first finds its origins in both name and site.

In November 2019, I was able to visit the site for the first time as the origin the *Chor Bazaar* in Bombay/Mumbai. As explained, *Chor* means "thief". Local myth explains this name is actually founded on a mis-appellation, which continues to the present day. Originally named *Shor* or "noisy" market, mispronunciation of the word by the British modified the name to *Chor*.

The market's easy proximity to the sea docks has meant that *Chor Bazaar* has had a long historical association with smuggling. Another local myth tells us how a violin and some other belongings of Queen Victoria once went missing from one of the ships in the Bombay port, they were later discovered put up for sale at *Chor Bazaar*. In the spirit of this illicit exchange through cultures I have also been fascinated by the contribution of the Indian politician and author Shashi Tharoor who likened the imperial museum to a *Chor Bazaar*, 'Every British Museum is a "chor bazaar", a showcase for successful theft: "Why are you proud to display what your grandfather stole from mine?"'.

As was the case with the British in India, this chapter's negotiation of names reflects my personal history of misunderstanding. For steps towards remedying this misunderstanding, I would like to thank my friend, the artist, Archana Hande who first enlightened me about the differences between the *Gujeri Market* of Bangalore and the *Chor Bazaar of Bombay*. In an email. Archana was able to describe that the Baroda and Bangalore markets are closer to the idea of a flea market and essentially nomadic in nature.

Archana's description of the *Chor Bazaar* as the 'biggest surviving city archive' is evocative as is as her description of the values of objects that were sold there; 'the concept of *Chor Bazar* in Bombay is very unique. it talks about authenticity + fake + stolen + plagiarism - it questions all kinds of norms which we follow morally in a good society.'

In contemporary Mumbai, the *Chor Bazaar* is situated on Mutton Street in the Bhendhi Bazaar presenting as a more slow-moving repository for Bombay/Mumbai's, and India's, epic material culture, rather than a place designed for quick sales and the furtive trade of smuggled goods. In contemporary Bombay/Mumbai, the *Chor Bazaar* is also a tourist trap of sorts, connecting to the imagination of the exotic bazaar, where objects of nostalgia are preserved and remnants are bought and sold, recycled by Bollywood art directors for use in films and affluent shoppers from India and abroad. The shops' presentation of objects are a compressed timeline of all things and all times, colonial and traditional statues and figurines, gramophones and radios, Bollywood posters and vinyl soundtracks. Their categorisation traverses the ancient to the new, the antique and the obsolete and of special significance are the displays of old technology, an embodiment of Michael Taussig's observations of the 'recently outmoded'. A formation into artwork of the *Chor Bazaar* can be found in the work of Sudarshan Shetty and the exhibition *Pieces the Earth Left Behind*.

The *Chor* or thief is a disruptor to a market economy where the typical value of commodities is determined by monetary exchange while the thief does not participate in this process of determining value.

But who is the thief?

I am reminded of another word that has more easily migrated from Hindi to English to reference stolen goods and plunder itself – *loot*. And how the Indian writer, Shashi Tharoor, laments the phenomenon of a contemporary nostalgia for British Imperialism in a Brexit era that ignores the horrors of what had actually happened, the moral debt that a period of colonialism has yet to ledger, and comparing the British Museum to a *chor bazaar* because everything is stolen.¹⁰⁶

In the bazaar these values are similarly fluid and unstable, cash is king, eluding bank accounts and tax, prices are haggled over, commodities provenances remain unknown, second-hand goods are either junk or trash or treasure, depending on either broker or buyer's point of view and situation in time. Imported imitations of global brand names sit on the side of the road or on simple carts rather than being displayed on shelves behind shiny shop windows.¹⁰⁷

Reconstructions/Replications/Remaking

Throughout the duration of *Market Values*, I have been searching for brass letters and numbers at the Laverton market to replicate the collection in the image from India. I had better luck finding numbers rather than letters and some made their way into my artwork *History of The World*. This assemblage of brass objects took its inspiration from diagrams of timelines found in history books and encyclopaedias but also

¹⁰⁶ Adams, Phillip, Tharoor, Shashi. "Late Night Live." *Did Britain modernise or de-industrialise India*. Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 31st August 2017, 2017, <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/did-britain-modernise-or-destroy-india/8860348>

¹⁰⁷ Arjun Appadurai discusses the unreliability that characterises bazaar economies and the things that and people who populate these economies. The values of goods are not standardised and volatile pricing systems exist. Appadurai extends the model of the lack of standardisation to other economies such as used cars and oriental rugs but it could equally apply to the art market, auction houses and museums themselves. Appadurai, *The Social life of things*, 43. See also Appadurai's rendering of how cash, and its application to material culture and economies is applied in Appadurai, "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai," 627.

plumbing pipes and fixings that push water and waste around buildings and seem to echo these diagrams of time.

At the Laverton Market I chanced upon brass zeroes, many of them, but many zeroes are still nothing. However, in their material form as brass is this still the case? Where is “nothing” amidst the textures, colours and weight of these shapes and the energies expended in and stored in their formation? Now, the perimeter of the brass zero is material and perfectly frames the void that sits in in between. The making of sculpture along with its display is performed in a similar way, through the balancing of materials and the empty space that circulates between and around material, bridging what is there and what isn’t and the magical psychic electricity that this tension creates.

I also wanted to find a way to transform this image, *Found Alphabet*, into sculpture. The photographic Image of *Found Alphabet* records an intimate connection to time and place, suggesting ‘I was there’ (once) and this is what I found.¹⁰⁸ In the “lost wax” process used in a series of artworks that I have called *Circulation Piece* this dialogue between presence and absence is key, and enabled by the intimate proximity of the wax object to its cast counterpart, the “investment”, where the wax is burnt out, creating a void as a counterpart to or negative space from where the wax form once was but is no longer.

I replicated the letters that appeared in *Found Alphabet* in wax. I poured the hot wax into a simple clay mould and cooled my formed collections in a sink of water. The wax letters floated and moved on the water’s surface; the pulses of energy stored in the water animated them around their watery enclosure. They were un-burdened by the mediation of gravity, or the fixings of screws and nails and the order of the wilful arrangement of geometry and sequences that forms words, meaning and memories.

The Arrangements floated on the surface to become the model of a larger view, of flotsam and jetsam cast into the water from the event of a recent shipwreck, or continents colliding over millions of years, a view of Benjamin’s ‘natural history’. The form of a letter shares the same anatomy of a living person and my time in its making. A crowd of arms and legs, serifs, shoulders, spines and spurs pushed into each other,

¹⁰⁸ The dialogue between presence and absence that is revealed by photography is explored in the classic text by Roland Barthes, see Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. (London: Vintage, 1993).

connecting and rebounding to make different formations again and again in different outlines of positive and negative space and eventual nonsense. It was my shipwreck to play with, and with my fingers I could also direct this movement, wrapping the letters around my little fingers as my figure of speech.

A bronze sculpture arrests this potential for movement, to rotate, align or skew with another. An infinite arrangement that needs to stop, immutable.

*

Rejected Gods

The true picture of the past flits by. The past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognised and is never seen again.¹⁰⁹

My curiosity in returning to India was in part to see if this arrangement of the brass letters of *Found Alphabet* was even still there, to seize the image again, if it appears again in the world. It would defy the odds as an arrangement if it was there, its permanence has been set by a photograph rather than commerce but I imagined the letters to be set still over the accumulation of time and space, not unlike the 16th century ruins of the old fort that are still visible in Bangalore and are close to this market.

Returning to the same location in Arcot Srinivasachar Street of the *Gujeri Market* in 2019 and in my search for brass letters, I recognise a steel case from my digital cache of photographs from India in 2013. The case acts as a metal enclosure for the whirlpool of brass forms within, some hardware but mostly a jumbled pantheon of Hindu deities that have been touched by many, from their makers to their many respective handlers.

Some figures are sand cast, a technology that is both ancient and continuous. The figures exist as icons only in their frontality, a visual code, *tékhné*, a language formed over generations with a collective memory of design, craft and knowledge. From behind, the technology of its making shapes as a muted and material shroud, a reversal of the god that it aims to represent. I learn that the forms have been rejected

¹⁰⁹ Walter Benjamin. "Theses on the Philosophy of History." In *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 255.

because of some flaw in the casting process and these are “rejected gods” unlike another arrangement I witness, of gods and animals arranged on a blue plastic sheet, advancing forward like a perfect, miniature army that marches forwards to the future and coming towards me, directed by this unknown vendor.

Although my separate photographs of these separate events reveal the same steel case, the similarities and differences of the two arrangements rub into each other. The same open road of dirt, aggregate and plastic sheet as separation echoes, and a vocabulary of evocative motifs circles around the case. The similarities and differences between the two arrangements rub into each other as does the past and the present.

My shadow looms over both images, the ghost of my form, validating the evidence of my presence in this scene in a moment now relegated to both the recent and increasingly distant past. Optics has its own mischievous and contingent contributions. It delineates my recognisable form clearly against the ground plane of the road, but it fractures when my shadow touches the objects. While the contents of this tableaux recede gently into a background that reflects my point of view, my ghost presence is mysteriously made upright through this anamorphic play.

In these two photographs, an *Origin* and a *Return* conflate joined in this whirlpool of forms. My two separate documents of this same case are placed within the frame of the photograph, an enclosure that collects time and space, spread over six years and 18,000 km's.

Remaking

Standing over the investments at the edge of the foundry floor in Caulfield. I pushed them over, they were still warm, a mix of the investment being baked in the foundry oven for three days and the bronze being poured at 1000 degrees the day before. My uncertainty was also embedded within the investment. The previous day, during the bronze pour, the hot bronze had found a way to escape from one casing. It was a dangerous escape as liquid metal seeped through an unwelcome fissure in the investment, caused by a delamination between the investment layers, an inherent risk from the staggered process of investing a flat surface with the mixtures of *luto* and plaster.

The bronze seeped instantaneously through the cracks, burning through the safeguard of the investment's wooden casing that had subsequently caught fire. Little metal had seemed to hold in the mould and the spilled metal puddled suddenly like a tilted burning candle's wax and the metal settled and pooled as thin metal sheet in the sandpit of the foundry. It was a disappointment after all the commitment of work, time and money that was invested within this casing.



Figure 19: Michael Bullock, *Circulation piece*, 2018, bronze, 5 x 26 x 14cm. Photography by Aaron Rees.

Using a sledgehammer and movements learnt long ago as a teenager, a dialogue between twisting hips and shoulders directing the momentum and weight of the sledgehammer head, I cracked down on the investment and it fractured and cleaved with the sound of compressed and dull thuds.¹¹⁰ Material fell away to leave a shroud of dense *en tous cas*, investment material formed from crushed bricks that envelop the form of the bronze embedded within. The investment fell into *boondies* of various

¹¹⁰ While an undergraduate student in Perth in the late 1980s, my part time work involved putting up marquees which involved driving star pickets and stakes into the ground in order for the structures to be tied down.

sizes of irregular and fractured forms and scorched *luto* where the molten metal had been directed and eventually stilled.

Tempering my energy by replacing sledgehammer with a hand-held pick, slowing down to mimic the attention of the archaeologist, such as those who retrieved the plaster figures of shackled dogs or sleeping couples from the ruins of Pompeii, formed from the void left by the hot ash of Vesuvius. The material yielded easily at the edges while errant swings are noted by the ring of metal pick against bronze. Amidst the rubble, I can see the letters of my sculpture as they emerged from the debris.

*

On a crowded city street in India amidst the rubble of a demolished building I can see the numbers of a torn calendar against the debris.

Their rational and recognisable shapes are in red and black, framed within the matrix of a wavering grid travelling the background of white, crumpled paper, alongside, broken red bricks and the remnants of cement mortar that once held them together when it was a building, now demolished, no longer there. These fragments are illuminated and obscured by the tinged light and oblique shadows of a late afternoon sun.

Men are perched on the skeleton of a 2nd or 3rd floor, swinging sledgehammers to batter away bricks, men with oxy-torches melt the steel girders away. Piles of Rubbish are organised, wooden beams, bricks and metal. Framing this decaying carcass of a building, one stall holder remains untouched, but not for long. It is a watchmaker who does repairs, the march of time is defining this space.¹¹¹

I am now back here at the beginning, sorting through the ruins of a past and the future. The past catches up. . .

¹¹¹ Artist's notebook entry after visiting *Chor Bazaar*, Bombay/Mumbai. November 2019.



Figure 20: Michael Bullock, *Enclosure 2013*, author's reference image, 2013



Figure 21: Michael Bullock, *Enclosure 2019*, author's reference image, 2019.

Conclusion: Market Values

How art records an engagement with the world.

How art records an engagement with the world, and the objects that have inhabited it, has been a key theme underlying this project. *Market Values* presents this engagement with the world in the materiality of objects I have explored, through investigations of the places in which they can be found, and their transformation through sculptural processes that highlights how these objects circulate in the world within various systems of exchange.

My installation, *The World*, first exhibited at Five Walls Gallery in 2017 and discussed in Chapter II, was an initial response to the images and forms found in market places. These forms and images were sourced from the record of my movement through the world; a world that is defined through terms of proximities, of both near and far, and timeframes of present and past. The focus of my research developed from these encounters that I had recorded in photographs. The images captured a range of visual forms, such as the simple stepped forms used for the display of objects. This form became the impetus for the display structure made for *The World*, that allowed me to reconsider the objects themselves and how they were arranged. The sources of these images were the markets, specifically second-hand markets, of my local neighbourhoods that I often frequent, as well as more distant locations in India, from which I had recently returned and to which I would return in 2019.

While *Market Values* began with these first encounters in the marketplaces, it has been the sustained engagement with the materiality of these places, their objects and display forms, and subsequent translations into artworks, that has guided the conversations between thinking and practice evidenced by the exegesis and artworks.

The places this doctoral project, and especially this exegesis, have rendered are the Laverton Market in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne and the Gujeri Market of Bangalore/Bengaluru. In our moment of contemporaneity, where the exchange of goods is characterised by global logistics and virtual commerce, markets and particularly the second-hand market presents a contrary force; a display of trade borne out of the connections made with people and things. A market is a meeting place, it

sits at a junction between its immediate location and what lies beyond the immediate assembly point, the people and things that gather there reveal imaginings, of distant geographies and layered timeframes.

The second-hand market assembles and gathers a disparate array of things, and as an artist I undertake similar tasks. Contemporary art is often, as Nicholas Bourriaud remarks, ‘closer to the open-air market, the bazaar, the souk, a temporary and nomadic gathering of precarious materials and products of various provenances.’¹¹² Like market vendors, artists glean and rummage through the data of material culture, to choose and select from existing arrangements that present themselves to be made into new versions. However, the processes of making sculpture involves, not only choosing and arranging, but joining and assembling to create tactile and actual connections that form the most unique bonds, and thereby make a likeness to a bigger version of the world.

When I installed *The World*, I didn’t yet know what this artwork was—once it was exhibited I had the opportunity to listen to what it could begin to tell me. As Boris Groys observes, ‘The installation is a place of openness, of disclosure, of unconcealment precisely because it situates inside its finite space images and objects that also circulate in the outside space—in this way it opens itself to its outside.’¹¹³ As such the location of the artwork in a gallery space presents a very different comprehension of the places and locations that had first inspired the work. Imagining and materialising the sculptural form brought these distant locations into focus and disclosed another version of the world.

It is in this way, through bringing objects and materials into new relations, that the PhD project has orientated and extended the conversations generated from the second-hand market places of the Laverton and Gujeri Market and their environs. While the display forms that featured in *The World* were based on practical structures, as they were in the market place in which they originated, what is more important is that they were derived from “a living place”. A living place in flux, where objects could be placed

¹¹² Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005). 29

¹¹³ Boris Groys, “The Topology of Contemporary Art” in *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*, ed, Nancy Condee et al., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 79.

on or around them, where they could be added or removed, just as they had been in the exhibition *Market Values*, from which this doctoral project takes its name.

Over the course of the PhD project the production of each new artwork has developed a more sustained conversation with the living places from which they are derived. The exegesis has played a decisive role in developing this conversation as it has allowed me to add other voices, tones and registers. These voices are not only in dialogue with the artworks, but also with the places that have defined them. Through their resonating utterances and expanded vocabularies, a sustained conversation with visual forms, objects, material, places and histories has developed. This long and extended dialogue has resulted in a comprehension that has allowed a collection of sculptural arrangements to be generated that has unfolded from the living place of the market.

Proximity

As I have already mentioned, at the same time I was making *The World*, I was engaged in fieldwork at the two sites that have orientated and defined this project: the Laverton Market, and the Gujeri Market. These two sites present two locations with differing versions of proximity. There was the nearby world of the Laverton Market, that I could visit easily and repeatedly so as to maintain a continual familiarity. It was just a trip down the highway, where I could test a model for the circulation of people and objects. This proximity enabled the weekly visits for collecting materials and images of these encounters.

In contrast to the Laverton Market, the Gujeri Market and the surrounding KR city market, in Bangalore, existed for me as a memory and in my imagination more than the physical place. These places in India were characterised by their lack of proximity, both through the passing of time from when I first visited in 2013 and the vast physical distance from where I lived now. The rendering of this memory is always partial and incomplete, done through the imagination prompted by my collection of images comprising an allusive, rather than actual materiality. This contrast nonetheless formed an equivalence to the ongoing experience of the Laverton Market. As the archive of material forms developed from the Laverton Market, my existing collection of images from the Gujeri Market nevertheless created a catalogue of materials and objects from which to work.

One image in particular that I have named *Found Alphabet* created its own diachronic importance throughout the course of this project. The persistence of this image demanded a response that led to a series of sculptures in bronze, *Circulation piece*, 2018. It also prompted a return to India in 2019, which I explored in Chapter IV, “Origins, Arrangements, Returns: The past catches up”. My return to India allowed me to recognise more clearly my artistic methodology as a series of returns, that included retrieval, recycling, and reconstruction generated by the provocation of the image *Found Alphabet*.

My return to India echoes the strategy that Leonard had employed in *Analogue*, detailed in the Introduction to this exegesis. While Leonard followed a line of trade in redundant and obsolescent materials that were exported from the first world to local economies in the, so called, developing world, my ambition was to trace a motif back to its origin. I wanted to determine if an image and arrangement based on past experience and encounter could be encountered again. However, when retuning to the Gujeri Market in 2019, an arrangement of letters in anyway similar to those of *Found Alphabet* could not be found, rather it was the re-appearance of another familiar motif, a steel case of brass objects, that brought the past and present together. In this encounter there was a layering of time that married my personal biography to the biography of the objects gathered together at the Gujeri market. In this way, my artistic methodology responds to the turbulence of temporality, that Walter Benjamin describes as a whirlpool, from which opportunities for future artworks and arrangements are presented.

In the swirling temporalities of the distant and proximate the observations by the Nigerian curator Okwui Enwezor assume particular relevance. Enwezor remarks that we now live in a ‘post-colonial constellation’ in which contemporary globalisation relates to historical colonialism.¹¹⁴ The slow accumulation of this realisation has occurred throughout the duration of this doctoral project. From the beginnings of my first encounters in the Laverton Market and the comparisons it disclosed to my previous experiences in the Indian market, I have come to unpack the two places and their economies. This has revealed not only the objects gathered there and the ones

¹¹⁴ Okwui Enwezor in “The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition,” *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*.

that I select to draw upon and investigate, but also the constellations and generations of lives revealed by the markets, of people, and the movement made necessary by the displacement of historical events, and the need to find and explore opportunities for survival.

The Market as a site of, and for the imagination

As these market places in Laverton and Bangalore were subjected to more scrutiny and analysis, they developed into sites for and of the imagination.

As an artist, I am driven by the capacity of my various imaginings. The markets have orientated my artistic imagination, primarily for the service of making sculpture. Earlier on I recognised the importance of the structures used for display in the market. At the beginning or end of a market day, these structures shared a strong resemblance to the sculptural form itself. The more sophisticated forms possessed an unvarnished materiality that revealed their making (and as an occasional counterpoint, their un-making). The repetitions and seriality of forms and their eventual staging were not designed for a gallery setting but for commercial display. Even simple tarpaulins in bright or faded colours, laid out on the ground, became surprising fields for both the demarcation of space and eventual commerce. If empty of objects, these display modalities became pregnant with anticipation for the presentation of future events, or ambiguous as a vestige of past ones.

Once the market stall is open for business and laden with objects and displayed on tarpaulin, table or structure there is another opportunity for the imagination. Each stall presents a different collection of forms that have been arranged to temper the confusion that presents itself from all this material. As the Indian artist, Vivan Sundaram has observed of the displays in the Indian junkyard market; 'Used objects carry their personal histories, the quixotic juxtapositions can be read as surreal collages',¹¹⁵ The arrangements and presentations of objects bring wildly diverse genealogies, physiognomies and scales together to reveal jarring encounters,

¹¹⁵ Deepak Ananth. "Indian Bazaar." *Flash Art International* 41 (01//Jan/Feb2008 2008): 98-100. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=asu&AN=505266159&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s8849760>. 100.

provoking an impulse for the artist of not only collage but montage, bricolage and assemblage.

These observations of the modalities of display in the marketplace returns to Steinberg, whose demand for ‘art to let the world in again’ I quoted at the beginning of this exegesis. This quote is associated with his contention that the contemporary art of his day was orientated by the flatbed picture plane. He writes

The flatbed picture plane makes its symbolic allusion to hard surfaces such as tabletops, studio floors, charts, bulletin boards—any receptor surface on which objects are scattered, on which data is entered, on which information may be received, printed, impressed—whether coherently or in confusion.¹¹⁶

The flatbed is a particular viewpoint, composed of information and materials, sourced from culture and its processes, rather than any particular scenic view. It does not comprise what could be pictured outside a window instead it is a view of the world as it could be assembled on a table. Whether it be an image of a collection of objects arranged on a table at Laverton, or the brass letters spaced evenly on a PVC sheet found at my feet in Bangalore, my photographic images of these markets have arrested the potential for circulation in these displays. Today the flatbed picture plane can be associated with ‘the matrix of information’ as it is availed through the arrangement of pixels on a screen, rather than by fixing objects with glue, paint, nails or screws, as it was in Steinberg’s day and in the examples of artworks by Robert Rauschenberg that he referenced.¹¹⁷

A recognition of the flatbed viewpoint has helped generate the sculptures that populate this doctoral project, *Market Values*. Flipping between the horizontal and the vertical planes has been a consistent design strategy, whether it be the table-top structures that comprise *The World*, or the soldered copper rod and bronze coin sculptures such as *Empire* or *Constellation*. These latter works were made by joining the dots, initially generated by scattering coins on my studio floor and later joining them together with solder and copper rod.

¹¹⁶ Leo Steinberg. *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art*. (London:Oxford University Press, 1975), 84.

¹¹⁷ Steinberg, 85.

Flea markets and the bazaar

While the market has generated connections and fuelled my imagination, resulting in artworks, the research that has guided *Market Values* has also understood the similarities and differences between the Laverton and Gujeri market, even though they operate in separate cultural spheres.

Both market places demonstrate Clifford Geertz's observation of 'the truth that, under whatever skies, men prefer to buy cheap and sell dear.'¹¹⁸ Both markets assemble the obsolete and discarded objects banished from a host economy. Commodities are presented as having unstable values, prices are not fixed, and exchange value can also be negotiated through bartering that creates the possibility of achieving bargains. Both markets are presented at makeshift locations and operate only on weekends. For example, at the Laverton Market, the temporary nature of stalls, the appearance and reappearance of stallholders, the sometimes-furtive transactions of goods and the need for cash. All these features reinforce what Straw observes in flea markets, that they 'arouse popular and judicial suspicion against which these events may struggle.'¹¹⁹

As Chapter IV elaborates, it was the Surrealists who drew aesthetic values from the flea market in the early 20th century through their encounter with left-over objects. The surrealist encounter with obsolescence, is interpreted by Benjamin in terms of a 'profane Illumination', comparing the insights that these encounters offered to religious apostasy or drugtaking. Drawing on Benjamin's writing, Taussig adds a further interpretation that associates obsolescence with the marketplaces of the Third World. For Taussig, 'profane Illumination' can be seen as the embodiment of First World spectatorship of Third world material culture. Taussig's analysis of obsolescence within this context are reminders of my alterity within these places, an alterity based both on distance and difference, demonstrated by fieldwork undertaken at Laverton, but especially in India. In each case, my participation in the markets is itself a form of connoisseurship. Viewing, curating, selecting materials and images is very separate from the vernacular economies that facilitate the precarious needs for survival.

¹¹⁸ Geertz, Clifford. "The Bazaar Economy: Information and Search in Peasant Marketing." *The American Economic Review* 68, no. 2 (1978), 28-32.

¹¹⁹ Straw, Will. "Spectacles of Waste," 200.

This form of encounter and exchange across cultures brings its own ethical complexity which must always be negotiated as it reveals misunderstandings and insensitivities in relation to different cultures and languages. This complexity seems to be captured in the photographs taken in the Gujeri Market, six years apart, in which my shadow looms large—an indexical trace of an absent presence capturing the power relations at play. The slow recognition of these misunderstandings has guided my research, demonstrated by readings into the *Chor Bazaar* and *bazaars* in general. The exoticism surrounding these places has long been a feature of a Western cultural imagination drawn from antiquity to today that is shared between India and the rest of the world.

As an artist interested in materiality, Benjamin's observations of the material culture of modernism, has revealed the profundity of the material world today. Through Benjamin, objects and things still speak and reveal. Nevertheless, the challenge of assembling a philosophy based on these materials, amidst the remnants of all the stuff that pile up around us, forming meaning from these objects is itself another form of gleaning, sorting and arranging the trash from the treasure. It was a challenge that Benjamin grappled within his own epoch, its relevance and urgency is enhanced amidst the relentlessness of contemporary global markets and production.

Benjamin's conception of natural history, elaborated by Taussig, Susan Buck-Morss and Jennifer Gabrys, compares the obsolescent commodity, of which there are many to be found in the market, to petrified forms or fossils. These comparisons provide a strong relationship to the material languages of sculpture, and opportunity to rethink processes such as casting. The fossil is the imprint in a material substrate of the indexical trace, a material snapshot of the event of a life whose biology is replaced by calcified form. In a similar manner, each time a plaster cast is made, a connection is made to past events and lives. These material connections confided by Benjamin have also been evidenced by my discussion of the penny in Chapter III, and the eventual realisation into the artworks *Rubbings and the Rubbed*.

Inscription/Spectral qualities of the Market

In the introduction of this exegesis, I referred to Iversen's definition of the analogue as a 'relatively continuous form of inscription involving physical contact'.¹²⁰ An exploration of ideas around the indexical trace, inscription and the analogue are throughout the exegesis and their interchangeability as terms and processes operate in *Market Values*. Yet how they operate may be differentiated in their interplay between proximity and distance, and this has remained a consistent curiosity. While the indexical trace can be found in my images of markets and the materials that circulate within, the domain of inscription reveals another intimacy. The touch of hand to object, tool to material, and the traces that they leave are examples of the proximity that avails inscription. Equally important is the detail indicating that a mark of touch is evidence of what is absent. Although I had asked my artwork 'to come from a living place', the descriptions and insights from writing the exegesis have revealed the paradox that spectral qualities continue to haunt the imagination of *Market Values*.

The spectral can also be found at the sites of the marketplaces I have frequented. For example, at the Laverton Market there are the very visible traces of when it was a former drive-in. Although the drive-in closed long ago and its technology is obsolete, the hand-painted signs on glass windows still remain, touting fish and chips. There is also a children's playground composed of faded fiberglass and painted metal that is devoid of any playing children, and scrappy peppermint trees sitting around a once ornamental lake. The disappearance and reappearance of stall holders are evidenced by bound bundles of goods that populate the bitumen, along with left-over oil tins, buckets and containers filled with concrete that are used to weight down market stalls and provide protection against the wind. Amidst the animation of people, the activation of the weather, by the wind, rain and sun, many uncanny encounters and arrangements are produced.

Spectral qualities are also found in the artworks and their making. In Chapter III, I examined the indexical by way of a photograph of a coin, revealing its materiality and iconography. Through a subsequent digital scan of the coin they acquired the pallor of ghosts, as fragments of profiles of kings and queens, and symbols of the imperialism

¹²⁰ Margaret Iversen, *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, 34.

of a recent past. Their obsolescence as currency, as symbol, as material, loomed large.

Technical failure allowed other realisations, evidenced by the series of bronze works of letters titled *Circulation Piece* that I discussed in Chapter IV. I had wanted the metal to circulate through the mould but when the bronze leaked from the investment in the foundry process, it was a violent escape. The orange boiling puddle sank in the sand and the remaining bronze settled into a form I couldn't have designed, of the recognisable forms of letters being half-made and unmade. Sorting through the rubble of the investment, I noticed that the heat had scorched the shapes of the letters onto the *luto*.

The indexical trace of language, its historical associations and contemporary implications all haunt the image *Found Alphabet*. Reflecting on this haunting I have considered the legacies of the British Empire and Colonialism stored within the vernacular economies of contemporary Bangalore/Bengaluru, the souvenirs I have retrieved from there amidst the temporal layerings of contemporaneity.

The Lives of Objects

An object, be it a fired piece of clay, a bone, paper with colors applied to it, a lump of metal shaped into a sharp point, a shiny stone which is polished, a feather, everything that we can think of as existing in nature, can be transformed through human labor into a product which has meaning, use and value.¹²¹

This doctoral project has also revolved thinking about objects and their uses, of used objects found in the market, of objects then being used for sculpture and then, these sculptures having the qualities of objects.

It should be no surprise that the above definition of an 'object' should come from an anthropologist, Bernard S. Cohn, the insights into how commodities and objects operate in the world, the sense of enchantment offered by objects and artworks, to

¹²¹ Bernard S Cohn. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 76.

how markets and bazaars operate have all borrowed from the discipline of anthropology.

As Arjun Appadurai has noted, drawing on the work of Igor Kopytoff: ‘... objects move through many states and meanings in the course of their lives, and can shift from being icons, to being heirlooms, to being luxuries, to being personal treasures, to becoming junk or trash and perhaps emerging again as icons.’¹²².

While the objects assembled at the Laverton market and Gujeri Market reveal these biographies, outside of these locations example abound. A museum arranges the shattered fragments of clay pots from an ancient campsite, a Roman coin can be found in a ploughed English paddock, or a Tommy McRae drawing can be found in a garage in country Victoria to be later sold at auction, mid-century designer furniture can be found in hard rubbish on the streets of Camberwell to be re-sold in a retro furniture boutique in Prahran, a wooden matchbox bought from a cigarette stand in Vietnam is kept in a bedside drawer as a personal treasure that rivals any artwork, while cultural treasures are repatriated to their countries of origin from where they were first stolen.

A museum’s design is for the preservation of material culture, their collections arrest the itineraries of objects, inscribing the purpose that these objects first possessed and the provenance of their origins without equivocation, however in comparison, the second hand market and these outdoor venues have no design for the conservation of artefacts. They operate amidst and recognise the fluctuating values objects possess and acknowledge that once novelty disappears, an object’s values are also set in flux.

Appadurai reminds that objects ‘... carry the force of their histories, their journeys, the accidents and adventures that befall them and these often show up in their shape, form and force.’¹²³

As an artist I give attention to objects, to imagine and invent their journeys from when they were first made to their ends, and to imagine the story of circulation that lies in between. It is a strategy that this doctoral project has consistently followed, and yet it is not always possible to envisage a clear story. This is a feature of objects, that Appadurai suggests results from their uncertainty, he goes on to say, ‘They also resist

¹²² Arjun Appadurai. "Museum Objects as Accidental Refugees." *Historische Anthropologie* 25, no. 3 (2017), 401-08. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7788/ha-2017-0306>. p.402. See also: Kopytoff, Igor. "The Cultural Biography of Things" in Appadurai (ed.) *The Social Life of Things*, 64-91.

¹²³ Appadurai, "Museum Objects as Accidental Refugees," 406.

interpretation, choreography and manipulation by those humans who might seek to make them speak in a particular way.¹²⁴

Used objects display the scars accumulated from their continual use that betrays the good design and work that went into making something anew. They remind us that a material life transcends the moments that define an object's making and connect it to a time that is eternal.

Palimpsests

During the coronavirus lockdown of 2020 the Laverton Market was mostly closed, it temporarily ceased being a place for people and objects to gather. When the market reopened, I noticed some changes to the infrastructure that governs the use of the site. Leakes Road leading to the market has been upgraded and a new cement footpath sits alongside the refurbished bitumen. The rusted patchworks of the cyclone fence that so evocatively trapped errant plastic bags on windy days has been replaced. Inside the market, some of the traces of the market's past have been erased, the hand painted sign that read *Rubble and Riches* has been painted over completely with white paint. With each erasure of the past, the present attempts to tame what was, made possible because of the pause in our lives brought about by the pandemic.

While the market was closed, the world I had been letting in to my artwork has revolved around my computer, keyboard and screen placed on my kitchen table. Nevertheless, I have a view out of my window which I love, I had written about it in the coda to Chapter I. It is a sight for sore eyes, a tonic to the brightness of an LCD screen and the myriad worlds the internet offers that are always out of reach. This view reminds me of the material world I inhabit, move within and negotiate. I can see the railway sidings of Tottenham station. Stilled, graffitied freight cars line up in my view, while others move past daily, transporting coiled rolls of steel for export. In this eyeline are the distinctive contours of Chùa Phật Quang or Lord Buddha's Light temple that sits on the corner of my street. At my desk/kitchen table, I can hear the occasional sounds of their temple drum being struck but also the clackety clack of the train rolling down the tracks.

¹²⁴ Appadurai, 406.

Further down the road from my home is a yard for shipping containers, once it was an almost empty lot, used for the occasional overflow of the ports nearby. Before Covid-19, there were a few loosely scattered containers that caught the gold of the morning sun whenever I drove past on my way to the market, but since the pandemic's effects took hold, the numbers of containers stacked there have multiplied and now almost block the view of the horizon that lies beyond. These containers are like building blocks in the global trade of goods. Now because of this visible proliferation, this activity seems to have momentarily sputtered.

The containers carry the same simple geometry and stepped volumes of my artwork, *The World*. Like my artwork there are infinite arrangements of containers that can be made, but the scale of these arrangements to my version is considerably different. This layering, fluctuations and negotiations between the large and small, from the market stall, to artwork, to shipping container, are another part of the language that sculpture teaches and tells us—that artworks make a resemblance and a connection to a bigger version of the world.

While stacked shipping containers represent the materiality of global trade and markets, the Laverton and Gujeri Market represent a more nuanced set of comprehensions and relationships. Over the course of this research project I have come to appreciate the precariousness and preciousness of their vernacular economies. These markets present a form of resistance relative to the host economy they operate against, the non-places of shopping centres, strip malls and global brands.

The day I returned to the market after the Covid-19 lockdown, it was a spring morning, and people were walking out with plastic bags full of tomato seedlings, but also seedlings, for persimmons, dragon fruit and pomelos. It was different from all these objects that were housed within, and the stories that they held. The plants offered a future for where things can grow again. In this way, the study of the markets in *Market Values* also resembles a bigger version of the world and of futures that are yet to be made.

Bibliography

"The Last Kings of Lamington Road." *TechTree.com* (2011).

"Street Shopping: It's a Steal! A Chunk of the Past with a Dash of Quirky, Mumbai's Mutton Street Is Your One-Stop Shop for All Things Antique." *The Ideal Home and Garden* (2012).

"Blaze Destroys Little Saigon Market at Footscray, in Melbourne's West." (Melbourne). Tuesday 13 December 2016, 2016. Accessed 13/11/2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-13/footscray-fire-crews-battling-blaze-at-little-saigon-market/8114602>.

"Mary Gillick: Her Art in Your Pocket." Henry Moore Institute. 2017. Accessed 12/07/19, 2019. <https://www.henry-moore.org/whats-on/2017/09/20/mary-gillick-her-art-in-your-pocket>.

Adams, Phillip, Tharoor, Shashi. "Late Night Live." 31st August 2017, 2017. in *Did Britain modernise or de-industrialise India*. in Sydney. 35 min 4 sec. <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/did-britain-modernise-or-destroy-india/8860348>.

Adamson, Glenn. *Thinking through Craft*. Oxford: Berg, 2007.

_____. *The Invention of Craft*, edited by Victoria and Museum Albert: London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

_____. *Art in the Making: Artists and Their Materials from Studio to Crowdsourcing*, edited by Julia author Bryan Wilson: London: Thames & Hudson, 2016.

Aljys, Francis, Godfrey, Mark, Biesenbach, Klaus Peter, Greenberg, Kerry, Tate Modern, Wiels, and Museum of Modern Art. *Francis Aljys : A Story of Deception*. New York: Museum of Modern Art : Distributed in North America by D.A.P., 2010.

_____. *Sign Painting Project. Francis Aljys: Sign Painting Project with Juan García, Emilio Rivera, Enrique Huerta*, edited by Juan García, Emilio Rivera, Enrique Huerta, and Theodora Vischer. Göttingen: Steidl Basil: Schaulager, 2011.

_____. "Francis Aljys." 2016. Accessed 4/06/18. <http://francisalys.com>.

Amor, Mónica. "Documenta X: Reclaiming the Political Project of the Avant-Garde." *Third text* 11, no. 40 (1997): 95-100. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09528829708576689>.

Ananth, Deepak. "Indian Bazaar." Article, *Flash Art International* 41 (01//Jan/Feb2008 2008): 98-100.

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Anonymous. "In the Studio: Sheela Gowda." *Tate Etc*, no. 37 (2016): 96-99.

Appadurai, Arjun, and American Council of Learned Societies. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Public Worlds; v. 1. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

_____. "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai." *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (2000): 627. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/08992363-12-3-627>.

_____. "Museum Objects as Accidental Refugees." *Historische Anthropologie* 25, no. 3 (2017): 401-08. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7788/ha-2017-0306>.

_____. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Arvatov, Boris, and Christina Kiaer. "Everyday Life and the Culture of the Thing (toward the Formulation of the Question)." *October* 81 (1997): 119-28. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/779022>.

Baker, George, Martha Rosler, Richard Serra, William Kentridge, Gerard Byrne, Andrea Robbins, Max Becher, Tacita Dean, Tom Burr, Pierre Huyghe, Silvia Kolbowski, Judith Barry, Douglas Gordon, Liisa Roberts, Matthew Buckingham, Joachim Koester, Nancy Davenport, Nils Norman, Christian Philipp Müller, Renée Green, Jimmie Durham, Luis Camnitzer, Noël Burch, Allan Sekula, and Zoe Leonard. "Artist Questionnaire: 21 Responses." *October* 100 (2002): 6-97. Accessed 2020/11/23/. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/779093>.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Bayley, Paul. "Francis Aljys 'Fabiola'." *Art and Christianity*, no. 59 (2009):5.

- Bayly, C.A. *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*. 3rd ed. Oxford India Perennials Series. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Bazin, Andre. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image: (Translated by Hugh Gary)." *Film Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1960): 4-4. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1210183>.
- Becker, Carol. "The Second Johannesburg Biennale." *Art journal (New York)* 57, no. 2 (1998): 86-100. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00043249.1998.10791881>.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. [1st ed.] edited by Hannah Arendt. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.
 "Theses on the Philosophy of History." In *Illuminations*. Edited by Hannah Arendt. New York: New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.
 "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction [Chapter]." Fontana, 1973.
 "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia." In *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. Edited by Peter Demetz. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.
One-Way Street, and Other Writings, edited by E. F. N. Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter. London: Verso, 1997.
The Arcades Project, edited by Rolf Tiedemann. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1999.
The Writer of Modern Life, Essays on Charles Baudelaire. Cambridge, edited by Michael W Jennings: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Bennett, Jane, Ebooks Corporation, and Duke University Press. *Vibrant Matter : A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Berardini, Andrew author. *Danh Vo: Relics*, Milan: Mousse Publishing, 2015.
- Bergstein, Mary. *Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography, and the History of Art*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- Berrebi, Sophie. "Goats, Lamb, Veal, Breast: Strategies of Organisation in Zoe Leonard's ", *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, no. 25 (2010): 30-37. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/657460>.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Bishop, C. "History Depletes Itself." *Artforum Int.* 54, no. 1 (2015): 324
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, edited by Jeanine Herman and Caroline Schneider. New York: New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005.
- Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, edited by Walter Benjamin. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989.
 "Radical Cosmopolitanism." *Third text* 23, no. 5 (2009): 547-49.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09528820903184641>.
- Burnham, Jack. *Beyond Modern Sculpture: The Effects of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of This Century*. London: London: Allen Lane, 1968.
Hans Haacke Wind and Water Sculpture, edited by Hans Haacke. Evanston, Ill.: Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1967.
- Chabot, Pascal, Graeme Kirkpatrick, and Aliza Krefetz. *The Philosophy of Simondon: Between Technology and Individuation*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013.
- Choy, Lee Weng "Present and Unread: Simryn Gill's Where to Draw the Line." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, no. 33 (2013): 78-87. Accessed February 4, 2021. doi:10.1086/672022.
- Churner, Rachel. *Hans Haacke*: Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2015.
- Cohn, Bernard S. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- cutrichic. "Hans Haacke, "Circulation" 1969" (Online Documentation). 14th Sep 2013. Accessed 17th May 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9NHp-sHFuA>.
- Dalrymple, William & Fraser, Olivia, 1965-, (illustrator.) *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.
- Deutsche, Rosalyn. *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics*. Cambridge, Mass.: Chicago, Ill.: MIT Press, 1996.

Dheram, Premakumari. "English Language Teaching in India: Colonial Past Vis-À-Vis Curricular Reform." *Teaching English to the World: History, Curriculum, and Practice*. Edited by George Braine. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005.

Didi-Huberman, Georges. "Wax Flesh, Vicious Circles" In *Encyclopaedia Anatomica: A Complete Collection of Anatomical Waxes*. Edited by Georges Didi-Huberman, Marta Poggesi, and Specola Museo zoologico La. Köln: Taschen, 1999.

_____. *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*. University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005.

_____. "The Order of Material: Plasticities, Malaises, Survivals " In *Sculpture and Psychoanalysis*. Edited by Brandon Taylor. Aldershot, Hants [England]; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006.

_____. "The Album of Images According to André Malraux." *Journal of Visual Culture* 14, no. 1 (2015): 3.

Doane, Mary Ann. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

_____. "Indexicality: Trace and Sign: Introduction." *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007): 1.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2006-020>.

_____. "The Indexical and the Concept of Medium Specificity." *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007): 128.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2006-025>.

Enwezor, Okwui. *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*. Göttingen: Steidl Publishers, 2008.

_____. "The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition". *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*. Edited by Nancy Condee, Okwui Enwezor, Terry Smith, Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Foster, Hal. *Compulsive Beauty*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993.

_____. "The Archive without Museums." *October* 77 (1996): 97-119. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/778962>.

_____. *The Artist as Ethnographer* [Chapter 6]. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996.

_____. *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996.

_____. "An Archival Impulse." *October*, no. 110 (2004): 3-22.

Fried, Michael. *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Frow, John. *Time and Commodity Culture: Essays on Cultural Theory and Postmodernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Gabrys, Jennifer. *The Natural History of Electronics*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2007.

_____. *Digital Rubbish: A Natural History of Electronics*, edited by Muse Project. University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Gardner, A, and C Green. n.d. "Okwui Enwezor's Johannesburg Biennale: Curating in Times of Crisis." *Documenta Studies*, no. 8, March 2020.

Gartner, John. *The Standard Australian Coin Catalogue*. 5th ed. Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1973.

Gassner, Hubertus, Schaffner, Ingrid, Batchen, Geoffrey, Winzen, Matthias, Siemens Kulturprogramm, Henry Art Gallery, and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center. *Deep Storage : Collecting, Storing, and Archiving in Art*. Munich ; New York: Prestel, 1998.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, edited by Societies American Council of Learned. New York: New York: Basic Books, 1973.

_____. "The Bazaar Economy: Information and Search in Peasant Marketing." *The American Economic Review* 68, no. 2 (1978): 28-32.

Gell, Alfred. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

_____. "The Enchantment of Technology and the Technology of Enchantment." In *The Craft Reader*. Edited by Glenn Adamson. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010.

Gill, Simryn, Storer, Russell, Morgan, Jessica, Taussig, Michael T, and Museum of Contemporary Art. *Simryn Gill*. Köln: Sydney, N.S.W.: Walther König ; Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.

Godfrey, H. Walter. "Mary Gillick, Sculptor." *The Architectural Review (Archive: 1896-2005)* 49, no. 290 (1921): 20-22.

Godfrey, Mark. "Photography Found and Lost: On Tacita Dean's Floh." *October* 114 (2005): 90-119. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1162/016228705774889619>.

Gowda, Sheela, Christoph Storz, and Suman Gopinath. "Sheela Gowda and Christoph Storz in Conversation with Suman Gopinath." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 22, no. 22 (2009): 44-52. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/aft.22.20711763>.

Gowda, Sheela & Harsha, N. S & Mohamedi, Nasreen & Institute of International Visual Arts & Angel Row Gallery *Drawing Space: Contemporary Indian Drawing*. London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 2000.

Graburn, Nelson H. H. "The Evolution of Tourist Arts." *Annals of tourism research* 11, no. 3 (1984): 393-419. [https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(84\)90029-X](https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(84)90029-X).

Grasskamp, Walter. *Hans Haacke*, edited by Jon Bird and Molly Nesbit. London: Phaidon, 2004.

Gronberg, Tag. "Simon Starling: Crafting the Modern." *The journal of modern craft* 1, no. 1 (2008/03/01 2008): 101-15. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967708783389788>.

Groys, Boris. "The Artist as Consumer." In *Shopping: A Century of Art and Consumer Culture*. Edited by Christoph Grunenberg and Max Hollein. Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002.

_____. "The Topology of Contemporary Art." *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*. Edited by Nancy Condee, Okwui Enwezor, Terry Smith, Press Duke University, and Inc ebrary. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Habib, Irfan. "Trade and Merchants in Indian History." *Studies in People's History* 2, no. 1 (2015): 2-8. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2348448915577295>.

Hansen, Miriam Bratu. "Benjamins Aura." *Critical Inquiry* 34, no. 2 (2008): 336-75. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/529060>.

Harun Farocki, Antje Ehmann. "Labour in a Single Shot." Harun Farocki Filmproduktion. 2014. Accessed 07/06/2017. <http://www.labour-in-a-single-shot.net/en/films/>.

Heiser, Jorg. "Good Circulation." *Frieze* April, no. 90 (2005).

Helland, Janice. *The Craft Reader by Glenn Adamson (Ed.)*. Vol. 3: Routledge, 2011.

Herkenhoff, Paulo. *Cildo Meireles*, edited by Cildo Meireles, Gerardo Mosquera, and Dan Cameron. London: Phaidon, 1999.

Hershberger, Andrew E. "Malraux's Photography." *History of Photography* 26, no. 4 (2002): 269-75. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2002.10443301>.

Hocking, W. J. "Simon's Dies in the Royal Mint Museum, with Some Notes on the Early History of Coinage by Machinery." *Numismatic chronicle and journal of the Royal Numismatic Society* 9 (1909): 56-118. Accessed May 23, 2019. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42662208?seq=1>

Holland, Paul M " Australian Penny Varieties: A New Classification Scheme.", *Journal of the Australian Numismatic Society*. ((Feb 1994)): 14-27.

_____. "Master Die-Types of Australian Pennies." *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 9 (1998). Accessed July 30, 2019. <http://www.numismatics.org.au/naa-journals/1998/>.

_____. "Bronze Coinage at the Perth Mint 1951-53: The Transition to Working Die Production.", *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 10 (1999): 32-45. Accessed July 30, 2019. <http://www.numismatics.org.au/naa-journals/1999/>.

_____. "The Perth Mint Penny "Mules" of 1955-56." 12 (2001): 39-44. *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 12 (2001). Accessed July 30, 2019. <http://www.numismatics.org.au/naa-journals/2001/>.

_____. "Australian Pre-Decimal Bronze Coinage." *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 17 (2006): 16-20. Accessed May 23, 2019. <http://www.numismatics.org.au/pdfjournal/Vol17/Vol%2017%20Article%203.pdf>

Hughes, Richard. *The Colouring, Bronzing and Patination of Metals: A Manual for the Fine Metalworker and Sculptor*: edited by Michael June Rowe. London: London: Crafts Council, 1982.

Hoskote, Ranjit. "The Animism of the Machine: Kausik Mukhopadhyay's Autobiography in Moving Parts." *Squeeze Lime in your Eye*. Chatterjee & Lal. 2017. Accessed 1st November 2019. <https://chatterjeeandlal.com/artists/kausik-mukhopadhyay/>.

Iversen, Margaret. "Readymade, Found Object, Photograph." *Art Journal* 63, no. 2 (2004): 44-57. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00043249.2004.10791125>.

_____. "Resistance to Replication." *Tate Papers*, no. 8 (2007): np.

_____. *Chance*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel Gallery, the MIT Gallery, 2010.

- _____. "Carving, Modelling, Painting: Adrian Stokes and Merlin James (Essay)." *Journal of Contemporary Painting* 2, no. 1 (2016): 115. https://dx.doi.org/10.1386/jcp.2.1.115_1.
- _____. *Photography, Trace, and Trauma*, edited by ProQuest: Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017.
- _____. 'Index, Diagram, Graphic Trace: Involuntary Drawing', in *Tate Papers*, no.18, Autumn 2012. Accessed 12 January 2019. <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/18/index-diagram-graphic-trace>,
- Iwabuchi, Kōichi, Muecke, Stephen, Thomas, Mandy, and JSTOR. *Rogue Flows Trans-Asian Cultural Traffic*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004.
- J. G. Pollard. "Matthew Boulton and the Reducing Machine in England." *Numismatic chronicle* (1966) 11 (1971): 311-17.
- Jacobs, Emma. *Mini Masterpiece in Your Pocket*. (Business Life). 2013.
- Jain, Kajri. "India's Modern Vernacular-on the Edge" in *Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*. edited by Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Kajri Jain, Art Queens Museum of, Australia Art Gallery of Western, and Museum Asia Society. London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005.
- Kapur, Geeta. *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*, New Delhi: New Delhi: Tulika, 2000.
- Ken, Johnson. "412 Glimpses of Corporate Globalization's Toll: Review." *The New York Times* (2015).
- Kilderry, David. "Australian Drive-Ins, Victoria, Drive-Ins Down Under." 1999 June 4, 2017. http://www.drive-insdownunder.com.au/australian/vic_brooklyn.html.
- Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America." *October* 3 (1977): 68-81. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/778437>.
- _____. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America. Part 2." *October* 4 (1977): 58-67. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/778480>.
- _____. *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986.
- _____. "A Voyage on the North Sea": *Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1999.
- Lange-Berndt, Petra editor. *Materiality*: Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2015.
- Langlois, Walter G. *André Malraux: The Indochina Adventure*. New York: New York, Praeger, 1966.
- Latour, Bruno. *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*, edited by Catherine translator Porter. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- Leonard, Zoe. *Analogue*, edited by Ann Bremner and Arts Wexner Center for the. Columbus, Ohio: Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007.
- Leslie, Esther, Ursula Marx, and Archiv Walter Benjamin. *Walter Benjamin's Archive: Images, Texts, Signs*. London: London: Verso, 2007.
- Linecar, Howard W. A. *British Coin Designs and Designers*. London: Bell, 1977.
- Mahadevan, Sudhir. *A Very Old Machine: The Many Origins of the Cinema in India*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2015.
- Malraux, André. *Museum without Walls*. London: London: Secker & Warburg, 1965.
- Marcoci, Roxana., Batchen, Geoffrey, Bezzola, Tobia, and Museum of Modern Art. *The Original Copy: Photography of Sculpture, 1839 to Today*. New York: Museum of Modern Art: Distributed in the U.S. and Canada by D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, 2010.
- Marcus, George E., and Myers, Fred R. *The Traffic in Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Masters, H. G. "Sheela Gowda." *Art and AsiaPacific* 10 (2015): 78.
- Mathur, Saloni. *A Fragile Inheritance: Radical Stakes in Contemporary Indian Art*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2019.

McDonough, Tom. "The Archivist of Urban Waste: Zoe Leonard, Photographer as Rag-Picker." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, no. 25 (2010): 18-29. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/657459>.

Meireles, Cildo. *Cildo Meireles*, edited by Guy Brett and Modern Tate. London: London: Tate, 2008.

Molesworth, Helen. *Zoe Leonard, Analogue, 1998-2007*. Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity. Edited by Nancy Condee, Okwui Enwezor, Terry Smith, Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.
_____. *Part Object Part Sculpture*. 1st ed. ed., edited by Helen Anne Molesworth and Arts Wexner Center for the Visual. University Park, Pa.: London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005.

Muecke, Stephen. "A Landscape of Variability." *Kenyon Review* 25, no. 3-4 (2003): 282-300.
https://dx.doi.org/10.2307_4338533.

_____. "Writing the Indian Ocean: Immersion in Seven Waves." *Performance Research* 21, no. 2 (2016): 85-89. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2016.1162495>.

_____. "Materialities of Tourism in the Twenty-first Century: A Very Brief Introduction." *Tourist Studies* 14, no. 3 (2014): 227-30.

Ngo, Dung. *Bent Ply: The Art of Plywood Furniture*, edited by Eric Pfeiffer. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003.

Nicholson, Tom, Amelia Barikin, and Helen Hughes. *Tom Nicholson: Lines Towards Another. Lines Towards Another*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2018.

Patel, Sujata, and Alice Thorner. *Bombay: Mosaic of Modern Culture*. Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Patel, Vibhuti. "The Art Is Trash." *Newsweek* 152, no. 16 (2008).

Pearce, Murray. "Royal Titles and Australian Coins: The "Defender of The Faith" Controversy of 1953." *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 3 (1987): 12-17.

Pollard, J. G. "Matthew Boulton and the Reducing Machine in England." *The Numismatic Chronicle* (1966-) 11 (1971): 311-17. Accessed May 23, 2019. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42678399>

Rajat Kanta, Ray. "The Bazaar: Changing Structural Characteristics of the Indigenous Section of the Indian Economy before and after the Great Depression." *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 25, no. 3 (1988): 263-318. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/001946468802500301>.

Reserved, Laverton Market. All Rights. "Laverton Market ." 2013. Accessed 04/06/2017.

Rich, Jack C. *The Materials and Methods of Sculpture*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1947.

Robert, G. Skerrett. "A Key to Many Industries." *Scientific American* 128, no. 4 (1923): 246.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0423-246>.

Roberts, John. *The Intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling in Art after the Readymade*. London: Verso, 2007.

Rosengarten, Ruth. "Chapter 3, Vivan Sundaram, [Great Indian Bazaar and Trash] Boulevards and Barricades." Accessed 12th November 2019.

<https://www.academia.edu/33714512/>

Chapter_3_Vivan_Sundaram_Great_Indian_Bazaar_and_Trash_Boulevards_and_Barricades.

Roy, Tania. "Non-Renewable Resources: The Poetics and Politics of Vivan Sundaram's Trash." *Theory, culture & society* 30, no. 7-8 (2013): 265-76. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0263276413503690>.

Sambrani, Chaitanya. *Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*, edited by Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Kajri Jain, Art Queens Museum of, Australia Art Gallery of Western, and Museum Asia Society. London: Philip Wilson Publishers New York, 2005.

Scarlett, Sarah Fayen. "The Craft of Industrial Patternmaking." *The journal of modern craft* 4, no. 1 (2011): 27-48.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967811X12949160069018>.

Sekula, Allan. *Fish Story: Witte De with, Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 21.01.1995-12.03.1995*, edited by centrum voor hedendaagse kunst Witte de With. Rotterdam: Düsseldorf: Richter, 1995.

Sen, Sudipta. "Bazaar" in *Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies*, 19. NYU Press, 2016.

- Shannon, Joshua. *Black Market: Materiality, Abstraction and the Built Environment in the New York Avant -Garde, 1958–1962*. Edited by Anne M. Wagner: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2003.
- _____. *The Disappearance of Objects: New York Art and the Rise of the Postmodern City*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- _____. *The Recording Machine: Art and Fact During the Cold War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017.
- Sharples, J. (2010) Branch Mints of the Royal Mint in Museums Victoria Collections
<https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/3768>
 Accessed 17 January 2021
- Sheikh, Gulammohammed. "Among Several Cultures and Times". *Journal of Arts & Ideas*. New Delhi: Tulika Print Communication, Circa 1995. Accessed January 15, 2021.
<https://aaa.org.hk/en/collections/search/archive/gulammohammed-sheikh-archive-articles-and-essays/object/among-several-cultures-and-times>
- Simmel, Georg. *The Philosophy of Money*, edited by Corporation Ebooks. Abingdon: Routledge, 2011.
- Simpson, Mark. *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture*. Vol. 81. North York: University of Toronto Press, 2012.
- Smith, Terry. "Introduction: The Contemporaneity Question." *Antinomies of art and culture modernity, postmodernity, contemporaneity*. Edited by Nancy Condee, Okwui Enwezor, Terry Smith, Press Duke University, and Inc ebrary. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Smith, Trevor. "The Specific Labour of Sheela Gowda." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 22, no. 22 (2009): 36-43. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/aft.22.20711762>.
- Starling, Simon. "Replication: Some Thoughts, Some Works." *Tate Papers*, no. 8 (2007): np.
 _____ "Five Thousand Years (Some Notes, Some Works)." *The journal of modern craft* 1, no. 1 (2008/03/01 2008): 117-31. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2752/174967708783389904>.
- Steinberg, Leo. *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
 _____ "To Take a Chance." In *The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Stoler, Ann Laura, ProQuest, Corporation Ebooks, and Press Duke University. *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.
- Straw, Will. "Exhausted Commodities: The Material Culture of Music." *Canadian journal of communication* 25, no. 1 (2000): 175. <https://dx.doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2000v25n1a1148>.
 _____ "The Music Cd and Its Ends." *Design and culture* 1, no. 1 (2009): 79-91.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.2752/175470709787375751>.
 _____ "Spectacles of Waste." In *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture*. Edited by Will Straw and Alexandra Boutros. Montreal: Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.
- Straw, Will, and Alexandra Boutros. "Introduction." In *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture*. Edited by Will Straw and Alexandra Boutros. Montreal: Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.
- Sundaram, Vivan. *Trash / Vivan Sundaram*. New Delhi: Gallery Chemould, 2008.
- Taussig, Michael T. *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Temkin, Ann, Umland, Anne, Perdrisot, Virginie, Mahler, Luise, Lowery, Rebecca, Lim, Nancy, Picasso, Pablo, Museum of Modern Art, and Musée Picasso. *Picasso Sculpture*. 2015.
- Thompson, F. C. "The Use of the Microscope in Numismatic Studies." *Numismatic chronicle and journal of the Royal Numismatic Society* 16 (1956): 329-38. Accessed May 22 2019. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42678399>
- Thompson, Michael. *Rubbish Theory the Creation and Destruction of Value - New Edition*, edited by Joshua O. Reno. London: London: Pluto Press, 2017.
- Tronzo, William, and Institute Getty Research. *The Fragment: An Incomplete History*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2009.

Tsai, Sylvia. "Sheela Gowda." *Art and AsiaPacific*, no. 95 (2015): 138.

Tully, Mark. "English: An Advantage to India? (the English Language in India)." *ELT Journal* 51, no. 2 (1997): 157. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/51.2.157>.

Tumbe, Chinmay, and Shashank Krishnakumar. "From Bazaar to Big Bazaar." *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 10, no. 3 (2018): 312-30. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JHRM-12-2017-0078>.

Untracht, Oppi. *Metal Techniques for Craftsmen: A Basic Manual for Craftsmen on the Methods of Forming and Decorating Metals*. 1st Ed.] ed. Garden City, N.Y.: London: Doubleday, Hale, 1968.

Vibhuti, Patel. "The Art Is Trash: Vivan Sundaram's Photos of Garbage Make a Beautiful Statement." *Newsweek (International, Atlantic edition)* 152, no. 16 (2008).

Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Wahlberg, Malin. "Inscription and Re-Framing: At the Editing Table of Harun Farocki." *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History* 73, no. 1 (2004): 15-26. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00233600410027273>.

Walter, H., and H. Godfrey. "Mary Gillick, Sculptor." *The Architectural Review (Archive: 1896-2005)* 49, no. 290 (1921): 20-22.

Welchman, John C. author. *Past Realization: Essays on Contemporary European Art, Xx to Xxi. Vol. I*, edited by Max editor Bach: Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016.

Yang, Anand A. *Bazaar India Markets, Society, and the Colonial State in Gangetic Bihar*, edited by Press University of California and eScholarship California Digital Library. Berkeley: Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Yve-Alain, Bois, Crimp Douglas, Krauss Rosalind, and Haacke Hans. "A Conversation with Hans Haacke." *October* 30 (1984): 23-48. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/778298>.

Zitzewitz, Karin. "The Moral Economy of the Street: The Bombay Paintings of Gieve Patel and Sudhir Patwardhan." *Third text* 23, no. 2 (2009): 151-63. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09528820902840623>.

Interviews

Jayaram, Suresh. "Interview with Suresh Jayaram." interview by Michael Bullock. 1 Shanthiroad, Bangalore. 16th December 2019, 2019.

Mukhopadhyay, Kausik. "Interview with Kausik Mukhopadhyay." interview by Michael Bullock. Vasant Nagari Road, Va Sai, Bombay. 6th December 2019, 2019.